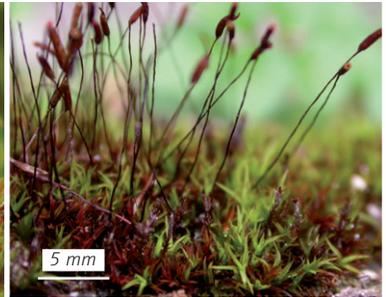
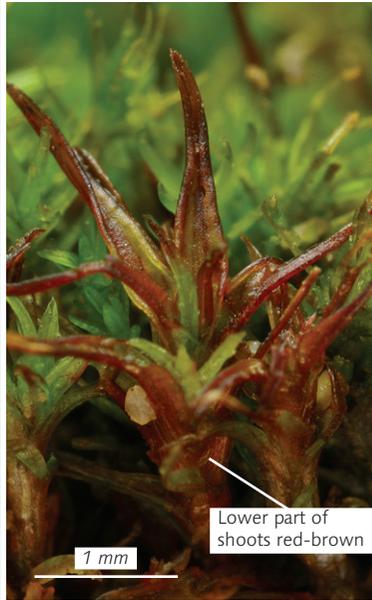
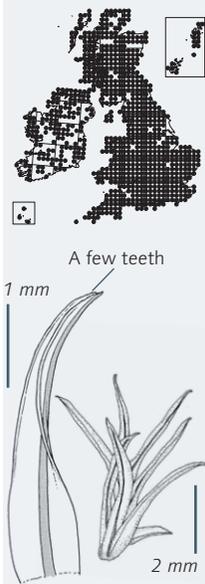


*Bryoerythrophyllum recurvirostrum**Barbula recurvirostra*

Red Beard-moss

Key 193, 224, 233



## Identification

This moss forms quite large, loose, soft sheets or turfs up to 5 cm tall. It is quite distinctive, with narrow, spreading, straight or recurved, bright green upper leaves often contrasting markedly with the rusty red lower leaves and stem; because of the loose growth form, this can usually be seen with the plants *in situ*. The leaves are about 3–4 mm long, narrow, tapering from a somewhat expanded base to an acute tip, which may have a few teeth. There is usually a distinct change in taper just below the tip. The leaf margins are obviously recurved for most of their length and the nerve ends in the tip. Cylindrical capsules are quite common and are held erect on a red seta. Unfortunately, green forms of *B. recurvirostrum* are fairly common, so do not rely on the presence of a rusty red lower part of the shoots for identifying this species.

## Similar species

*Didymodon insulanus* (p. 463) and *D. fallax* (p. 457) can be superficially similar, but the lower parts of their shoots are not red-brown, and their leaves taper gradually and constantly to the tip. The uppermost leaves of *D. insulanus* curve sideways, giving the shoots a spiral appearance. The rather similar, if rarer and almost exclusively upland *B. ferruginascens* (p. 443) tends to be reddish throughout, and has shorter leaves that taper gradually to an acute tip, without the characteristic change of taper. *Gymnostomum aeruginosum* (p. 451) may also resemble *B. recurvirostrum*, but *G. aeruginosum* is smaller (leaves up to 1.5 mm long) and forms cushions rather than turfs.

## Habitat

This is a species of rather stony, calcareous habitats, growing on sheltered walls, on thin soil and in rock crevices in lightly shaded places. It is also occasionally found on tree boles in the flood zones of streams and rivers. It is common throughout Britain and Ireland.