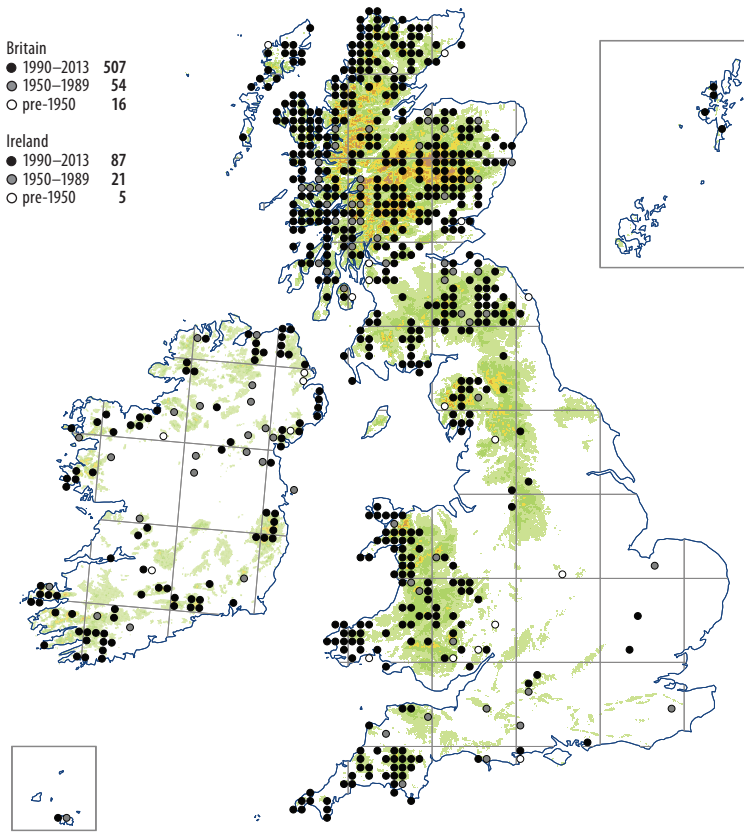


Hedwigia stellata



Common and locally frequent on dry, sun-exposed, south- or west-facing rock faces of low cliffs and tors, and on the tops of angular, detached boulders in moorland, in block scree, boulder fields, below cliffs, and on river banks, often growing with *Andreaea rothii*, *A. rupestris*, *Grimmia trichophylla*, *Racomitrium fasciculare*, *R. heterostichum* and saxicolous lichens such as *Parmelia omphalodes* and *P. saxatilis*. It is a characteristic species of the tops of large boulders by lakes and lochs in upland districts and occurs, more rarely, on acid dry-stone walls and roofing slates, in old quarries, and even on old tarmac. In lowland areas where natural rock outcrops are rare it is recorded from a few localities on Sarsen stones and on stone walls and roof tiles. It is restricted to hard acid or mildly basic rocks, commonest on igneous and crystalline siliceous rocks, and absent from limestone and schist. Exceptionally it has been recorded

from tree bark, as on the base of an oak in Gloucestershire. Altitudinal range: 0–700 m.

It was an early victim of atmospheric pollution near industrial centres and has been slow to recover. However there have been a few records recently in the South Pennines, where it was long absent, even occurring unexpectedly on a rockery and a wall within urban areas.

Autoicous; capsules are frequent, mature in spring and summer.

Described only recently (Hedenäs, 1994), *Hedwigia stellata* remains somewhat under-recorded, though its overall distribution is clear and it is much the commonest *Hedwigia* in Britain and Ireland.

European Temperate. Iceland and southern Scandinavia through W and C Europe south to Portugal, Corsica and Greece. See Erzberger (1996) for the European distribution. Macaronesia (Canary Islands, Madeira), N Africa (Morocco). Turkey, Cyprus. Asia (Sino-Himalaya, Russian Far East). N America.

H.J.B. Birks, rev. T.L. Blockeel

