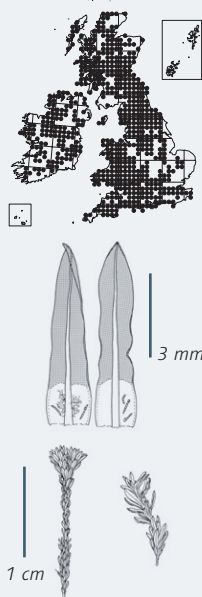


Encalypta streptocarpa

Spiral Extinguisher-moss

Key 160, 166



Identification

This moss forms relatively large, dull, pale green patches. Shoots are typically 1–2 cm tall, with leaves 4–7 mm long. The broad, more or less parallel-sided, opaque, very matt leaves narrow abruptly to a blunt, rounded tip, with the nerve ending in or just below the tip. Clusters of brown, thread-like propagules often occur in the leaf axils. Capsules are rarely present. They are spirally ribbed, have a peristome, and until maturity are entirely covered by the very large calyptra. This is the commonest species of *Encalypta*, but the only one in which capsules are rare.

Similar species

When fertile, the very large calyptra over the capsule confirms this as a species of *Encalypta*, and the spirally ribbed capsules are characteristic of *E. streptocarpa*. However, it differs from other species of *Encalypta* (pp. 555–556, 558–559) by the capsules normally being absent. Unlike other members of the genus, *E. streptocarpa* has leaves in which the nerve may cease just below the tip. The rather broad, dull green leaves and very large calyptra distinguish it from members of the Potertiales. *Tortula subulata* (p. 475) in particular might be mistaken for this species (or other species of *Encalypta*) but can be distinguished by its bordered and darker, more shiny leaves. *Syntrichia latifolia* (p. 501) growing away from water courses may be distinguished by its leaves being wider relative to their length.

Habitat

E. streptocarpa is the commonest species of its genus. Mainly a lowland species, it grows on base-rich rock and stone (especially limestone) and mortar in walls. It also occurs in grassland on chalk and limestone.