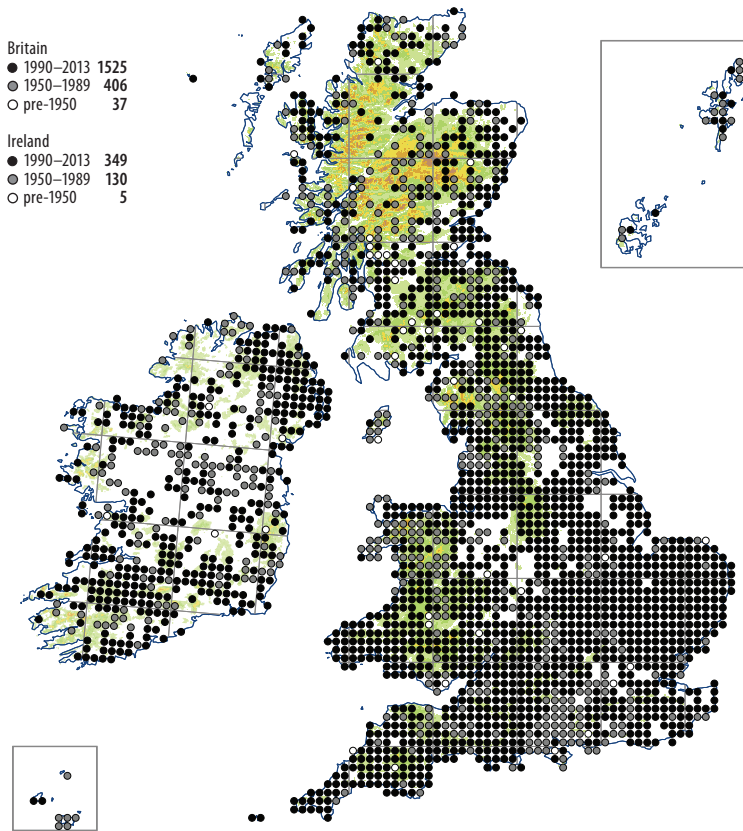


Orthotrichum anomalum



A plant of base-rich rock in both natural and artificial habitats, usually found in open sites but sometimes extending into moderate shade. It is especially abundant in areas of Carboniferous Limestone, growing on rock outcrops, boulders, limestone pavement, dry-stone walls and in quarries. It is also frequent on other hard limestones and on basic igneous rocks such as basalt, but it is not found on chalk. Typical artificial substrates include concrete, stonework, ledges and buttresses of bridges and churches, gravestones, and mortar on otherwise non-calcareous walls; slate and asbestos roofs are also colonised occasionally. *Grimmia pulvinata*, *Schistidium crassipilum* and *Tortula muralis* are the most frequent associates. Exceptionally it occurs on trees, especially in drier eastern regions and near limestone quarries where lime dust and particles are deposited on the bark. The British record of *Orthotrichum urnigerum* Myr. has

proved to be based on plants of *O. anomalum* growing in this habitat (Blockeel, 1987). Altitudinal range: 0–720 m.

There has been a continuing increase in records. While this partly reflects better coverage, *O. anomalum* has increased in and around industrial areas during the past two decades. It was absent from these areas during much of the 20th century, but with reduced SO₂ levels it now occurs even in city centres on concrete and other calcareous surfaces.

Autoicous; capsules are abundant, mature in spring and early summer.

European Wide-temperate. Most of Europe north to Iceland, but sparsely in N Scandinavia and N Russia. Canary Islands, N Africa. Turkey, Cyprus, Saudi Arabia, Iran. Widespread in the Northern Hemisphere, from the boreal zone south to India and China in Asia, and Guatemala in C America.

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