

Grimmia trichophylla

Hair-pointed Grimmia

Key 125



Identification *G. trichophylla* is common in the north and west, forming light to yellow-green, round cushions or loose patches to 1 cm or taller, with shoots up to 3.5 cm long and with leaves 2–3 mm long. The younger (upper) leaves are lighter green than the lower leaves. The nerved leaves are narrow, recurved at the margins and taper towards the tip which terminates in a conspicuous, but variably long, white hair point. When moist, the leaves spread, giving a spiky appearance. Dry leaves twist, becoming spirally arranged and slightly contorted, and the wavy hair points become more prominent, albeit not as markedly as in *G. pulvinata* (p. 526) or *G. orbicularis* (Smith, p. 446). The egg-shaped, ribbed capsules are rare.

Similar species *G. dissimulata* (Smith, p. 451) has been split from *G. trichophylla*, and looks similar, but grows on limestone. *G. lisae* (Smith, p. 452) is not uncommon in some areas, especially on coastal sandstone and on boulders around large lakes; when moist, its leaves sometimes bend strongly backwards, but other forms are indistinguishable in the field from *G. trichophylla*. *G. decipiens* (p. 531) is an uncommon lowland plant; it is typically larger than *G. trichophylla*, usually with capsules, and has a hair point that can be seen with a hand lens to be distinctly toothed. In upland areas, *G. donniana* (p. 522) may resemble *G. trichophylla*, but forms small, neat cushions with numerous smooth, pale brown capsules on a straight seta. In the field, *G. trichophylla* is often confused with forms of *Racomitrium heterostichum* (p. 537), but that has cylindrical rather than egg-shaped capsules, and its hair points are flattened at the base.

Habitat *G. trichophylla* is predominantly an upland species, found exclusively on siliceous rocks and boulders. It grows in scree, on exposed cliffs, sarsen stones, roofs, walls and other acidic stonework. Although it does occur in lightly shaded conditions, it is mainly a plant of open, exposed sites.