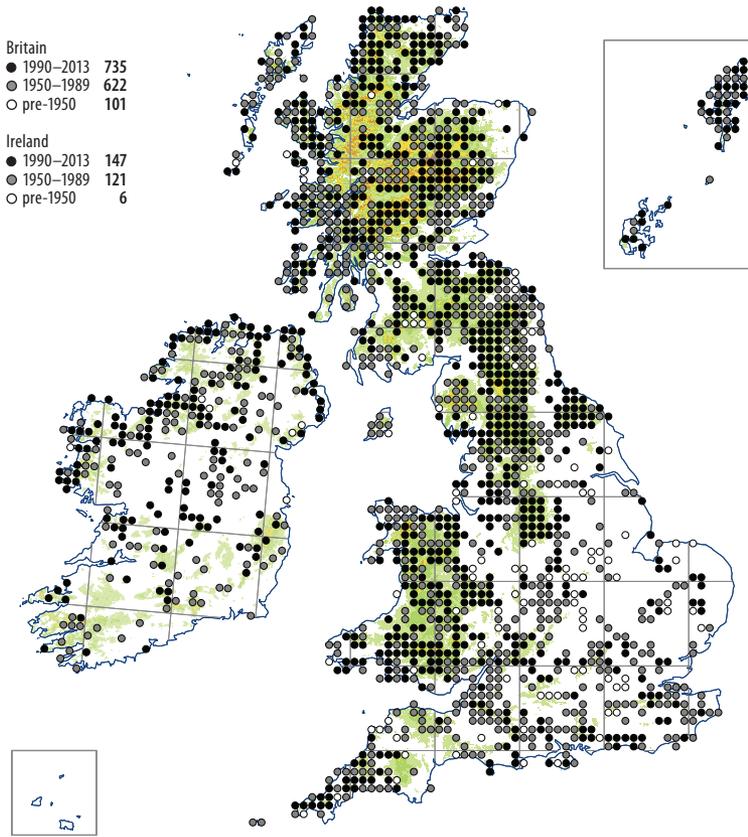


Bryum pallens



A frequent moss occurring in varied unshaded or lightly shaded sites with damp substrates that vary from strongly basic to moderately acid. It grows on sand, gravel, soil, soft rocks or occasionally even peat. Habitats occupied include sand-dune slopes, dune slacks, gaps in grassland cover (in pastures including limestone and chalk grasslands), pathways, roadsides, stream, river and lake edges, woodland rides and clearings, damp banks, quarries, sand pits, brick pits, and disturbed soil on waste ground. It is also found on wet rocks, crevices among rocks, sometimes growing in dense cushions on limestone, as well as on damp walls, and beside springs and upland flushes. It sometimes forms extensive bright pink patches, for example on base-rich lead mine spoil in NE Wales. There are a small number of records from cultivated fields. Altitudinal range: 0–1100 m.

Analysis of records received since 1960 indicates a steady decline in both upland and lowland areas that is not easily explained. This contrasts with the dramatic increase reported from inland sites in the Netherlands (BLWG, 2013).

Dioicous; capsules are infrequent in Britain and Ireland, especially in the south, mature in summer and autumn. Bulbils and tubers are absent; the protonema is perennial, and protonemal gemmae are produced in culture (Whitehouse, 1987). Axillary uniseriate gemmae are common in Arctic plants, occasional elsewhere southwards at least to Sussex. In a few populations on Cornish mine spoil broken-off stem apices with leaves attached probably also serve as propagules.

It is variable in both gametophyte and sporophyte characters. Occasional populations with filamentous axillary gemmae formerly separated as *Bryum subelegans* Kindb., and in continental Europe as *B. oeneum* Blytt ex Bruch & Schimp. or *B. rutilans* Brid., are now treated as conspecific (Holyoak, 2004). Confusion with juvenile plants of *B. pseudotriquetrum* may have led to over-recording of *B. pallens* in some areas.

Circumpolar Wide-boreal. Widespread in Europe from Iceland and Svalbard south to N Italy, Bulgaria and the Balkans. Elsewhere circumboreal, in Asia south to the Caucasus, Iran, Nepal and Japan, in N America and Greenland. Also in Rwanda, Zambia, Ecuador, Peru and Argentina (Tierra del Fuego).

