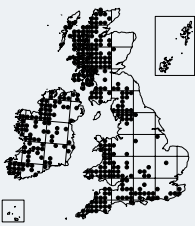


*Loeskeobryum brevirostre**Hylocomium brevirostre*

Short-beaked Wood-moss

Key 340



Identification The shoots of this medium-sized (7–12 cm long) moss have dull, yellow-green, irregularly branched branches, and red-brown stems. Stem leaves are typically 2–3 mm long, broadly triangular, and taper to a long, narrow point, which is often curved to one side when moist, and irregularly but conspicuously undulate when dry. They tend to stick out irregularly from the stem, giving the plant a chaffy appearance, and the basal corners clasp the stem. Branch leaves are smaller (about 2 mm long) and oval. Both types of leaf have a slender, double nerve, which extends about one-third of the way up from the base, lightly toothed margins, and some slight, longitudinal folding of the leaf surface. Under a hand lens, the stems and branches appear furry owing to the presence of many branched filaments. Capsules are rare in Britain.

Similar species Patches are similar in size to *Eurhynchium striatum* (p. 764), but that species lacks branched filaments on its stems and the leaves have strong nerves. *Hylocomiastrum umbratum* (p. 823) is usually smaller and has strongly pleated leaves which lack a wrinkled tip and extensions of the leaf base that run down onto the stem. The rather chaffy leaves make *L. brevirostre* look a bit like a species of *Rhytidiadelphus* (pp. 816–819), but it can be distinguished by the presence of branched filaments on the stems and branches.

Habitat *L. brevirostre* is fairly common in woodland in western Britain on grassy banks, on rocks and on trees and logs, especially in damp, base-rich places.