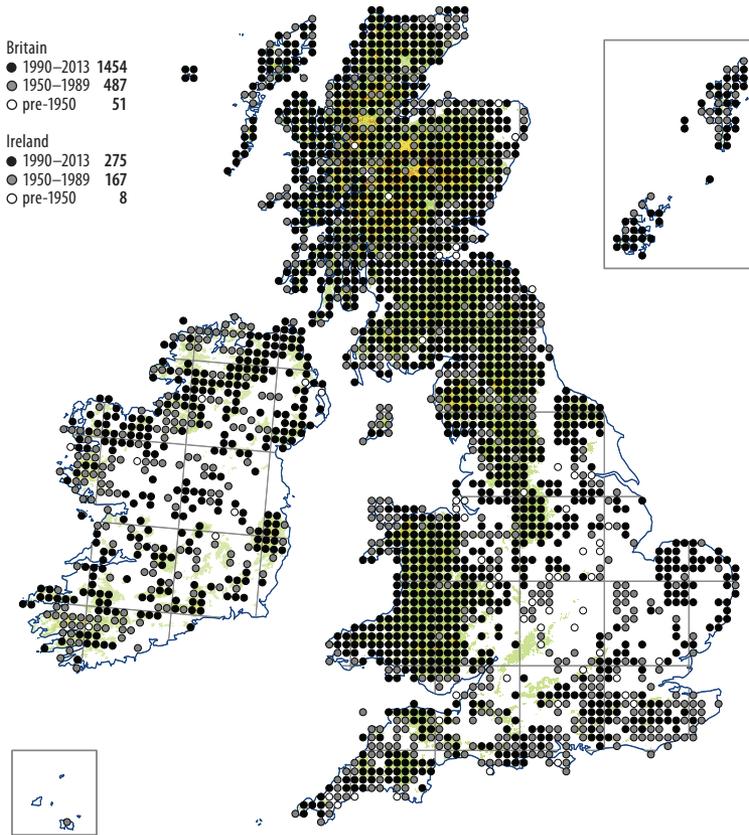


Pleurozium schreberi

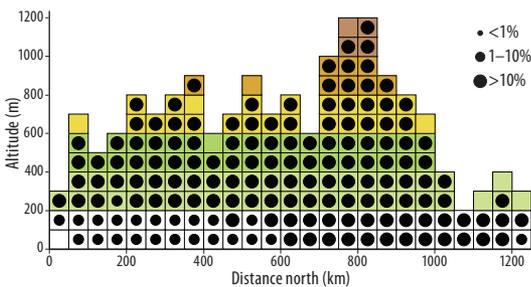


A conspicuous species of heathland and other base-poor habitats. It is common among dwarf shrubs, especially heather and bilberry, on upland moors and lowland heaths, and it also occurs among boulders, in stable scree, on hummocks in bogs, in unimproved acid grassland and grass-heath, and on fixed dunes. It may persist in old grassland in churchyards and parkland. It is also widespread in woodlands, especially of oak, birch and pine, where it tends to occur in dry and relatively open places, often with or alongside *Hylocomium splendens*, *Rhytidiadelphus loreus* and other large pleurocarpous mosses. In dense woodland and commercial conifer plantations it is confined to sites where there is sufficient light, for example on banks by forest roads and rides. *Pleurozium* is one of several robust pleurocarps that sometimes colonise former industrial sites, such as disused collieries and spoil tips. Normally it grows on peaty

and sandy soils and on raw humus; over limestone and other basic rocks it is confined to pockets of peat or leached soil. Altitudinal range: 0–1095 m.

Dioicous; capsules are generally rare, but more frequent in the Scottish Highlands, mature in winter. Longton & Greene (1979) found that most populations are female (or lack inflorescences) but male plants are frequent in northern Scotland.

Circumpolar Boreo-temperate. In Europe widespread from the high Arctic, including Svalbard, south to the mountains of the northern Mediterranean region, reaching N Spain and Portugal, S Italy and N Greece. Macaronesia (Azores, Madeira), N Africa (reported from Algeria). Turkey, Iran. Circumboreal, ranging from the high Arctic south to the Himalaya, Taiwan, and Mexico. Also in C America and northern S America.



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