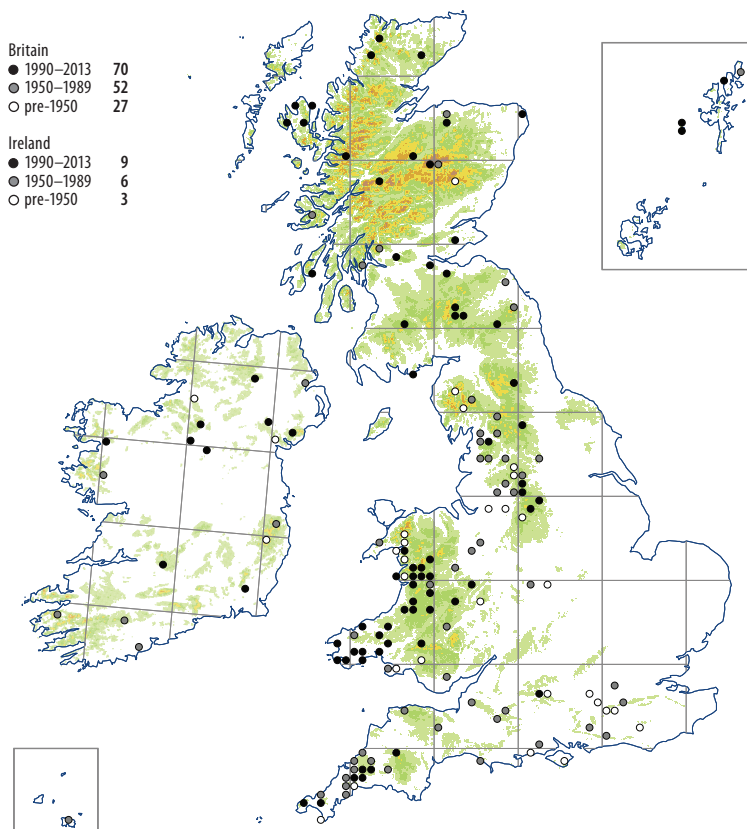


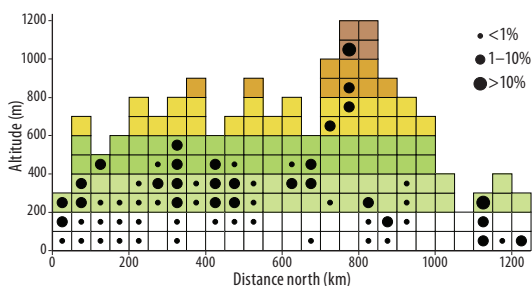
Philonotis caespitosa



A lax species of *Philonotis* occurring on moist or wet non-calcareous soil and rocks, where flushed or flooded by slightly basic, mineral-rich water, usually unshaded or almost unshaded. Recorded habitats include springs, streamsides, ditches, marshes, marshy fields, margins of lakes and reservoirs, tracksides, quarries and dripping rocks. It tolerates, or may even be encouraged by, some poaching by livestock, which maintains suitable sparsely vegetated hummocks of soil. Recorded associates include *Fossombronina wondraczekii*, *Pellia endiviifolia*, *Phaeoceros laevis*, *Archidium alternifolium*, *Barbula unguiculata*, *Brachythecium mildeanum*, *B. rivulare*, *B. rutabulum*, *Calliergonella cuspidata*, *Kindbergia praelonga* and *Oxyrrhynchium hians*. Altitudinal range: 0–950 m.

Dioicous; capsules have been found once, in Ashdown Forest in 1901. Vegetative propagules have not been recorded in Ireland or Britain.

This species has been, and remains, a source of much confusion, and recording has been inconsistent. In its typical form it is a rather soft, medium-sized plant with lax areolation and falcate leaves, but other forms, including Wilson's type material from Cheshire, are much smaller, resembling *P. arnellii* but with proximal mamillae, or depauperate *P. fontana* but with a plane leaf margin with single teeth and acute inner perigonal leaves (which unfortunately are normally absent). The map reflects this taxonomic uncertainty.



Circumpolar Boreo-temperate. From the Arctic south to the mountains of W, C and E Europe, rare in the Mediterranean region. Macaronesia, N Africa (Morocco, Algeria). Turkey, Georgia, Iran to Afghanistan, N, C and E Asia. Southern Africa. Traditionally recognised in N America as *P. fontana* var. *caespitosa*, but this taxon is not included, or indeed mentioned, in the *Bryophyte Flora of N America* (Griffin, 2014).

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