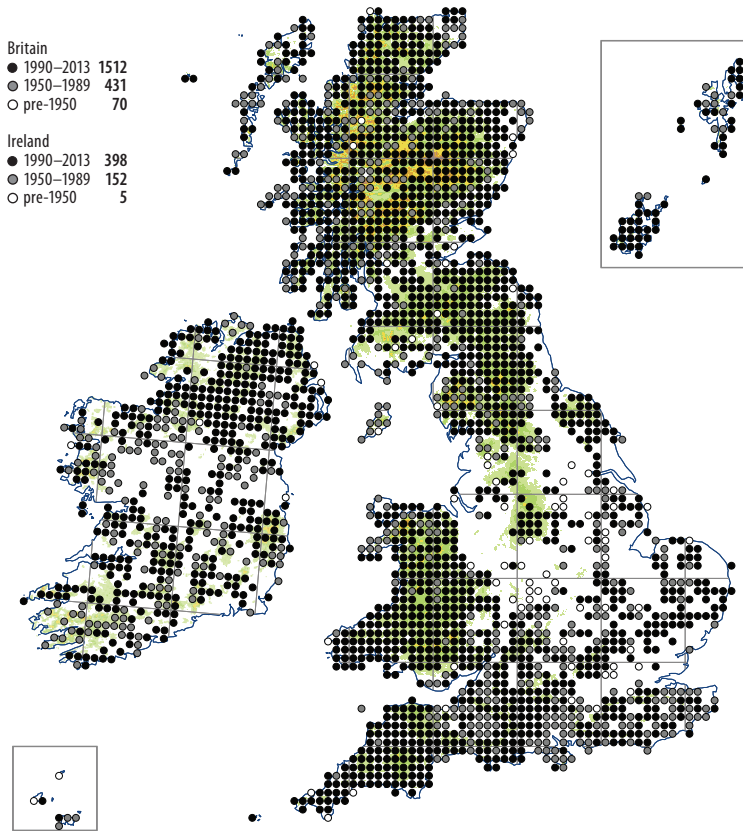


Rhytidiadelphus triquetrus



A robust moss forming coarse wefts among vascular plants in sheltered places, avoiding wet ground and dense shade. Habitats include grassy and rocky banks, stable scree, dunes and dune grassland, mountain slopes, ungrazed ledges, open places in woodland and laneside banks. Generally most abundant on base-rich or mildly basic clay soils in woodland and in sheltered limestone and chalk grassland, it is also frequent on neutral to acid soils in the north and west. It often grows with other robust species such as *Eurhynchium striatum* and *Thuidium tamariscinum*. In Scotland it occurs among *Vaccinium myrtillus* in pine-woods, with *Hylocomium splendens* and *Ptilium crista-castrensis*, and it is dominant in some snowbeds. Increasingly it has been found in recent years in post-industrial sites such as disused railways, and in scrub on old coal tips and spoil heaps. In some areas it is frequent in old grassland in churchyards,

while some churchyard colonies are restricted to one or two gravelly graves, perhaps resulting from introduction in wreaths. Altitudinal range: 0–1000 m.

During the 20th century *Rhytidiadelphus triquetrus* declined in parts of N, C and SE England, largely because of sensitivity to SO₂ pollution. Thus in the South Pennines it disappeared from non-calcareous sites and survived only in limestone dales. In recent decades, however, it has shown signs of recovery, as indicated by its colonisation of post-industrial sites, and experimental transplants of material into acidic sites in Windsor Forest, in a formerly polluted area, show that it is now able to survive there (Bates, 1993). Cessation of coppicing may have led to a decline in some woodlands.

Dioicous; capsules are rare, mature in winter.

Circumpolar Boreo-temperate. Most of Europe, north to Iceland, N Fennoscandia and Arctic Russia, south to the mountains of the Mediterranean region. Madeira. N Africa (Algeria). Turkey, Iran. Circumboreal, south to the W Himalaya and Taiwan in Asia, and Arizona in N America. New Zealand (introduced).

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