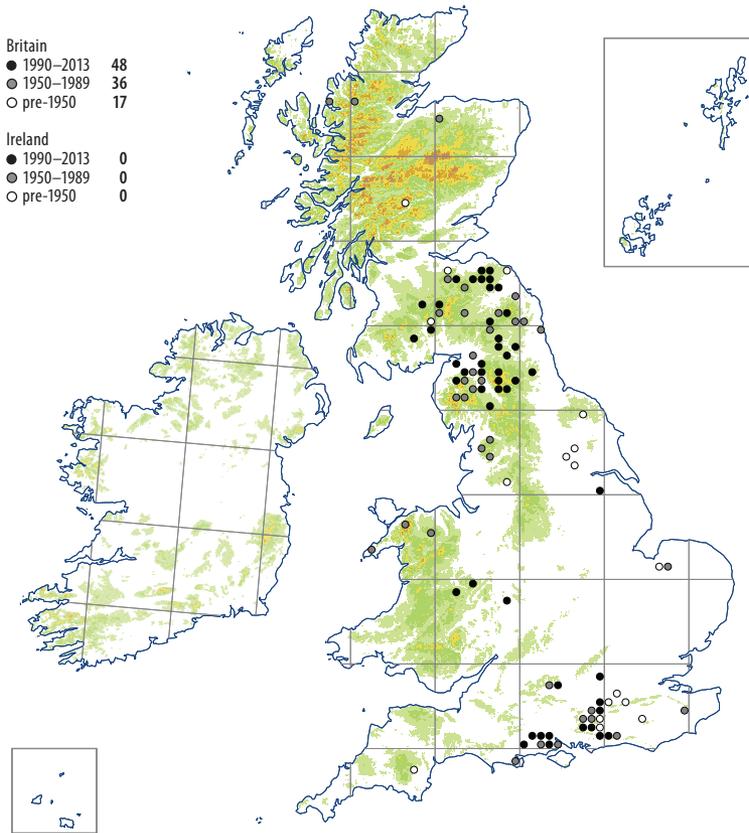


Hypnum imponens



An infrequent but sometimes locally common species of wet heath and of raised, valley and blanket bogs. It often occurs among heather, cotton-grass or *Erica tetralix*, but also on bare peat. *Hypnum jutlandicum* invariably occurs with it or in the vicinity. It sometimes persists in or colonises disturbed habitats, as on burned moorland, on peaty tracks and on the sides of ditches cut into bog and heath. In southern England it has been recorded in open areas in wet acid woodland. It is almost if not always confined to peaty substrates in Britain; the Buckinghamshire record is unusual in being from a fallen trunk and heathy grassland in dappled shade under oak, beech and holly. However in eastern N America *H. imponens* is a woodland plant, occurring mainly on logs and to a lesser extent on banks and rocks. Altitudinal range: 10–615 m.

Its pattern of distribution in Britain is unusual, especially for a species of heath and moor, and its apparent absence from most of central and northern Scotland, Wales and Ireland is difficult to explain. There has been an increase in records from unpolluted districts, probably due to recent recording in poorly worked areas of southern Scotland and the far north of England. Conversely records have declined in polluted areas, though this is unlikely to be related to changes in air quality.

Diocious; capsules are very rare.

It is probably under-recorded because of its similarity to *H. jutlandicum*, but it is hard to believe that it has been widely overlooked outside the core areas of its range.

European Temperate. Temperate and montane in Europe to about 67°N in Scandinavia, south to Portugal, Northern Spain, C Italy and the Balkan mountains, east to Latvia and Ukraine, also reported from Corsica and Sicily. Macaronesia (Azores). Turkey. Eastern N America. Doubtfully in Asia.

T.L. Blockeel

