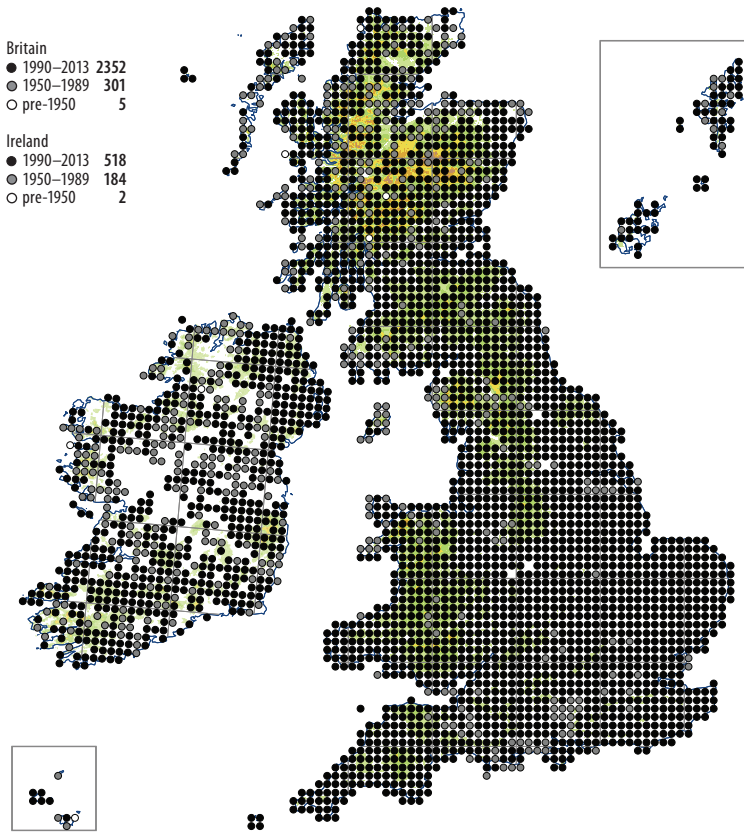


# Bryum capillare



An almost ubiquitous moss in Britain and Ireland, often common on rocks, walls, soil and tree bark, growing in the open or in light to moderate shade. Smith (1982) noted that *Bryum capillare* is both a facultative epiphyte and a facultative epilith. Indeed, field observations suggest it spreads readily from bark to rock or soil substrates without any evident preferences or ecotypic differentiation. It grows on basic rocks such as limestone and rather acid ones such as granite and sandstones, as well as those of intermediate reaction (e.g. basalt), and on a similarly wide range of man-made materials, including mortar, brickwork, old concrete, old tarmac and wooden fences. It also occurs on basic and slightly acid soils, in turf, and on a wide range of living trees (e.g. elder and elm and species with acid bark such as oaks), as well as fallen logs and stumps. Sites occupied are usually free-draining, and may be relatively dry, as on the

tops of boulders or walls, or damp and humid, as on rocks in streams. Altitudinal range: 0–950 m.

Diocious; capsules are frequent, mature in spring and summer. Rhizoidal tubers are usually present, scattered to abundant. Filamentous axillary gemmae and bulbils are lacking. The protonema is perennial, and gemmae and sometimes also tubers are produced on the protonema in nature and in culture (Duckett & Ligrone, 1992; Pressel *et al.*, 2007).

Extreme forms of var. *platyloma* (Schwägr.) Schimp. (syn. var. *rufifolium* (Dixon) Podp.) are striking plants of dry limestone rocks, with narrow leaves having a wide border. However, a continuous range of intermediates connect these to typical var. *capillare* so the taxon is regarded as a synonym (Holyoak, 2004).

Circumpolar Boreo-temperate. Widespread and common throughout almost all of Europe from Iceland and N Norway southwards to the Mediterranean region. Found elsewhere almost throughout the temperate and frigid zones of both hemispheres. There are also records from the tropics (mainly on mountains), but some of these probably result from the treatment of *B. torquescens* as conspecific with *B. capillare*.

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