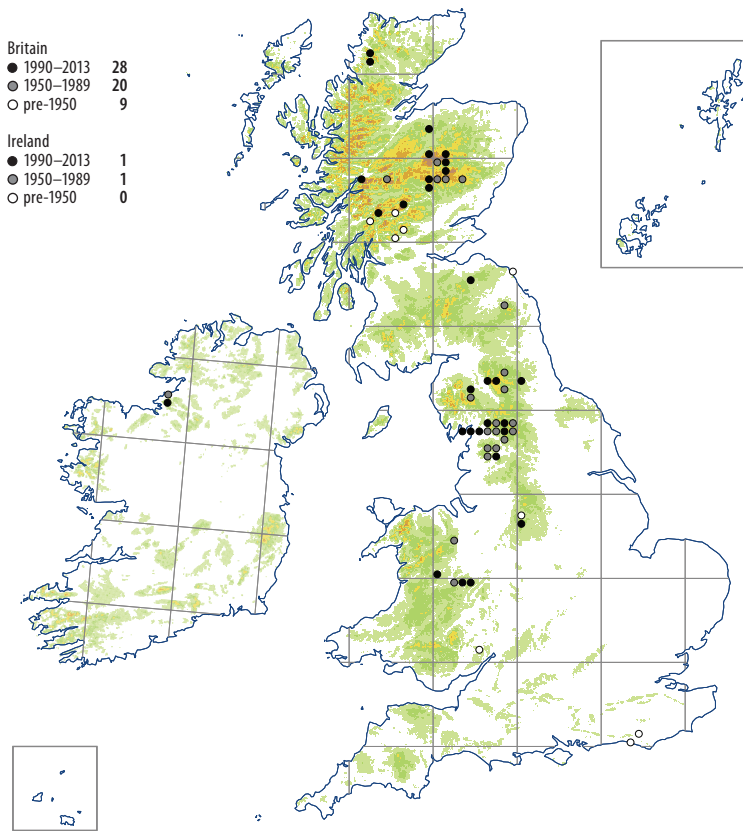


Bryum elegans



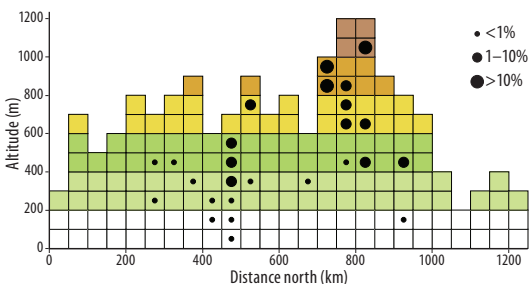
Mainly a moss of hill and mountain regions, *Bryum elegans* characteristically grows on thin soil overlying limestone or other basic rocks, or in crevices of the rocks, occasionally in thin limestone turf and on calcareous walls. Scarce forms previously separated as *B. stirtonii* grow on wet calcareous substrates, including ledges of calcareous crags and base-rich flushes. The few lowland records known to be correct perhaps represent temporary colonists.

It is uncertain whether there has been some decline in the scattered populations of *B. elegans* in southern parts of its British range or whether it was never well established at some of those sites. Altitudinal range: 30–1080 m.

Dioicous; capsules are very rare in Britain, unrecorded in Ireland. Tubers occur on the rhizoids but only rarely; bulbils and filamentous axillary gemmae are lacking.

Syed (1973) clarified the taxonomic distinction between *B. elegans* and *B. capillare*; Holyoak (2004) treated *B. stirtonii* as a synonym of *B. elegans*. Nevertheless, past confusion of *B. elegans* with *B. capillare* has confused published information on their wider ranges.

European Boreal-montane. In Europe *B. elegans* occurs from Iceland and Arctic Scandinavia southwards to SE Spain, Sardinia, the Balkans and Caucasus. Elsewhere it is reported from N Africa (Algeria, Morocco), Turkey and Cyprus, SW Asia, C and E Asia (Ural Mountains, Afghanistan, Mongolia, Kamchatka) and N America (Washington State: Spence, 1988).



D.T. Holyoak