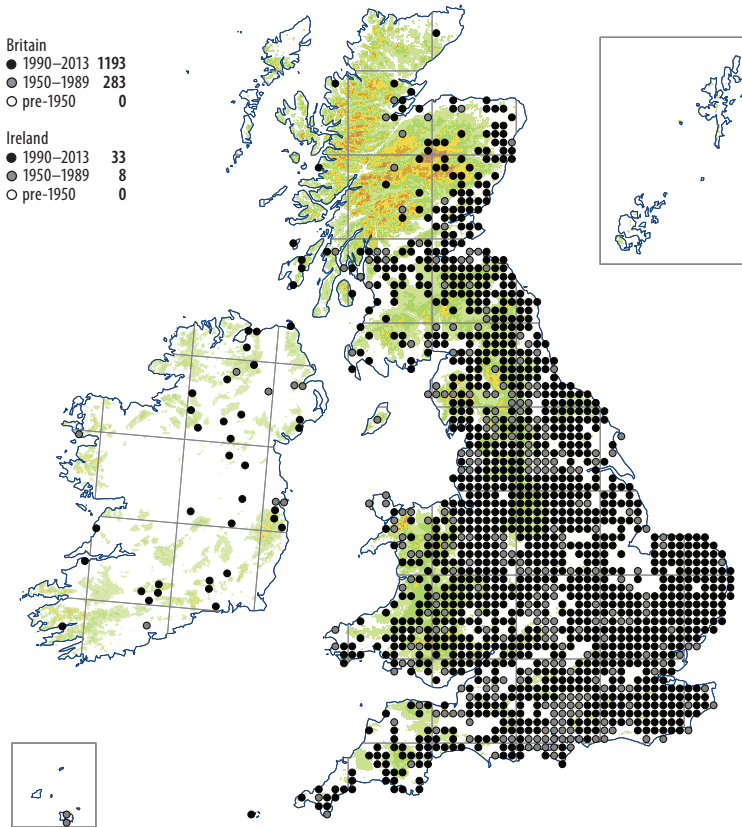


# Orthodontium lineare



An invasive species characteristic of shaded base-poor habitats. It occurs on sandy and peaty banks, on tree boles, old logs and stumps, and on siliceous rocks and crags, particularly on their vertical surfaces. As an epiphyte it occurs on trees with acid bark, being especially characteristic of the fissured trunks of birch trees. *Lophocolea heterophylla* is a common associate on wood. In some regions, for example on Millstone Grit in the South Pennines, it occurs plentifully in rocky woods, associated with *Lepidozia reptans*, *Lophozia ventricosa*, *Pseudotaxiphyllum elegans*, *Tetraphis pellucida* and many other calcifuge species. In northern and western areas it is also found on open moorland among rocks, on peaty banks and at the edge of eroding hags, but it is rare or absent in areas of high rainfall; in southern and eastern districts tree bases and stumps in woodland are much the commonest habitat. Altitudinal range: 0–700 m.

It was collected in Cheshire in 1910 (Burrell, 1940) but was not recognised as distinct from *Orthodontium gracile* till about 1920. Margadant & Meijer (1950) established its identity with *O. lineare* from the Southern Hemisphere, from where it is thought to have been introduced to Britain, perhaps with imported timber. Being tolerant of high acidity it flourished in areas subject to atmospheric pollution; in such areas it has become less abundant as an epiphyte in recent years following reduction in SO<sub>2</sub> levels, though still widespread and common in other habitats.

Autoicous; capsules are abundant, mature in spring and early summer. Protonemal gemmae are also produced abundantly (Duckett *et al.*, 2001).

European Temperate. Introduced in Europe, now widespread in W and C Europe, north to S Sweden and east to Kaliningrad, Slovakia and Hungary. Southern Africa. Australia, New Zealand.

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