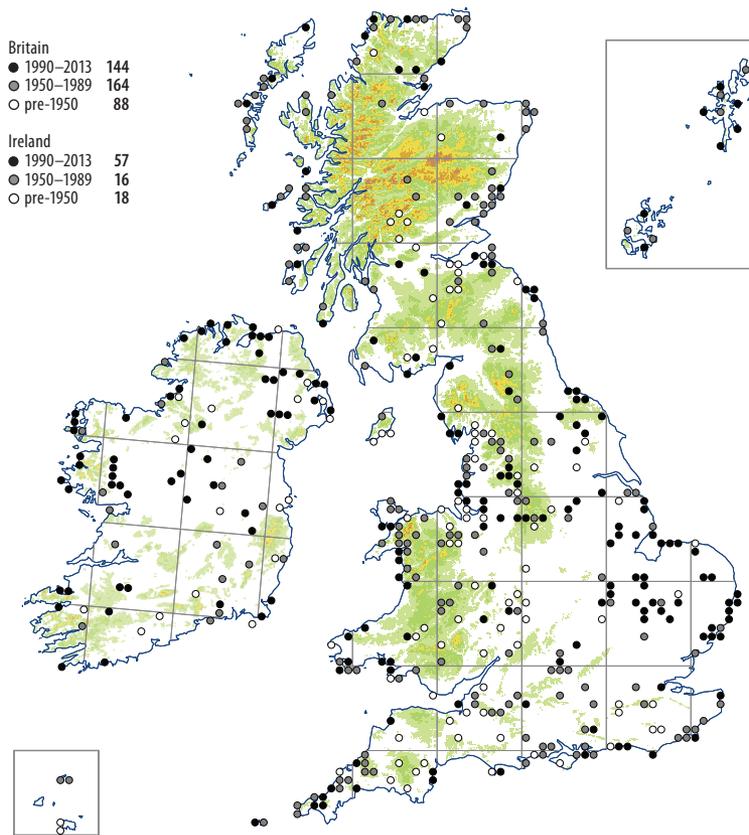


Bryum algovicum var. rutheanum

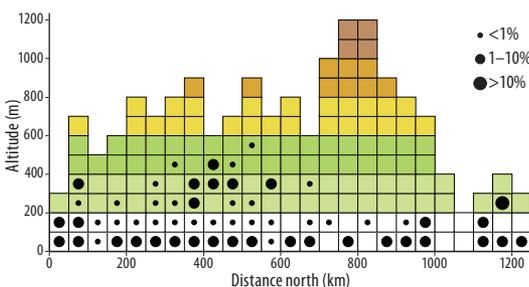


In Britain and Ireland this moss commonly forms large populations on coastal sands, both on semi-fixed foredune slopes beneath *Ammophila* or *Festuca rubra* and on open areas, e.g. in dune slacks or at pathsides in dune grassland. It can tolerate burial by 2.5–5 cm of blown sand (Gimingham, 1948; Birse *et al.*, 1957). Smaller populations occur at varied coastal and inland sites on open, mainly dry or sandy substrates, including crevices and tops of basic walls, rock crevices, in quarries, sand and gravel pits, disused railway sidings and on disturbed ground at roadsides. Altitudinal range: 0–410 m.

It seems likely that the strongholds of this species are at coastal sites, from which scattered and often impermanent populations become established inland from dispersal of spores. The prevalence of old records at inland sites is thus unlikely to indicate any long-term decline there.

Usually synoicous; capsules are common in most populations (the species is not reliably identifiable without them), mature in spring (May in S Britain and Ireland) or summer. Axillary gemmae, bulbils and tubers are unknown and apparently absent. The protonema is transient; protonemal gemmae are produced in culture (Pressel *et al.*, 2007).

This species is almost certainly under-recorded in S England as it fruits outside the main recording season; the recent records from Cambridgeshire were made by deliberately searching for fruiting *Bryum* plants in early summer. British and Irish plants belong to the synoicous var. *rutheanum*; the autoicous var. *algovicum* occurs mainly if not entirely on high ground in the Alps. Reports of “dioicous populations” in Aberdeenshire (Crundwell in Hill *et al.*, 1994), which may have consisted of a few atypical plants, need confirmation.



Circumpolar Boreo-temperate. Widespread in Europe from Iceland and Svalbard southwards to Spain and the Balkans. Elsewhere in Asia east to Japan; N America; Greenland; mountains of Ethiopia, Tanzania and S America; Australia, New Zealand, Falkland Islands, South Georgia, Kerguelen Island.

D.T. Holyoak