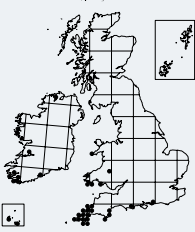


Fossombronia husnotii

Husnot's Frillwort



Identification This perennial species is winter-green, but in dry summers it dies down to the rather thick stems. It has the typical habit of a *Fossombronia*, with more or less prostrate, branched shoots up to 3.5 mm wide, and slightly crisped leaves up to 3 mm wide and 2.5 mm long, but it is the only British and Irish species with colourless or pale brown rhizoids. It is monoicous and fruits freely. Taxonomists currently consider this liverwort to be a form of *F. caespitiformis*, but it remains worthwhile noting populations with colourless rhizoids if you encounter them.

Similar species All other British *Fossombronia* species (pp. 228–230, 232–233) have deep purple rather than pale rhizoids. It is worth getting into the habit of routinely checking the colour of *Fossombronia* rhizoids in the field when bryologizing in areas where *F. husnotii* might occur, although it is important not to get too fixated on *Fossombronia* and forget that most other leafy liverworts also have colourless rhizoids. The spores of *F. husnotii* are too variable to afford useful microscopic characters.

Habitat This coastal species usually grows on thin soil over rocky cliffs and pathsides, in microsites which are moist in winter but dry in summer. It is found over limestone as well as more acidic rocks. There are a few records from other habitats, including woodland tracks, but the species has not been found inland for many years.