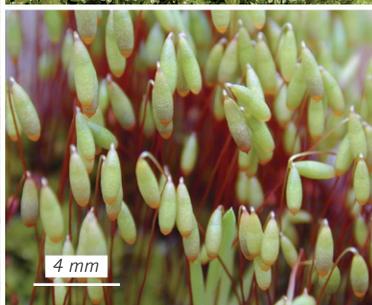
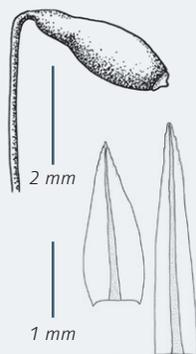
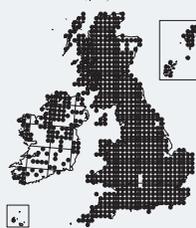


Pohlia nutans

Nodding Thread-moss

Key 215, 253

**Identification**

Rather variable in appearance, shoots are typically 1–2 cm tall, dull, dark green in the upper part and pale brown below, and form patches or tufts. The upper part of stems is reddish, with brown rhizoids on the lower part of stems. The spearhead-shaped leaves are larger (about 4.5 mm long) and more crowded towards the tops of shoots, and smaller below (about 2.5 mm long). The nerve ceases just below the leaf tip, and the leaves lack a border. Short-leaved branches often protrude above the cushions. Horizontal or pendulous capsules 3 mm long frequently form in spring and summer. Setae vary in length, but may be quite long – up to about 4 cm. The setae may persist after the capsules have disappeared.

Similar species

P. nutans has leaves narrower relative to their length than most *Bryum* species (pp. 581–599). The leaves of *P. elongata* (p. 604) are longer in relation to their width, and its capsule has a long, tapering neck. *P. cruda* (p. 603) is pale or glaucous green, with a glossy sheen to the upper part of shoots. The rare *P. obtusifolia* (Smith, p. 600) is pale green, with reddish stems and leaves that markedly run down onto the stem, and are shorter, wider, more concave and less sharply pointed than those of *P. nutans*. It grows in base-rich flushes, wet calcareous crevices and on rock ledges in the mountains.

Habitat

P. nutans is common and often abundant on wet or dry, acidic, peaty, sandy or gravelly soil on heaths and moors, in acidic grassland, bogs, woods and sand dunes. It also grows in crevices of rock, on boulders, dry-stone walls, in gravel pits, sand pits and abandoned industrial sites. It avoids base-rich or calcareous places. In many parts of Britain it is much rarer than the map suggests, and it may have declined in recent years.