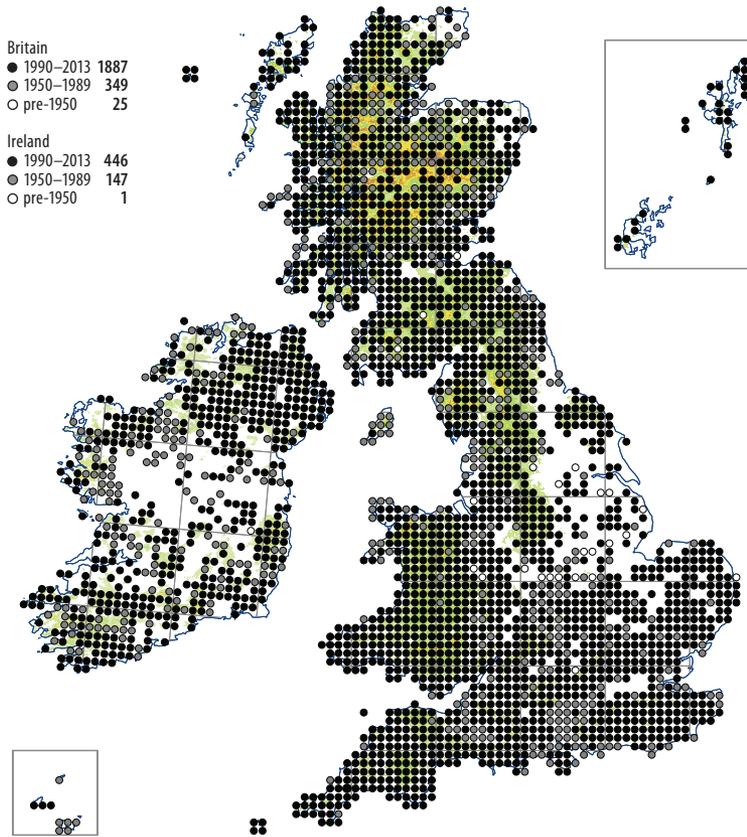


# *Isothecium myosuroides* var. *myosuroides*

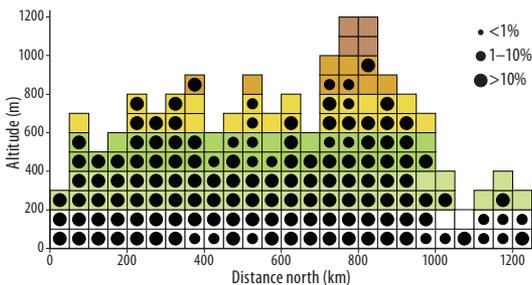


A shade-tolerant plant of well-drained, hard substrates such as trees, rocks and screes, in woodland and in sheltered to moderately exposed places on moorland and mountains. In the north and west, where it is locally dominant, the dense carpets may cover both rocks and tree boles to a depth of several centimetres. In rocky western oak woods, it can form a significant part of the ground layer, associated with *Scapania gracilis*, *Dicranum* spp., *Loeskeobryum brevirostre*, *Rhytidiadelphus loreus* and *Thuidium tamariscinum*, and in humid sites *Hymenophyllum wilsonii* and hygrophilous Atlantic bryophytes. It is calcifuge and is absent from calcareous rock surfaces. It is less abundant in drier eastern and southern regions but colonises the sides of siliceous rocks and boulders where these outcrop in woodland, and it is occasional on tree trunks in woods and sheltered places, but often only in small quantity. Altitudinal range: 0–800 m.

It became rare as an epiphyte in heavily polluted districts in the 20th century, and is now recovering, occurring as small isolated patches in the manner of a colonist. This partly explains its increased presence in C and E England compared with the 1991–1994 Atlas, although recording activities have also contributed to the filling of gaps.

Dioicous; capsules are common in the north and west, rare in drier districts, especially eastern England, mature from winter to early spring.

The separation from var. *brachythecioides* can be difficult, especially in Shetland (Hill & Paton, 1976). In NW Scotland and the Northern Isles (vice-counties 104, 108, 110, 111, 112) only records assigned to var. *myosuroides* are mapped. Elsewhere records not assigned to either variety have been mapped as var. *myosuroides* provided that there is no record of var. *brachythecioides* in the same hectad.



Suboceanic Boreo-temperate. Europe north to Iceland, NW Norway and the Baltic States, rare in adjacent parts of European Russia, to the south-east reaching the Carpathians and Caucasus, rare in the Mediterranean lowlands. Macaronesia, N Africa (Morocco, Algeria). Turkey, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan. Eastern N America (plants from western N America belong to the related *Isothecium stoloniferum* Brid.).

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