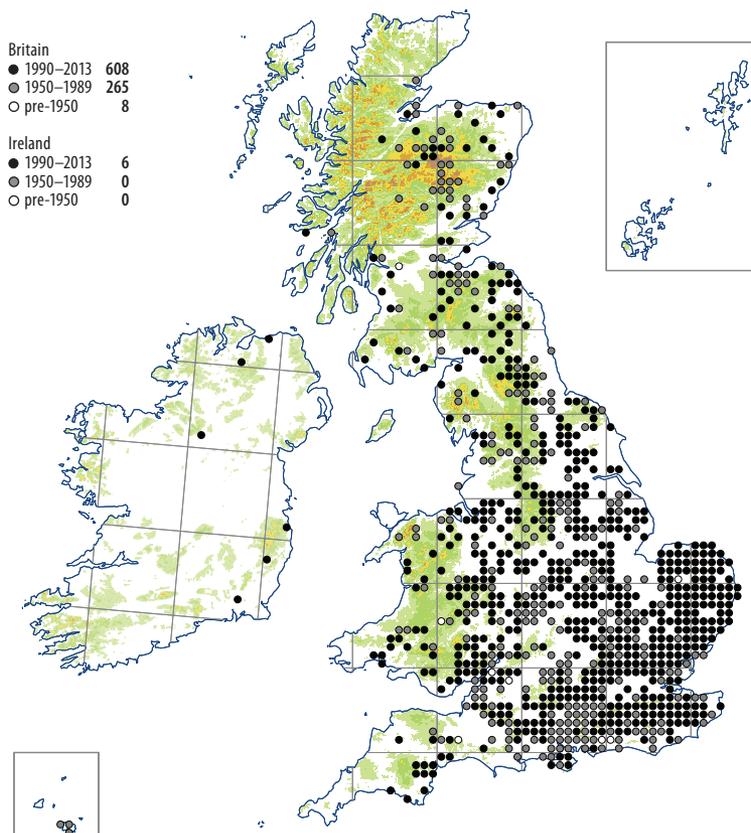


# Plagiothecium curvifolium



**A** calcifuge species typically found in woodland, often in conifer plantations but also in deciduous woods. It is most common on tree stumps and fallen logs, but it also grows about tree bases and on exposed roots, especially of trees with acid bark such as alder, birch, oak and pine, rarely on trunks and branches. Associated species may include *Lepidozia reptans* and *Campylopus flexuosus*. It colonises siliceous rocks, litter and humus-rich soil, growing particularly luxuriantly on soil covered with decaying conifer needles, often in deeply shaded plantations. It is not often found outside woodland but has been recorded from peaty soil in heathland. Altitudinal range: 0–610 m.

Records increased markedly between 1970 and 1990, and there was probably a genuine increase as a result of the widespread planting of conifers, and perhaps also because

of acid deposition, the increase being more apparent in polluted areas. Since 1990 there has been a steady decline, probably reflecting reduced acidity.

Autoicous; capsules are common, maturing from late autumn to early summer. Fusiform axillary gemmae are occasional.

It is very closely related to and often hard to distinguish from *Plagiothecium laetum*; in many countries the two are regarded as conspecific. The map undoubtedly contains some errors but these are unlikely to obscure the overall distribution.

European Temperate. Most of Europe, north to N Norway and the N Urals, south to the mountains of the northern Mediterranean region (south to N Spain, Corsica and N Greece). Turkey. The wider distribution is uncertain because of taxonomic confusion, especially with *P. laetum*, but *P. curvifolium* occurs in N America, E Asia and Japan.

N.G. Hodgetts, rev. T.L. Blockeel

