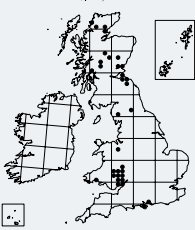


*Grimmia ovalis*Flat-rock *Grimmia*

Identification *G. ovalis* forms neat, round cushions or mats 1–4 cm tall, with leaves 3–4 mm long. These are sometimes distinctly hoary, owing to the silvery hair point that is almost as long as the blade of the upper leaves. The leaves are straight, appressed and overlapping when dry, spreading when moist, and have plane margins. The key feature is the rounded back to the leaves and the inconspicuous nerve that hardly protrudes from the lower surface. This makes dry leaves look smooth and shiny. The smooth, erect capsules are rare.

Similar species *G. longirostris* (p. 523) also has narrow leaves with a smooth lower surface, but recurved leaf margins, and capsules are often present. *G. laevigata* (p. 521) may grow with *G. ovalis*, and also has a smooth back to the leaf, but distinctly broader leaves with a conspicuous, white hair point that is relatively wide at its base. *G. elatior* (Smith, p. 456) has recently been rediscovered in Scotland. It resembles *G. ovalis* in general appearance, with thick hair points and dark green leaves, but *G. elatior* differs in having recurved margins and in forming very extensive patches.

Habitat Predominantly a lowland species, *G. ovalis* grows on exposed, base-rich to neutral rocks such as basalt and dolerite. It may form deep cushions on roofing tiles.