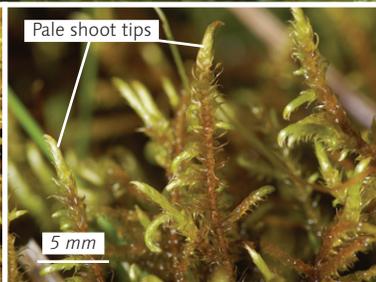


*Cratoneuron filicinum*

Fern-leaved Hook-moss

Key 313, 317, 327



**Identification** The pinnate shoots of this very variable moss are typically 1–3 cm long, with a rather pale tip. The leaves are rigid, with a stout nerve prominent all the way to the tip, making the shoots look spiky. Leaves are 1 mm long, and straight or slightly or strongly curved; in the latter case the branches may look hooked. Stem leaves are triangular, broadest just above the base, and taper evenly to a fine, acute tip. With a good hand lens, it is possible to see patches of enlarged cells in the leaf base. Branch leaves are narrower: broadly spearhead-shaped to egg-shaped. The stem bears red-brown rhizoids, and may also have tiny leaf-like structures, but the latter can be sparse and confined to upper parts of shoots. Capsules are uncommon.

**Similar species** *Palustriella* species (pp. 698–700) are larger, with leaves pleated and usually more strongly curved into a half-circle or more, and do not have pale-tipped shoots and branches. *Amblystegium varium* (p. 703), *A. humile* (p. 704) and *Hygroamblystegium* species (p. 706), especially *H. tenax* have more egg-shaped leaves, but some plants can only be distinguished microscopically. *Campyliadelphus elodes* (p. 712) can look very like *C. filicinum*, but is less regularly pinnate and more loosely branched, has narrower stem leaves with a very long, fine tip, and lacks red-brown rhizoids on the lower part of the stem. Small, compact forms of *Drepanocladus aduncus* (p. 714) have a weaker nerve that ends below the leaf tip. *Ctenidium molluscum* (p. 812) has more crowded branches, with more strongly curved and almost nerveless leaves. Soft, montane specimens of *C. filicinum* with egg-shaped leaves are worth collecting to check for the very rare *C. curvicaule* (Smith, p. 760).

**Habitat** *C. filicinum* occurs naturally in moist or wet, base-rich habitats, including springs, flushes, rock ledges and stony ground. It is also a common species of weedy habitats, especially in gravelly gateways and tracksides, and on old tarmac.