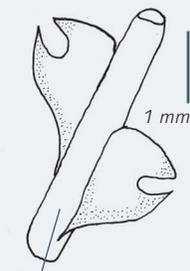


Cephalozia connivens

Forcipated Pincerwort

Key 53



Leaf not inserted near midline of stem



Identification

The shoots of *C. connivens* are typically 0.5–1 mm wide, with leaves 0.8 mm wide and 0.6 mm long. The leaves are inserted obliquely to longitudinally, and the insertions do not reach the midline of the upper surface of the stem. It has notably large leaf cells, making it look remarkably translucent through a hand lens, deeply 2- to 4-lobed female bracts and a perianth mouth with lobes that have teeth consisting of several cells in a row. *C. connivens* is the most frequent of four similar species growing in bogs, all with longitudinally inserted leaves, so specimens should routinely be taken for microscopical confirmation.

Similar species

C. macrostachya (Paton, p. 104), *C. loitlesbergeri* (Paton, p. 113) and *C. pleniceps* (Paton, p. 111) are all similar in size to *C. connivens*, and also have obliquely to longitudinally inserted leaves that do not reach the midline of the upper surface of the stem. *C. pleniceps* and *C. loitlesbergeri* also have male and female organs on the same shoot, like *C. connivens*. All four grow on saturated peat, often among carpets and hummocks of *Sphagnum*. *C. pleniceps* may also occur in moderately base-rich fens or flushes, especially on *Sphagnum subnitens*, and a compact form is occasionally found on soil banks and rock ledges in the mountains. Its female bracts are bilobed and untoothed, while its perianth has a weakly toothed mouth. The uncommon *C. loitlesbergeri* has quite deeply divided leaves, with pointed lobes that end in rows of 2–3 cells, unlike the other three species where the lobes end in 1–2 cells. Its female bracts are deeply 4-lobed and the perianth mouth is strongly fringed. *C. macrostachya* is either dioicous (var. *macrostachya*) or sexually variable (var. *spiniflora*). It often has brownish secondary pigment and notably channelled leaves,



with relatively small leaf cells; its female bracts are toothed and the lobed perianth mouth is sharply toothed; each tooth may consist of a row of several cells. Large male shoots with 3 more or less plane faces and 3 more or less rounded angles are a distinctive feature of var. *spiniflora*. *C. macrostachya* has a yellowish inner part of the stem, like *C. catenulata* (Paton, p. 102), but *C. catenulata* has smaller cells. *C. lunulifolia* (p. 96) and *C. catenulata* may occur in similar places to *C. connivens*, but both have smaller leaf cells and therefore look more opaque. The leaf insertion of *C. bicuspidata* (p. 92) is much more oblique than that of *C. connivens* and its leaf base runs almost to the midline on the upper surface of the stem. The rare *C. hibernica* (*C. crassifolia*) (Paton, p. 115) differs from *C. connivens* in its longer, narrower leaf lobes with fragile tips. It is only known from a few sites in western Ireland.

Habitat *C. connivens* characteristically grows on *Sphagnum* bogs and less often on acidic tussocks in wet fens and damp, peaty soil in heathland in the lowlands and submontane zone. It is also occasionally found on rotting wood, peaty ditch-sides and moist sandstone rocks.