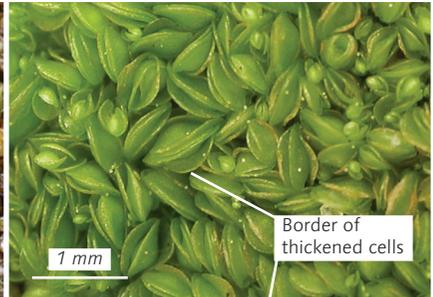
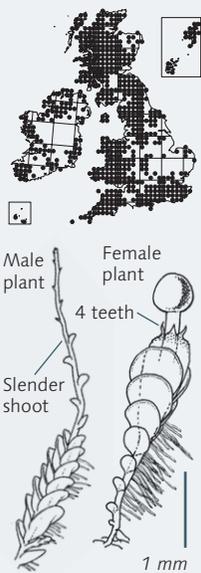


*Jungermannia gracillima**Solenostoma gracillimum*

Crenulated Flapwort

Key 71



Identification

Colonies in unshaded sites are characteristically rusty red, but shaded plants are pale green. Most colonies are a mixture of medium-sized plants and slender shoots, but some in marginal habitats near the edge of its range are composed only of slender shoots. The leaves are almost circular and usually have a striking, diagnostic border formed by enlarged cells with thickened walls. It is dioicous and the perianth lacks bracts halfway up its outside. Shoots are 0.5–1.5 mm wide, with leaves typically about 0.75 mm wide and long.

Similar species

Only the scarce *J. subelliptica* (*Solenostoma subellipticum*) (Paton, p. 287) has similar slender shoots, but differs in its narrower leaves and unwinged perianths. *Nardia scalaris* (p. 152) grows in similar places and can look like green forms of *J. gracillima*, but a hand lens will reveal its underleaves, which *J. gracillima* lacks. The thickened border to the leaf is also visible (when present) with a hand lens, and distinguishes *J. gracillima* from all other British *Jungermannia* species. *J. caespiticia* (*Solenostoma caespiticium*) (Paton, p. 280) is pale yellowish-green and, unlike *J. gracillima*, usually has brownish clusters of gemmae on the shoot tips. It is a very rare pioneer on moist, base-poor soil. *Odontoschisma sphagni* (p. 102) grows in bogs and has abundant, thread-like branches growing downwards from its stem.

Habitat

J. gracillima is a common pioneer of base-poor soil or soft rock, and is characteristic of open or lightly shaded, base-poor soil on banks, paths, ditches, crumbling cliffs or by rivers. Disturbance by trampling or weathering seems to benefit this species. Slender plants of *J. gracillima* can be found on shaded sandstone or shale rocks and may also be present on leached clay banks in otherwise unsuitable limestone districts. It is common in northern and western Britain, and is widespread in acidic districts of the south-east.