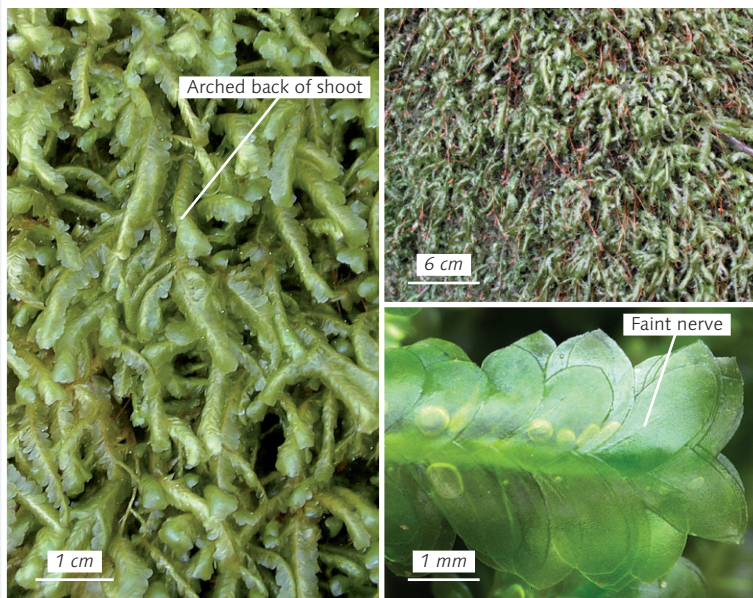
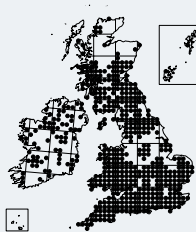


*Homalia trichomanoides*

Blunt Feather-moss

Key 291



**Identification** The flattened shoots (up to 6 cm long) and shiny, rounded leaves (just over 1 mm long) of *H. trichomanoides* look somewhat like a leafy liverwort. When dry, the leaves curve downwards at the tip, giving the shoots an arched back. A faint nerve extends at least halfway along the leaf. Egg-shaped capsules 1.5 mm long are not uncommon.

**Similar species** *Neckera complanata* (p. 682) not only resembles *H. trichomanoides* in appearance, but also grows in similar habitats. Its shoots have a more fan-like habit than those of *H. trichomanoides*, projecting outwards from the substrate. The most useful field distinction is the absence in *Homalia* of thread-like branches with tiny, distantly spaced leaves; these are almost invariably present in *N. complanata*. The much longer nerve of *H. trichomanoides* is not easy to see in the field; furthermore, on examining *N. complanata*, the edge of an underlying leaf sometimes leads to the false impression that a nerve is present.

**Habitat** On rocks and the base of trees and shrubs in shaded sites such as woods and hedgerows. It particularly favours sites by ditches, streams and rivers, growing in the flood zone, but well above the normal water level. It may also be found on rocks and walls.