

Marchantia polymorpha subsp. *montivagans*/*polymorpha*/*ruderalis*

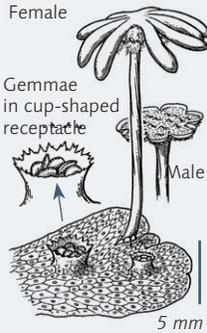
Mountain/Star-headed/Common Liverwort

Key 7



M. polymorpha s.l.

Female



Identification

M. polymorpha subsp. *montivagans* is one of the largest thallose liverworts, with dichotomously branching, prostrate or ascending flat thalli up to 2 cm broad, often growing in dense mats. Thalli are pale or yellowish-green when young, but become brown or purplish when old. They are thick and rigid. The upper surface lacks a black midrib, is covered with conspicuous dots (air pores), and bears scattered, cup-shaped gemma receptacles. Male plants have distinctive, stalked, flat-topped, disc-like receptacles, the margins with short, rounded lobes. Female receptacles are similar, but the lobes are finger-like and spreading.

The other two subspecies of *M. polymorpha* differ in their smaller size and the presence of a conspicuous, black median line on the thallus.

Subsp. *polymorpha* resembles subsp. *montivagans*, but the thalli are thinner in texture, narrower (up to 12 mm wide) and have a broad, conspicuous median line.

Subsp. *ruderalis* has thalli that are relatively thick and leathery, up to 15 mm broad, with a median black line which is irregularly developed and sometimes interrupted. Some plants can only be identified by microscopical examination of appendages to the ventral scales.