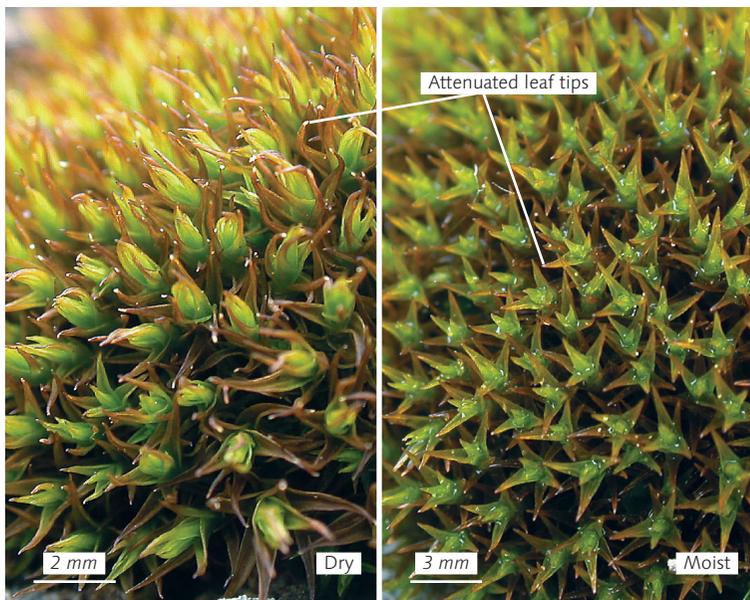
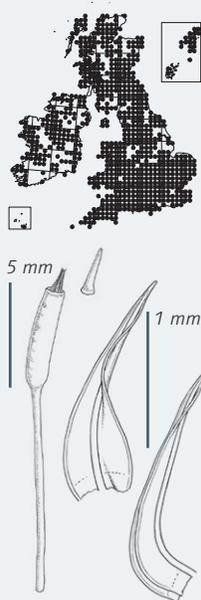


Didymodon rigidulus

Barbula rigidula

Rigid Beard-moss

Key 195, 223



Identification

This is the commonest *Didymodon* species on calcareous stone. Its shoots form dark green tufts, 0.5–1 cm tall. The narrow leaves are about 1.5–3 mm long, taper gradually to the tip, and have more prominent nerves than other *Didymodon* species. Oval-oblong capsules occasionally develop between autumn and spring. These have short peristome teeth that are not or only slightly twisted.

Similar species

Shoots of *D. vinealis* (p. 462) may look very similar to *D. rigidulus*, but are usually a somewhat lighter green, and its capsules ripen in spring; those of *D. rigidulus* mainly ripen in autumn and winter. *D. insulanus* (p. 463) has longer leaves (about 3–4 mm) than *D. rigidulus*, which appear spiralled from above. *D. nicholsonii* (p. 460) and *D. luridus* (p. 461) have a wider leaf base and leaf tip that is less filled by nerve. *D. mamillosum* (Smith, p. 319) is now regarded as synonymous with *D. rigidulus*. The very rare *D. glaucus* (Smith, p. 322) is minute (1–3 mm) and glaucous green. It occurs in crevices of chalk and limestone, and on chalky soil. The uncommon *D. australasiae* var. *umbrosa* (p. 467) is also very small (2–10 mm), and has spreading leaves. It grows in damp, shady, calcareous places, such as on mortar at the base of retaining walls, disused chalk or limestone quarries, and banks near springs on chalk. *D. acutus* (p. 456) grows on soil, not stone. *D. sinuosus* (p. 464) has leaves with wavy, plane margins. *D. spadicus* (p. 458) has longer (2–4 mm) leaves. *D. fallax* (p. 457) has a less attenuated leaf tip and grows on soil. *Eucladium verticillatum* (p. 420) is lighter green and has a less thickened, more sharply pointed, less parallel-sided leaf tip. Young *Schistidium crassipilum* (p. 511) has short hair points.

Habitat

D. rigidulus grows on sheltered, often shaded, base-rich walls, concrete, tiles, paving stones, and natural rocks in the lowlands.