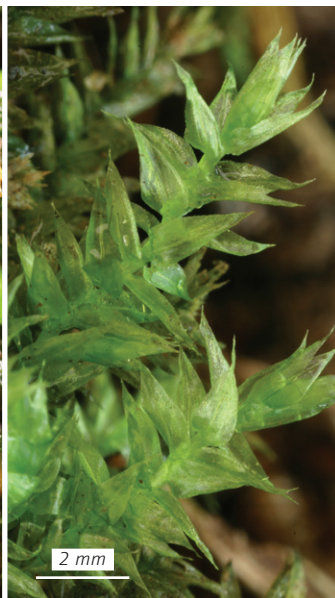
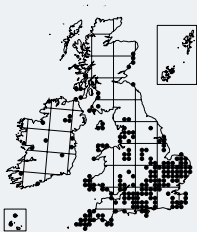


Oxyrrhynchium speciosum

Eurhynchium speciosum

Showy Feather-moss



Identification *O. speciosum* is medium-sized to large, usually occurring as dull or deep green, straggling shoots or in small patches. The branches may be erect or creeping. Stem leaves are a little larger than the branch leaves, but are all egg-shaped, with a tapering tip, and mostly 1.5–2 mm long. They have a single nerve reaching almost to the tip, and finely toothed margins. The leaves spread away from the stem and alter little when dry. Branch leaves are narrower and end in a short or long, fine point. They are often loosely arranged in one plane. Both stem and branch leaves tend to be widely spaced. Curved, oblong capsules (about 2 mm long) occur fairly frequently and have a beaked lid, and a roughened seta.

Similar species This moss is very similar to *O. hians* (p. 768), and some forms of the two species are difficult to distinguish in the field. Generally, *O. speciosum* is larger, with longer and somewhat narrower leaves which are more often widely spaced and arranged in one plane, and sometimes twisted at the tip. The stem leaves in *O. speciosum* tend to be evenly tapered, while those of *O. hians* tend to be contracted above mid-leaf. Capsules are much commoner in *O. speciosum* than in *O. hians*, and their presence is more likely to indicate *O. speciosum*. Large forms of *O. speciosum* may be overlooked for a species of *Brachythecium* (pp. 741–752), but *Brachythecium* species rarely have widely spaced leaves and flattened branches. When present, the beaked lid to the capsules immediately distinguishes *O. speciosum* from a *Brachythecium*.

Habitat *O. speciosum* is a lowland moss of wet habitats. It occurs in wet woodland and carr, in marshes, seepages, and on the banks of streams.