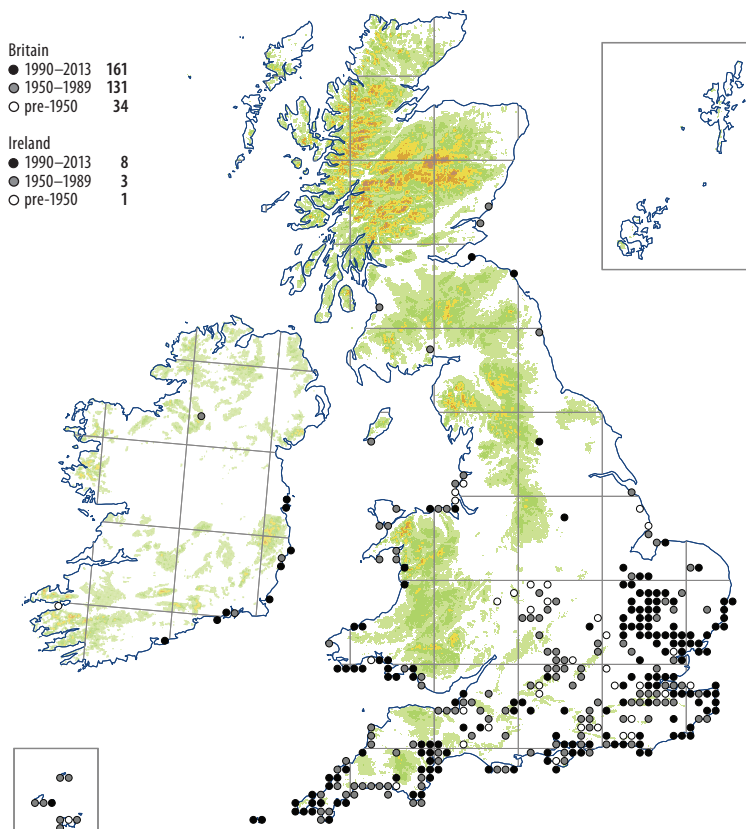


Rhynchostegium megapolitanum



Forming lax patches or growing through other bryophytes on light, well-drained soils, this moss is particularly characteristic of coastal habitats, growing on fixed dunes and in dune grassland, coastal slopes, headlands and cliff tops. It is sometimes plentiful in the ground layer among marram grass. Associates on dunes may include *Brachythecium albicans* and *Syntrichia ruralis* var. *ruraliformis*. Inland it occurs on sandy and chalky banks, chalk grassland (as in the East Anglian Breckland), thinly vegetated or gravelly ground by roadsides and in old pits, and in occasional diverse habitats such as old graves, wall tops and mine spoil. Its sites in Derbyshire and Yorkshire are on Magnesian Limestone, on loose soil on the top of or on ledges of old walls. Altitudinal range: 0–210 m.

Autoicous; capsules are occasional to frequent, mature from autumn to winter.

This species is easily overlooked for *Brachythecium rutabulum*, particularly when vegetative, and it is probably under-recorded away from the coasts.

Submediterranean-Subatlantic. W and S Europe, north to southern Sweden, extending east to Kaliningrad, Ukraine and Caucasus, common in the Mediterranean region. Macaronesia, N Africa. SW Asia, east to Turkmenistan.

T.L. Blockeel

