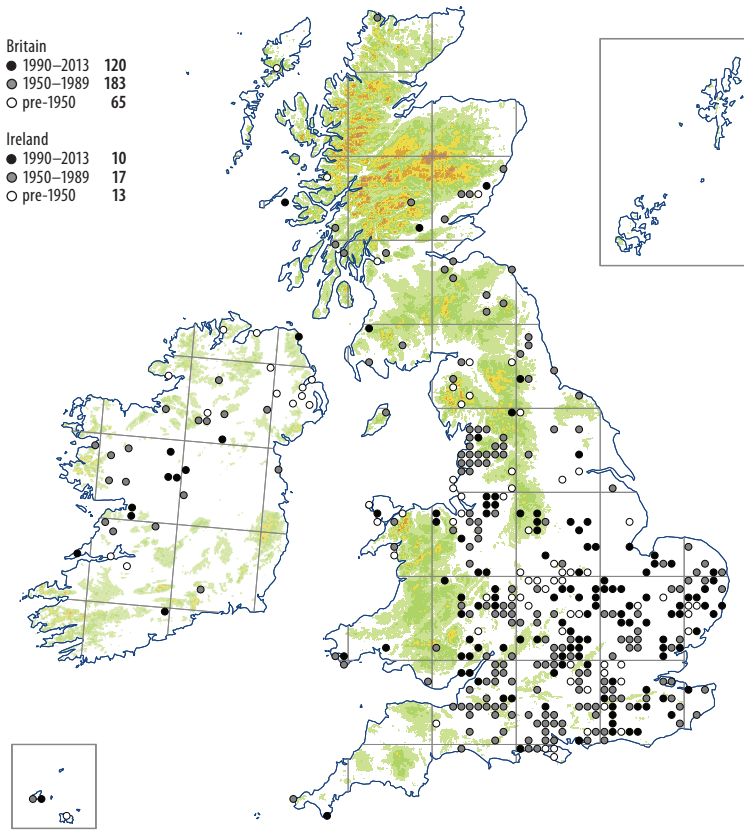


Hygroamblystegium varium



A moss growing in a wide variety of moist and wet habitats. The most characteristic of these is in wet woodland and willow carr, especially on the roots and bases of alders and willows, and on rotting wood and old grass and sedge tussocks; here it is often associated with *Leptodictyum riparium*. Likewise it sometimes occurs on rotting wood, stones or soil on the banks of streams, and on wet soil in fens, marshes and among rushes. Other habitats are more random and sporadic, and include damp stony ground in old quarries and workings, damp stonework and gutters in churchyards, stones by reservoirs, and muddy rock ledges. Altitudinal range: 0–380 m.

Autoicous; capsules are occasional, mature in summer.

A very variable species which intergrades with *Hygroamblystegium tenax*, and it may not be distinct from that species or *H. fluviatile* (see notes under the latter species). Slender forms may resemble *Amblystegium serpens*. Consequently there are likely to be many inconsistencies in the mapped records. On the other hand it is easily overlooked, as traditionally defined, and is probably under-recorded.

Circumpolar Temperate. Widespread in Europe north to S Fennoscandia and Arctic Russia, but rare in the Mediterranean lowlands. Macaronesia, N Africa. Turkey and the Near East. Temperate and subtropical Asia, Japan. N, C and S America, mainly at higher altitudes in the tropics. Australia.

T.L. Blockeel

