

Chiloscyphus polyanthos/pallescens

St Winifrid's Moss/Pale Liverwort

Key 75

*C. polyanthos**C. pallescens*

Identification

The 1.5–4.5 mm wide shoots of these pale green, translucent leafy liverworts usually interweave together in a mat. The lateral leaves are up to about 2 mm long and wide, more or less alternate, rounded, truncate or weakly indented, and the base runs down onto the stem. The small, narrow underleaves are bilobed, with lateral teeth. These two species are dioicous, and female plants give the only conclusive identification feature: the perianth lobes of *C. polyanthos* are undivided and hardly toothed, whereas those of *C. pallescens* are toothed.

Similar species

Lophocolea heterophylla (p. 184) is monoicous and has its lower leaves bilobed. *L. semiteres* (p. 185) has large (up to 1 mm long) underleaves, which join with at least one of the adjacent lateral leaves. Both of these *Lophocolea* species have strong smells, absent from *Chiloscyphus*. *Plagiochila* species (pp. 192–199) do not have underleaves (or only very small ones), and usually have toothed lateral leaves. *Saccogyna viticulosa* (p. 190) has opposite leaves. *Leiocolea bantriensis* (p. 124) is somewhat similar to *C. pallescens*, but has distinctly bilobed leaves and is usually much darker. *Porella pinnata* (p. 210), another aquatic species, can also look superficially similar, but has small lobules underneath the main leaf lobes, and completely different underleaves.

Habitat

C. polyanthos grows mainly on rocks in streams, flushes and wet ground, and could almost be considered an aquatic species. However, it can also occur in wet places where it is not submerged. *C. pallescens* tends to be found in fens, mixed among various mosses. It also grows on clay, or even leaf litter and wood.