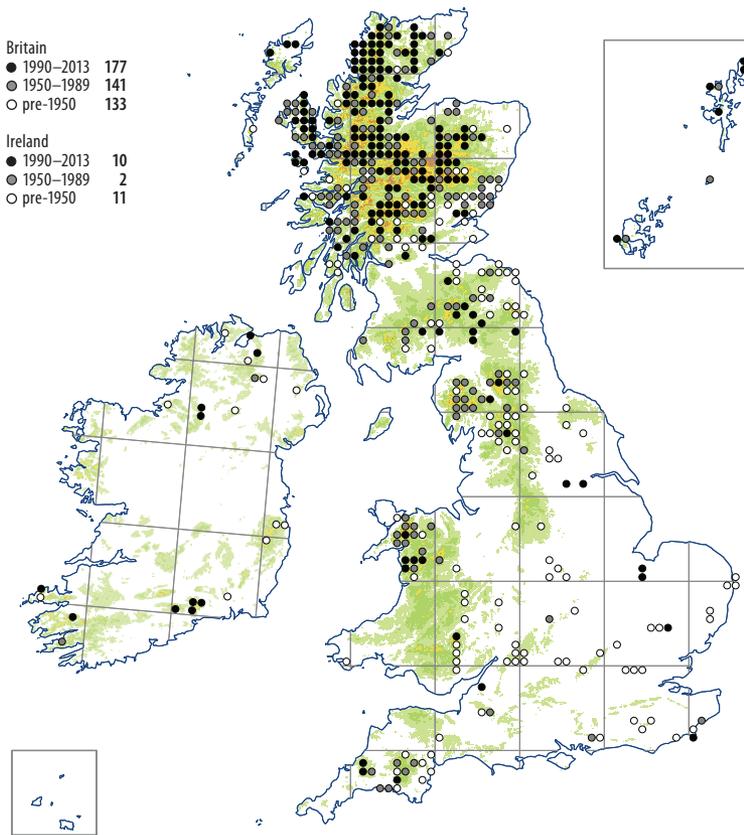


Antitrichia curtispindula



A rather robust moss, typically forming lax patches in open or lightly shaded places, occurring on rocks and boulders on hillsides, in scree and by lakes, and on cliffs and walls, showing a preference for basic substrates but sometimes on acid rocks. It is also recorded, albeit rarely, in upland grassland, on sand dunes and shingle, amongst *Thymus* over serpentine in Shetland and in north-facing chalk grassland, as at Heyshott Down. As an epiphyte it grows on a range of trees and shrubs, and may be locally abundant in parts of Scotland on trees such as rowan on river banks and the slopes of ravines. It was plentiful at one time on the dwarf oaks of Wistman's Wood on Dartmoor, colonising 4–5 cm diameter twigs (Proctor, 1962). Host species at recent English sites have included apple and pear trees in orchards, a low horizontal branch of willow in wet woodland, and an exotic *Paulownia* in Bristol Zoo. Altitudinal range: 0–980 m.

Antitrichia was abundant in the Late Glacial period; it is known from several archaeological sites in lowland England (Dickson, 1973, 1981; Stevenson, 1986). It disappeared from most of its south-eastern sites before 1900, probably eliminated by SO₂ pollution, and suffered a catastrophic decline at Wistman's Wood (Proctor *et al.*, 1980). Its recent re-appearance in small quantity on trees in lowland England suggests that it is in the early stages of recovery. Hodgetts *et al.* (2006) give a detailed account of its occurrence on an apple tree in a Cambridgeshire orchard.

Dioicous; capsules are generally scarce, but are locally plentiful in parts of Scotland, especially in epiphytic stands, mature in spring.

European Boreo-temperate. Europe north to Iceland, N Norway, S Finland, the Baltic States and adjacent parts of Russia, east to Ukraine and Caucasus, restricted to mountains in the south. Macaronesia, N Africa. Turkey. Taiwan. Greenland, Newfoundland and Labrador, western N America. C Africa. On molecular evidence Hedenäs (2008a) separated western N American plants as *A. gigantea* (Sull. & Lesq.) Kindb., and found that the Old World populations consist of two 'cryptic' species that are not distinguishable by their morphology.

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