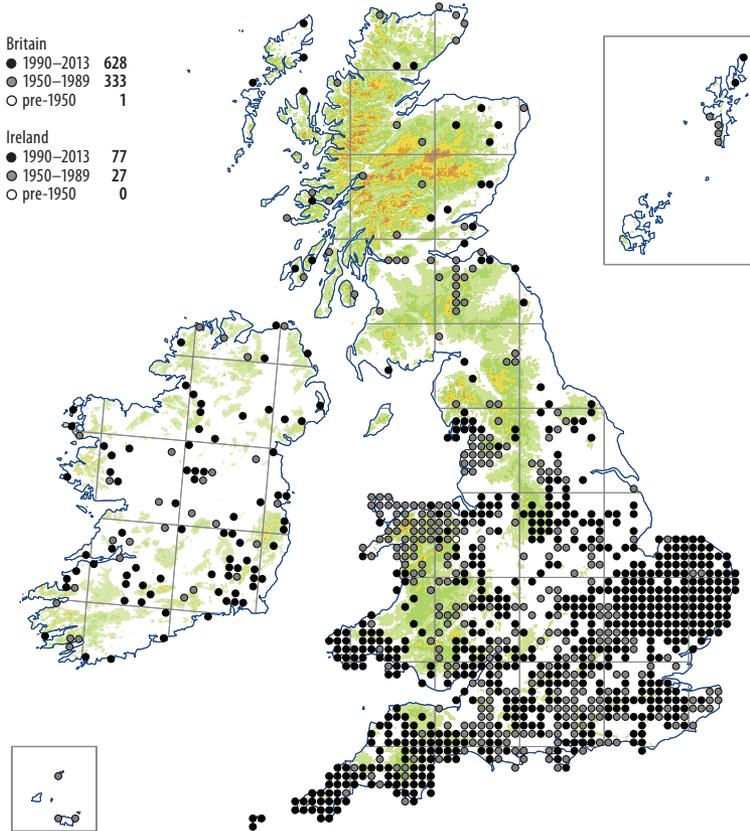


# Bryum ruderale



Often a common moss, growing on basic to slightly acid soils. It is especially characteristic of compressed or stony soil in places that are unshaded but not cultivated regularly such as path edges, roadsides and field gateways. *Pseudocrossidium hornsuschianum* is a particularly regular associate. Although described in the 1991–1994 Atlas as a species not usually found in regularly cultivated ground such as on arable land, Preston *et al.* (2010) found that it was frequent in some types of arable fields on basic soil but scarce in those on acid soils. It also occurs in gardens and on sandy ground near the sea. Altitudinal range: 0–370 m.

Dioicous; male plants are widespread, females apparently less common. Capsules are very rare and have not been reliably recorded in Britain or Ireland (although there is an unconfirmed record from Cornwall (Holyoak, 2012).

Rhizoidal tubers are frequent, usually plentiful on all but young plants, and virtually essential for reliable identification of the species. Bulbils and axillary gemmae are absent; the protonema is transient, and protonemal gemmae are produced (Whitehouse, 1987; Pressel *et al.*, 2007).

*Bryum ruderale* was rather seldom collected in Britain and Ireland before the revision of the '*Bryum erythrocarpum* complex' by Crundwell & Nyholm (1964). Like other small tuber-bearing species it is often overlooked, but the predominance of recent records suggest better coverage has now been obtained. Occasional forms with brown rather than purple rhizoids are still likely to be misidentified.

European Temperate. Widespread in Europe from S Norway and S Sweden southwards to Portugal, Spain, Sicily and Greece. Macaronesia, N Africa (Egypt: Sinai). SW Asia (Saudi Arabia, Turkey). Known elsewhere from Lenkoran in Azerbaijan, N America (Missouri, Texas, Ontario) and New Zealand.

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