

tially or wholly hidden by the upper leaves and is paler. The lower leaves do not have an excurrent nerve and are sharply toothed at the apex.

Similar species

The only other species that *L. proliferum* can be mistaken for is *Leptodontium gemmascens*. This also has clusters of gemmae (15–40 in a cluster) on the leaf tips, but they are yellow-green and occur on leaves to about mid-way or below on the stem, not just on the uppermost leaves. Since the leaves are more widely spreading, the gemmae clusters are more conspicuous in *L. gemmascens*. In addition, the upper and lower leaves are more or less equal in length. Under a microscope a further distinguishing character is the leaf margin of the upper leaves; in *L. proliferum* there is a border of elongated cells, but this is absent in *L. gemmascens*.

Habitat

So far, *L. proliferum* is known from only one place in the British Isles, on the scuffed margins of a bowling green in South Lancashire. It grows on decaying grass matter, and in this respect is similar to *L. gemmascens* which also grows on decaying vegetation, typically thatch, but also on decaying leaf bases of grasses. *L. proliferum* is almost certainly an introduced species, first found in Britain in 2000, and is otherwise known only from South America, Mexico and Lesotho.

Ron Porley

e ron.porley@sapo.pt

Further reading

Porley, R.D. & Edwards, S. (2010). *Leptodontium proliferum* Herzog (Bryopsida: Pottiaceae), new to Europe. *Journal of Bryology* 32, 46–50.

11.1.11

The snipe are in their deep marsh
Swaddled in a cushion of fen moss
Breasts tickled by tufts and tassels.

I trudged into their flight ambit;
Seven birds sprung,
Like party poppers
Then scribed out over Cortial Lough
Across the emptied grave of Gerry Evans.

Settling in Ballinurd
Huddled among the heather;
Dark eyes glistening
Mirrors to bog mosses,
Fascicles draped
Lustrous hues of whiskey and wine;
Versions of the half moon brilliance
Of the north window of Knockbridge
Church.

Defying the bitter's demise.

Maurice Eakin

(e maurice.eakin@environ.ie)

*Written in the days after some 'square-bashing'
in Co. Louth.*

► *Aulacomnium palustre* and *Sphagnum palustre*.
M. Eakin

