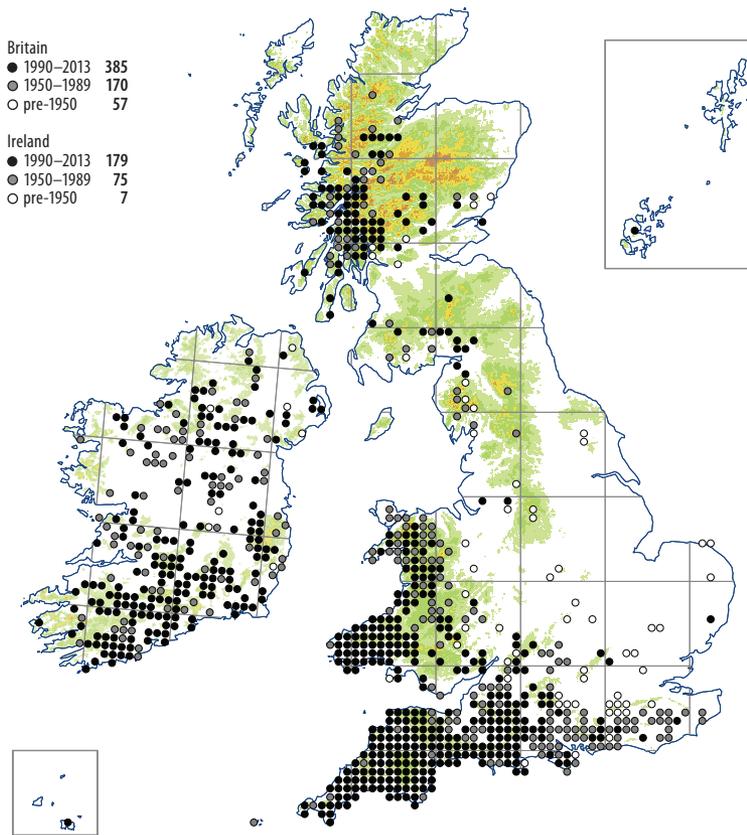


Neckera pumila



An epiphyte, growing on trees and shrubs in woods and plantations or in sheltered sites such as valleys, sunken lanes and old quarries and pits. It grows most luxuriantly on the smooth bark of trees such as ash, beech and sycamore but it is also found on a wide range of other hosts including alder, apple, birch, elder, elm, hawthorn, hazel, ivy, oak, poplar, rhododendron, sweet chestnut and willow, as well as ornamental trees in gardens. In humid sites it is able to colonise thin twigs and branches, and may descend into the flood zone of larger rivers. Associated species include *Cololejeunea minutissima*, *Frullania dilatata*, *F. tamarisci*, *Metzgeria furcata*, *M. violacea*, *Microlejeunea ulicina*, *Cryphaea heteromalla*, *Hypnum cupressiforme*, *Leucodon sciuroides*, *Orthotrichum lyellii*, *Ulota crispata*, *U. phyllantha* and *Zygodon viridissimus*. Only very rarely is it recorded on inorganic substrates, e.g. on granite in

Cornwall and an old wall in Angus. Altitudinal range: 0–440 m.

Neckera pumila, like many epiphytes, declined in the 20th century in areas where atmospheric pollution was high, and it has been slow to recover. However populations found recently in Cheshire and South Lancashire are very probably examples of recolonisation.

Dioicous; capsules are rare in SE England (although perhaps more frequent formerly), occasional elsewhere, mature in winter and spring. Filamentous axillary branches are frequent.

Suboceanic Temperate. W and C Europe north to N Scandinavia, east to Ukraine and Caucasus, rather rare in Mediterranean Europe where it is restricted to hilly and montane areas with moderate to high rainfall, reaching E Greece. Macaronesia (Canary Islands, Madeira), N Africa, Turkey, Georgia and Armenia.

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