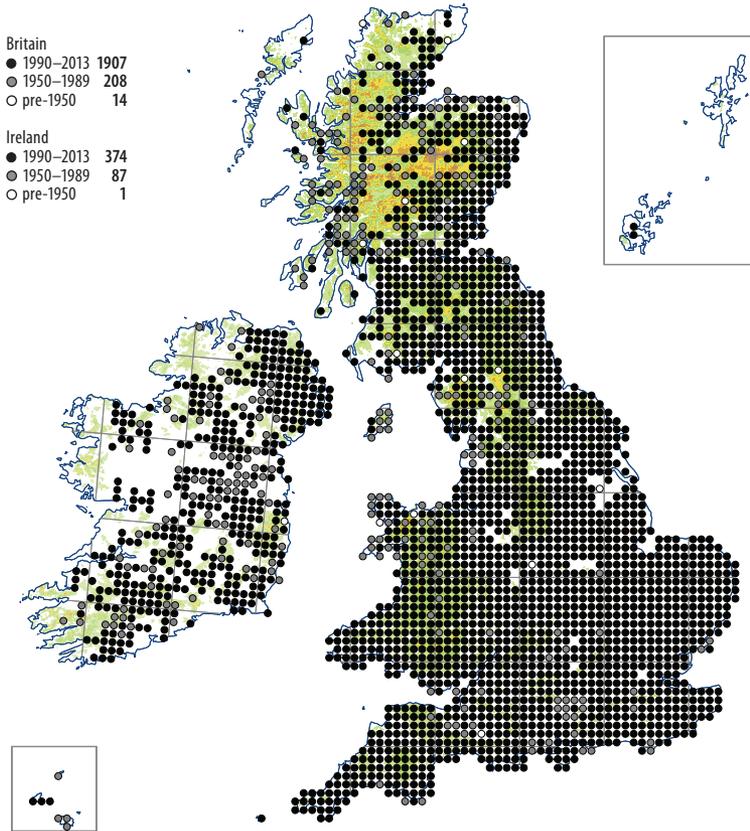


Orthotrichum affine

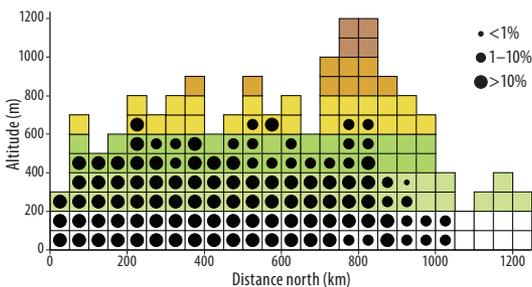


A common epiphyte growing as a pioneer on the exposed roots, trunks and branches of trees and shrubs, on roadsides and riversides and in scrub, fen carr and open woodland, but also in gardens and parks in towns. It favours sheltered but not heavily shaded localities, being most luxuriant in rather humid climates or microclimates and often occurring in abundance on twigs and young branches. It is sometimes found on silty bark in the flood zone of streams and rivers. Although particularly frequent on elder, it can grow on almost any deciduous tree species, including alder, alder buckthorn, apple, ash, beech, birch, buckthorn, elm, hazel, oak, poplar, sycamore and willow. Less frequently it grows on inorganic substrates such as rocks on natural outcrops and in quarries, stonework of walls and bridges, concrete walls and culverts, asbestos roofs, and even on metalwork. Frequent associates include *Frullania*

dilatata, *Metzgeria furcata*, *M. violacea*, *Amblystegium serpens*, *Bryum capillare*, *Cryphaea heteromalla*, *Dicranoweisia cirrata*, *Hypnum cupressiforme*, *Orthotrichum diaphanum* (and many other epiphytic *Orthotrichum* species), *Rhynchostegium confertum*, *Ulotia* spp. and *Zygodon* spp. Altitudinal range: 0–700 m.

It was a little more resilient during the industrial era than the other epiphytic *Orthotrichum* species (except *O. diaphanum*). It is now much more abundant than formerly in urban areas and penetrates deep into our conurbations.

Autoicous; capsules are frequent, often abundant, mature in spring, summer and autumn. Gemmae are occasional on the leaves, and are abundant on the persistent protonema in nature and also in culture (Pressel & Duckett, unpublished).



European Boreo-temperate. S, W and C Europe, north to C Scandinavia, NW Russia and the S Urals, Caucasus. Macaronesia, N Africa. Turkey and the Near East, to Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and China. Western N America.

C.D. Preston, rev. T.L. Blockeel