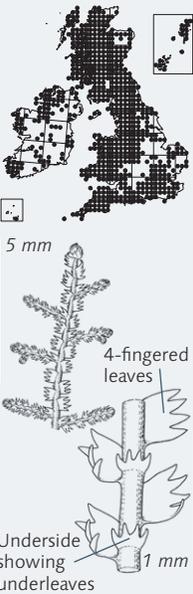


Lepidozia reptans

Creeping Fingerwort

Key 48



Identification

This common liverwort forms thin mats of pinnately branched, creeping plants. Shoots are 2–3 cm long and 1 mm wide. It is either yellowish-green or dark green, and has characteristic, hand-shaped leaves with 4 fingers at the tip that curve downwards towards the substrate. Leaves are about 0.5 mm long. The long perianths of this monoicous liverwort are prominent, but sporophytes are only moderately common.

Similar species

The only very similar species is *L. pearsonii* (Paton, p. 69). This looks like a slightly drawn-out plant of *L. reptans* and typically grows through mosses and liverworts on the ground in humid, Atlantic woodlands, on rocky mountain slopes or in scree beds. Although relatively restricted in habitat, it is not especially rare. It is dioicous, whereas *L. reptans* is monoicous, although spotting fertile plants in the field is not easy as they are usually interwoven among other bryophytes. *L. cupressina* (p. 81) has overlapping leaves. *Kurzia* species (p. 78), *Telaranea* species (p. 79) and *Blepharostoma trichophyllum* (p. 77) have much more finely divided leaves.

Habitat

Various acidic substrates support *L. reptans*, especially rotting logs, soft rock faces, the bark of oak (*Quercus*), birch (*Betula*) and conifers, and steep, peaty banks. Its habitats in these situations are very similar to those of *Tetraphis pellucida*. *L. reptans* can also be abundant in block scree or on rocky, heathery hillsides.