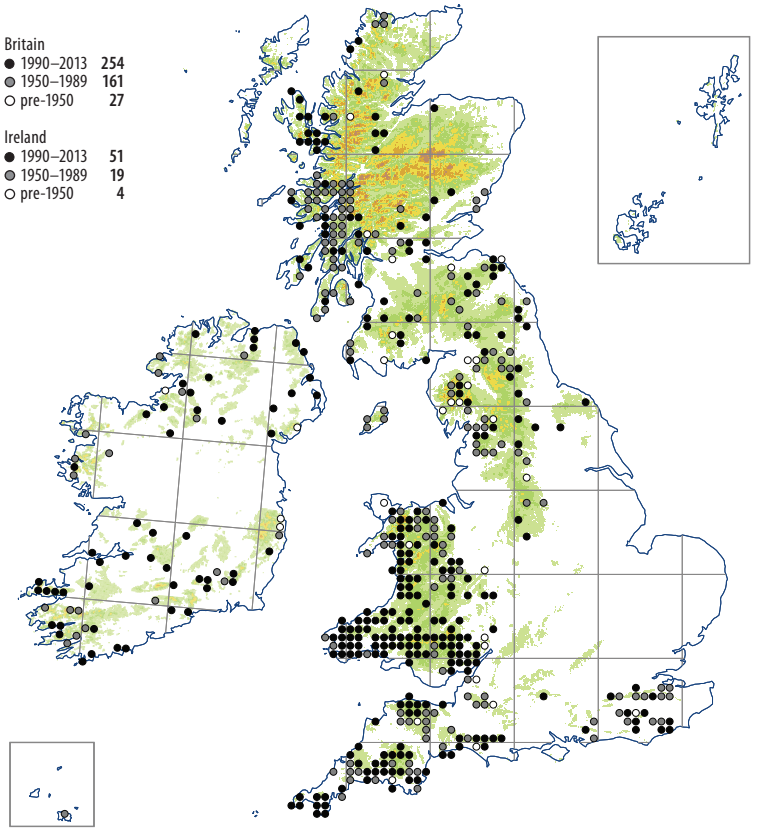
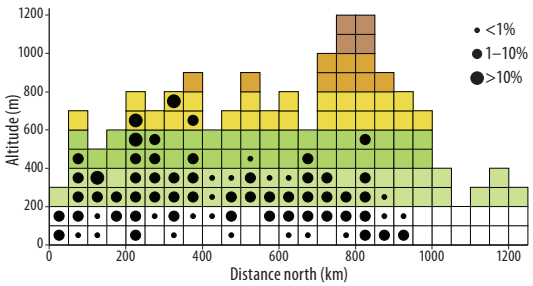
Heterocladium heteropterum var. *flaccidum*



A very slender moss forming thin wiry patches on densely shaded rocks in woodland and ravines, often near streams and rivers, but also on low stones on the woodland floor. It favours a rather drier, more basic substrate than var. *heteropterum*, occurring on limestone, calcareous sandstone and other rocks which are at least mildly basic. It has also been recorded growing on flints in chalk woodlands and scarps, and on ragstone in SE England. On rock faces, boulders or small stones, its associates include *Lejeunea lamacerina*, *Metzgeria furcata*, *Ctenidium molluscum*, *Fissidens pusillus*, *Homalia trichomanoides*, *Hygrohypnum luridum* and *Taxiphyllum wissgrillii*, as well as rarer species such as *Lophocolea fragrans*. It occurs infrequently on soil, and rarely epiphytically on tree roots and bases. Altitudinal range: 5–525 m.



It was somewhat under-recorded in the past, but greater awareness in recent years has filled in many gaps in its distribution.

Although often said to be clearly distinct in its morphology and ecology from var. *heteropterum*, plants with filiform shoots are occasionally encountered on wet acid rocks that are difficult to interpret. There may be some inconsistencies in recording.

Dioicous; capsules have not been recorded in Britain or Ireland.

Suboceanic Temperate. SW, W and C Europe, east to Switzerland and Germany, and north to S Scandinavia, perhaps elsewhere but not always recognised as distinct from var. *heteropterum*. Reported also for the Azores.

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