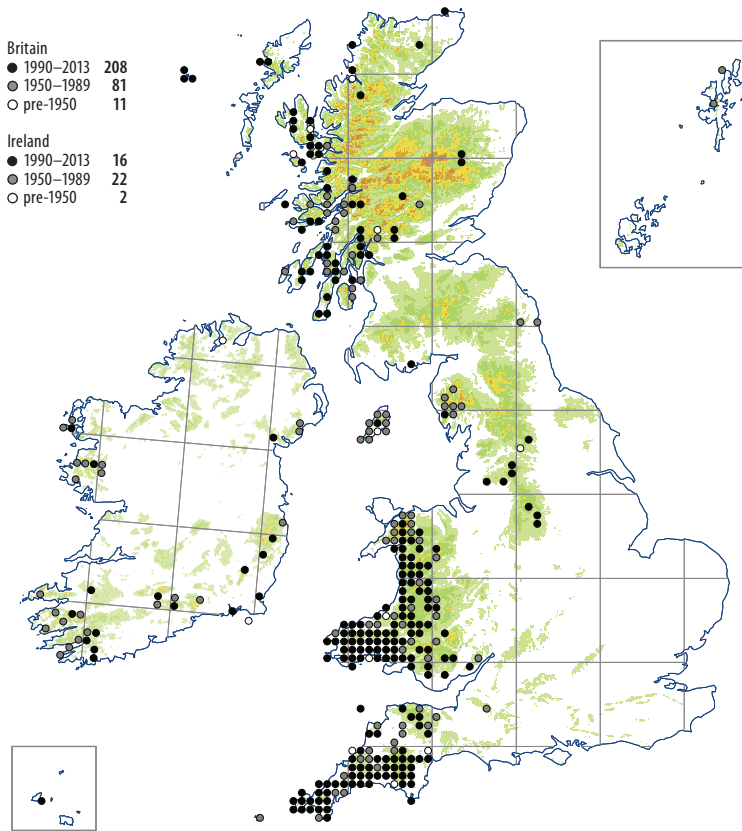


Fissidens bryoides var. *caespitans*



Occurring as scattered plants to extensive patches on thin soil over rocks or directly on rock surfaces, rarely on tree roots, usually growing in shade close to the normal water level of streams or sometimes shallowly submerged. Away from streams it grows on moist or flushed rocks and occasionally on compacted soil, in habitats that include ditches, soil in wet woodland, moist road cuttings and quarry faces, coastal cliffs and exceptionally in churchyards. It is mildly calcifuge, and underlying substrates include granite, slate, shales and sandstone. By streams it may be associated with *Scapania undulata*, *Platyhypnidium riparioides*, *Rhizomnium punctatum* and *Sciuro-hypnum plumosum*, less frequently with *Heterocladium* spp. Altitudinal range: 0–380 m.

This variety was formerly regarded as a separate species, *Fissidens curnovii*. Holyoak & Whitehouse (1998) pointed out that rhizoid colour was more variable than previously thought, and var. *caespitans* often has brown rhizoids. It is therefore likely to have been under-recorded in the past. The forms with brown rhizoids are easily mistaken for var. *bryoides*; intermediates are known to occur and are the reason for treating the plant as a variety rather than a full species.

Oceanic Southern-temperate. W and SW Europe, from southern Spain north to Scotland and east to Italy. Madeira, N Africa (Morocco to Tunisia).

T.L. Blockeel

Autoicous; capsules are common, late autumn to summer.

