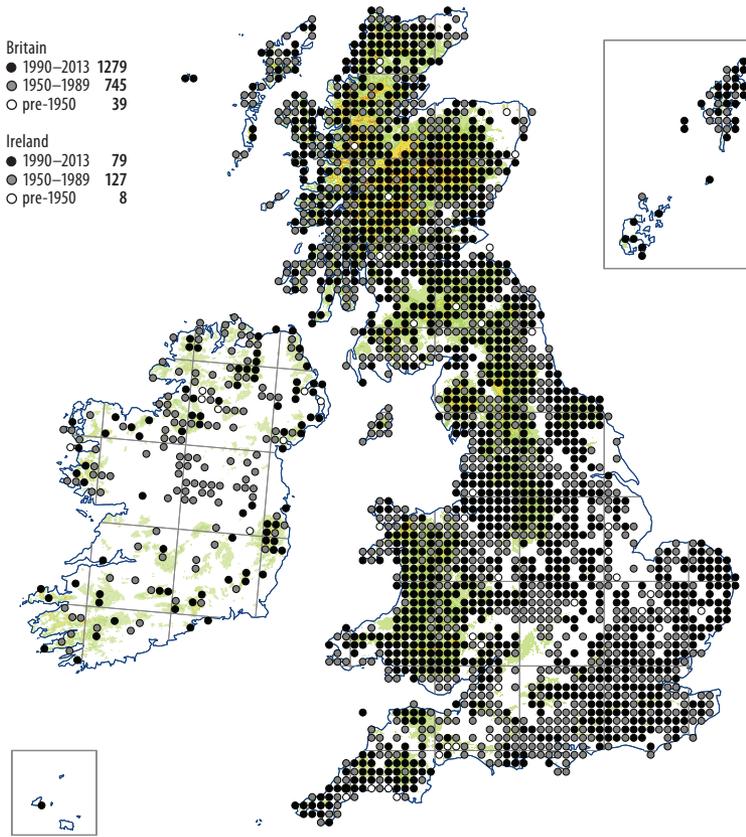


Pohlia nutans



A calcifuge species found in a wide range of wet and dry habitats on sandy and peaty soils. It occurs in lowland and montane heaths, in dunes, in ombrotrophic bogs and flushes, on peat hags, on sandy banks, in acid grassland, on peat and humus on boulders and rock outcrops, in rock crevices, on masonry and wall tops, on woodland banks, on rotting logs and stumps, and on tree bases and bark. In lowland calcareous districts it is restricted to organic substrates, especially rotten wood and occasionally old thatch. It is widespread in some man-made habitats, notably sand, gravel and coal pits, spoil heaps, and derelict industrial sites, but it is rarely found in other ruderal habitats. On mine waste in Cornwall it is tolerant of high levels of copper (Holyoak, 2012). Common associates include *Barbilophozia floerkei*, *Diplophyllum albicans*, *Campylopus flexuosus*, *C. introflexus*, *Ceratodon purpureus*, *Dicranum*

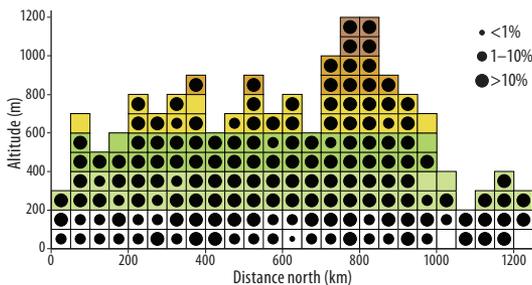
scoparium and *Hypnum jutlandicum*. It is also common in mires, often growing in *Sphagnum* carpets and hummocks with such species as *Lophozia ventricosa*, *Mylia anomala* and *Odontoschisma sphagni*. Altitudinal range: 0–1340 m.

It occurred more widely on tree bark and perhaps other habitats when levels of SO₂ pollution were high, but as an epiphyte it is now largely restricted to trees with acid bark such as birch. There has been a general decline in records since 1980, and this has been much more marked in formerly polluted regions.

Poarcous; capsules are common, mature in late spring and summer. It often produces deciduous branchlets and sometimes attenuated brittle shoots, which form a means of vegetative propagation.

Morphologically it is very variable, ranging from dense cushions in upland scree sporting capsules with short, thick setae, to scattered shoots growing through *Sphagnum* with disproportionately long, slender setae. This variation has not yet been fully investigated in Britain and Ireland.

Circumpolar Wide-boreal. Europe, north to Svalbard and Iceland, rare in the mountains of the Mediterranean region. Macaronesia, N Africa (Morocco). Turkey, Iran. Widespread throughout cool and cold regions of both hemispheres, including the Arctic and Antarctic. Very few and scattered localities in the tropics.



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