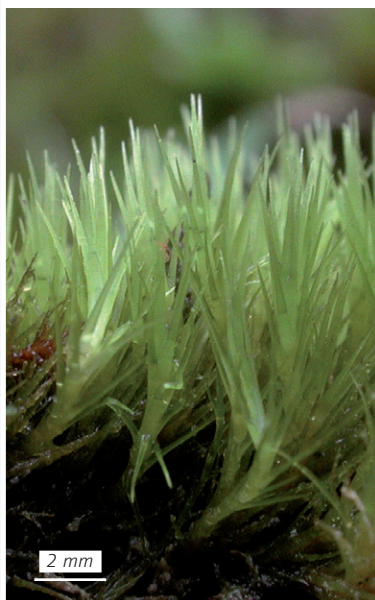
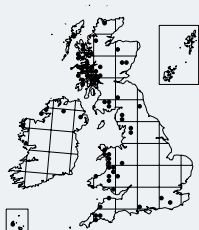


Campylopus subulatus

Awl-leaved Swan-neck Moss



Identification In dark or mid-green, uneven, loose turfs or patches, or just scattered stems to 3 cm tall, but usually less than this. The leaves are 2–4 mm long, straight and erect when moist, and not much altered, but more appressed to the stem when dry, and with just the tip slightly wavy. The lower part of the leaf has almost parallel sides which narrow abruptly about halfway up the leaf and then taper to a relatively short tip composed largely of nerve. The nerve is very wide at the base, up to 70% of the width of the leaf. Capsules are very rare and the frequent, deciduous shoot tips are presumably the means of spread.

Similar species The low, loose turfs and scattered stems with relatively short leaves distinguish this plant from other *Campylopus* species. The two species with which it is most likely to be confused are *C. pyriformis* (p. 394) and *C. fragilis* (p. 393). *C. pyriformis* has a longer, more drawn-out leaf tip and a much denser growth habit, while *C. fragilis* is more robust and differs in habitat, favouring grassy sites, and in the colourless cells in the leaf base. The rare, montane species *C. schimperi* (Smith, p. 220) forms dense mats of erect stems like *C. subulatus*, but is usually much larger, has longer leaves, short-leaved branchlets, and is yellow-green rather than the dull, dark green of *C. subulatus*.

Habitat *C. subulatus* grows in open gravelly or sandy places, and many sites are on the edges of tracks or footpaths, gravel parking areas and even old tarmac. More natural sites include river gravels, loch margins and fine gravel in amongst scree in the mountains.