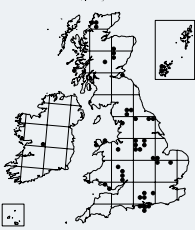


Ditrichum flexicaule

Bendy Ditrichum



Identification Forming dense, yellow-green tufts or patches up to 5 cm tall, but generally less than this. The stems are usually densely matted with rhizoids below. Thin, deciduous branches with short leaves are often present at the tip of the stems and may be found lying on the cushions. The leaves are 1–3.5 mm long, erect or occasionally somewhat turned to one side when moist, and only slightly wavy when dry. From a relatively long leaf base which clasps the stem, the leaves narrow abruptly into a long, fine, tapering tip in which the nerve is longly excurrent.

Similar species Only recently distinguished from *D. gracile* (p. 349; which confusingly used to be called *D. flexicaule*) and often difficult to distinguish from it. *D. gracile* is usually a larger and more silky plant forming lax patches with sparse rhizoids on the stem, and leaves that are wavy when dry. *D. gracile* also lacks the short-leaved, deciduous branches at the tip of the stems. Plants with such shoots from open limestone rocks are easily distinguished, but some plants from calcareous soils seem intermediate.

Habitat A lime-loving species, most frequent on upland limestone rocks, but also occurring on sand dunes and calcareous soil in grassland.