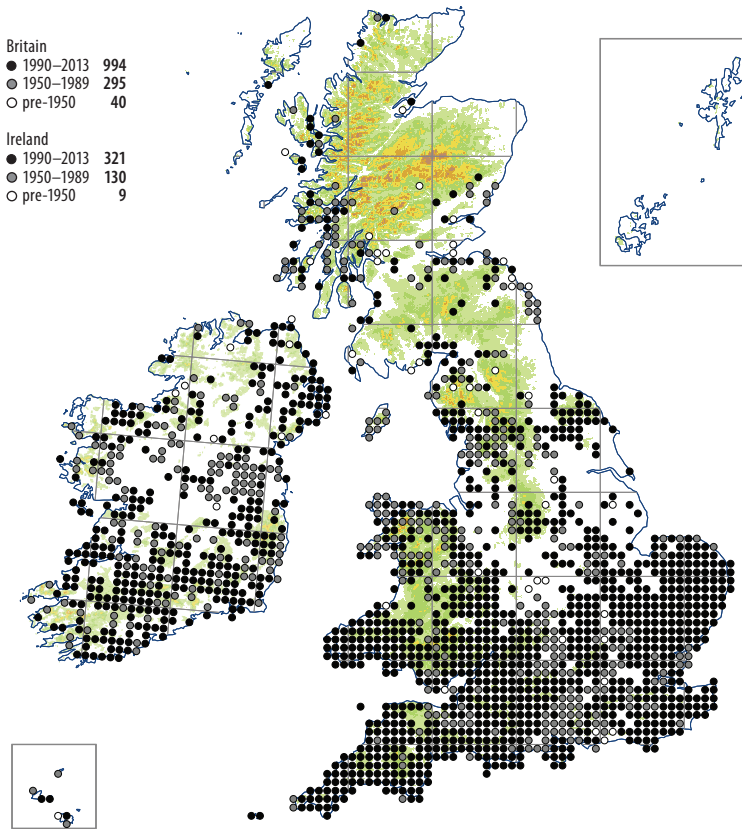


Rhynchostegiella tenella



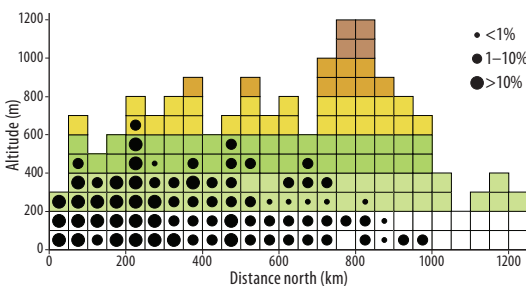
A calcicole moss of dry but usually shaded or sheltered rocks, on chalk, limestone, sandstone and other base-rich formations. Its natural habitats include rock outcrops and deciduous woodland, where it is tolerant of heavy shade, growing on chalk and flint pebbles, on stones, boulders, vertical rock surfaces and crevices, rarely on tree roots and stumps. An equally characteristic habitat is on old brick and stone walls (often on decaying mortar), bridges, ruined buildings, monuments and churchyards; it is often found at the bases of walls and gravestones. In some districts these are the commonest habitats. In coastal areas it occurs on sea cliffs and in sea caves. Towards the north it is increasingly confined to sheltered lowland habitats, but in western Ireland it is less restricted to shaded sites than in more easterly regions and it can frequently be found on exposed wall tops. On old walls its associates include

Barbula convoluta var. *sardoa*, *Bryum radiculosum*, *Didymodon rigidulus*, *Encalypta streptocarpa* and *Homalothecium sericeum*, but on rocks in woodland it is often in niches with few other bryophytes, though occasionally associated with *Seligeria* spp. Altitudinal range: 0–525 m.

There has been a slight upward trend in records, probably explained by increased recording activities in villages and churchyards.

Autoicous; capsules are frequent, mature in winter and spring.

The map incorporates all records assigned to *Rhynchostegiella tenella* s.l., which may include plants referable to *R. litorea*. This is likely to have little impact on the overall accuracy of the map.



Submediterranean-Subatlantic. Most of Europe, common in the Mediterranean region, and extending north to southern Scandinavia, east to Ukraine and the Caucasus. Macaronesia, N Africa. SW Asia, east to Kazakhstan and Afghanistan.

T.L. Blockeel