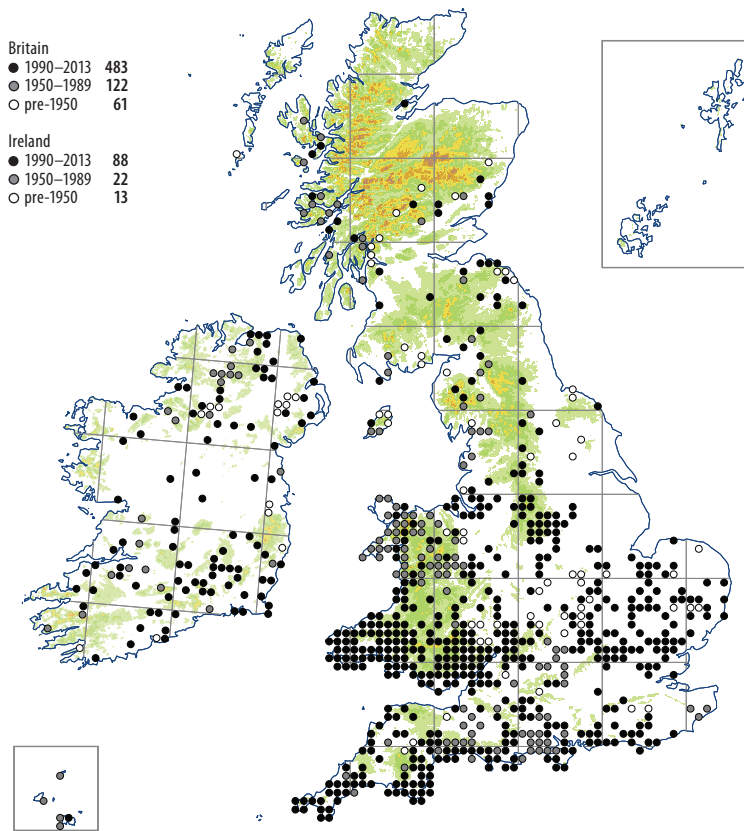


Orthotrichum tenellum



An epiphyte that usually grows on the bark of trees and shrubs in open sites such as hedgerows, scrub, roadsides, streambanks and in pastures, occurring much less frequently in woods and carr. It sometimes forms dense swards on ash or elm trunks, and is also frequent on elder, sycamore, willow and poplar. Its many other hosts include alder, apple, beech, field maple, hazel, oak, pear and poplar. Less typical habitats include silty riverside alders and damp concrete. *Cryphaea heteromalla*, *Orthotrichum affine*, *O. diaphanum*, *O. pulchellum*, *Syntrichia laevipila* and *Ulota phyllantha* are frequent associates. Altitudinal range: 0–440 m.

There has been a substantial increase in its known distribution in recent decades, especially in S Wales and C and E England. Although partly due to increased recording activity in some of these areas, the species has also benefited

from reductions in atmospheric pollution. Climate change may be an additional factor, as *O. tenellum* is a common and characteristic species of Mediterranean countries.

Autoicous; capsules are common, maturing from March to July. Gemmae are sometimes found in abundance on the leaves (Appleyard, 1986; Sleath, 2009) and are produced on the protonema in culture (Whitehouse, 1987).

Submediterranean-Subatlantic. Widespread in Europe and common in the Mediterranean region, north to southern Scandinavia, Belarus and Ukraine. Macaronesia, N Africa. Turkey, Cyprus, Lebanon to Kazakhstan and Afghanistan. Populations from western N America have been shown recently to belong to other species (Medina *et al.*, 2013).

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

