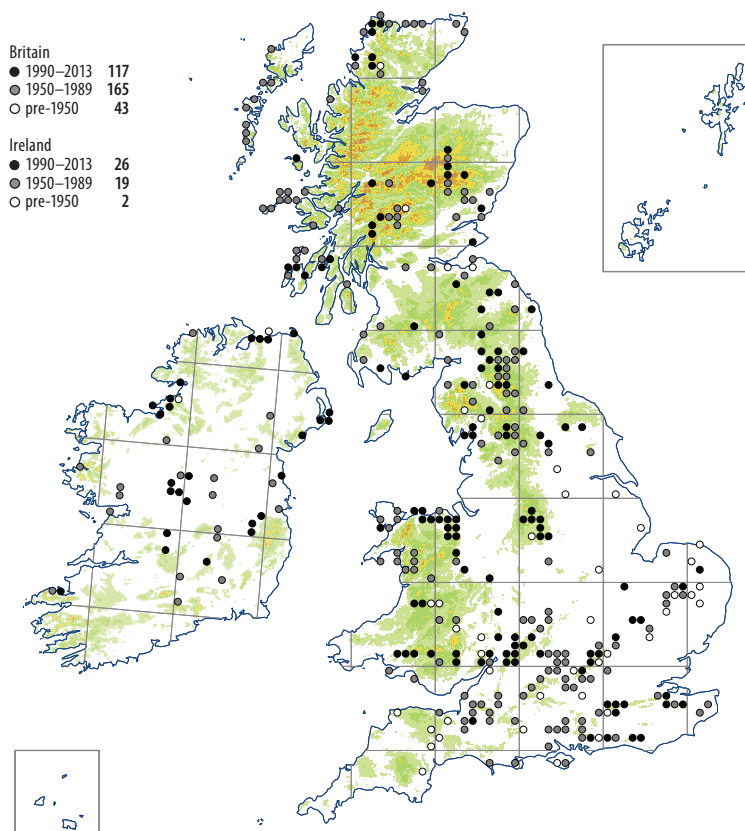


Thuidium assimile



This species occurs principally in calcareous grasslands, especially in undisturbed short-grazed turf that has not been enriched with fertiliser. It grows on thin chalk and limestone soils, calcareous clays and base-rich sand dunes, sometimes in old quarries, with associates such as *Calliergonella cuspidata*, *Ctenidium molluscum*, *Homalothecium lutescens*, *Hypnum cupressiforme* var. *lacunosum*, *Rhytidiadelphus triquetrus* and a range of small calcicolous acrocarps. It also grows on damp basic rocks in woods, especially on limestone blocks, and in a variety of montane habitats including ravines and damp rock ledges. It is a frequent machair species in parts of western Scotland, where it is accompanied by such mosses as *Amblystegium serpens* var. *salinum*, *Ditrichum gracile*, *Entodon concinnus*, *Hennediella heimii* and *Rhodobryum roseum*. Unusually, it has also been found in Cambridgeshire at the marshy edge of a

pool, growing with *Mentha aquatica*, *Campylopus protensum*, *Drepanocladus aduncus* and *Fissidens adianthoides*. Altitudinal range: 5–900 m.

Diocious; capsules are not known in Britain and Ireland.

This species is difficult to separate from *Thuidium delicatulum* (Tallis, 1961), and indeed may not be clearly separable from it (Hill, 1988). Some authorities (e.g. Crum & Anderson, 1981) treat *T. assimile* as a variety of *T. delicatulum*, and many workers have noted their inconsistent and intergrading character. There are undoubtedly inconsistencies in recording and on the map.

Circumpolar Temperate. Widespread in N and C Europe including Iceland but not Svalbard, east to the Ural mountains and Caucasus, becoming much scarcer southwards and absent from most of the Mediterranean region. Turkey, Georgia to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, Himalaya, Siberia, E Asia, Japan, N and C America, and also reported from S and E Africa and S America, but it is uncertain whether all these reports belong to the same species.

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