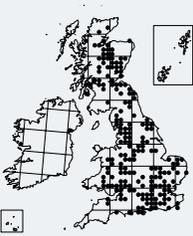


Ptilidium pulcherrimum

Tree Fringewort



Identification This is the only liverwort that usually grows on tree bark and has leaf margins with numerous long, thin teeth. It is compact, prostrate, closely appressed to the bark, reddish to yellowish-green, pinnately branched, with short, rounded branches densely covered with overlapping leaves. Shoots are up to 2 mm wide, and leaves are up to 1.8 mm wide and 1.4 mm long. Fertile plants are common, but capsules are rare.

Similar species Small forms of *P. ciliare* (p. 204) look very similar, but rarely grow on wood. *P. ciliare* is more robust, and grows in taller, looser tufts that are not closely appressed to the substrate. The leaves of *P. pulcherrimum* are more deeply divided than those of *P. ciliare*.

Habitat Unlike *P. ciliare*, *P. pulcherrimum* almost always grows on trunks and branches of living trees and shrubs, of which birch (*Betula*), juniper (*Juniperus*) and willow (*Salix*) are favourites; more rarely it grows on fallen logs and branches, or on boulders. It usually occurs in small quantity.