

Cynodontium jeneri

Jenner's Dog-tooth



Identification The largest of the *Cynodontium* species, growing in neat, dark to mid-green cushions to 5 cm tall. The narrowly spearhead-shaped leaves are about 4.5 mm long, crisped when dry, and erect or spreading and somewhat wavy when moist. The leaf margins are recurved to about halfway, and usually strongly toothed towards the tip. The cells in the upper part of the leaf are in a single layer, smooth and larger than in other *Cynodontium* species, rendering the leaves less opaque. Capsules are quite frequent, less than 2 mm long, erect and ridged, and have a small swelling at the base.

Similar species *Oreoweisia bruntonii* (p. 358) is smaller, has margins 2 cells thick, opaque leaves and capsules which are not ridged when moist. In scree there may be initial confusion with *Kiaeria blyttii* (p. 374), but that species has much more finely pointed leaves and capsules that are distinctly swollen at the base. Three rare *Cynodontium* species also resemble *C. jeneri*. *C. strumiferum* (Smith, p. 171) resembles a small *C. jeneri*, but has distinctly curved capsules with a swollen base, cells with rough, uneven surfaces on both sides of the leaf, and leaf margins 2 cells thick; it can be locally frequent in dry, acidic scree in the eastern Highlands. *C. polycarpon* (Smith, p. 173) is close to *C. strumiferum*, but has erect capsules and cells with less rough, uneven surfaces. *C. tenellum* (Smith, p. 175) is the smallest of the species and is usually lighter green, with smooth leaf cells, abundant capsules which are erect and have peristome teeth split to the base. Specimens should be checked carefully to rule out the very rare and usually larger *C. fallax* (Smith, p. 175) which has leaf margins that are very roughened (visible with a hand lens) and only 1 cell thick towards the tip.

Habitat *C. jeneri* grows predominantly on sheltered, acidic rocks, but will tolerate some base-richness. It occurs in rock crevices, on dry crag ledges and particularly in the interstices of block scree, usually at relatively low altitudes.