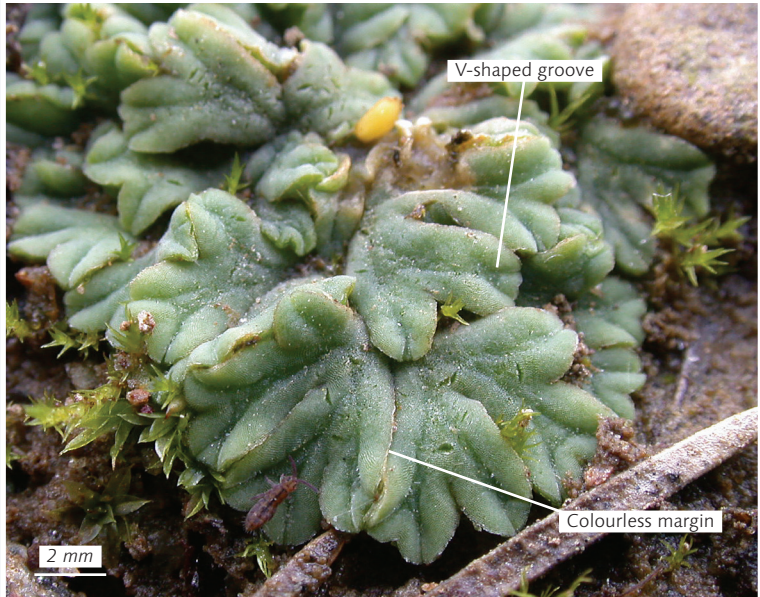
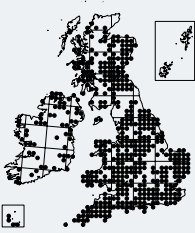


Riccia sorocarpa

Common Crystalwort

Key 14



Identification This is one of the commonest *Riccia* species and grows in irregular rosettes up to 2 cm diameter. The thallus branches may be over 2 mm wide, are broader than long, greyish-green above, becoming brownish when old, and have a very conspicuous, sharply V-shaped median groove. The thallus sides are almost vertical, and meet the top at an acute angle. Small, colourless ventral scales along the margin are visible with a hand lens. Capsules become visible in decaying, older parts of the thallus.

Similar species *R. sorocarpa* grows in arable fields with *R. glauca* (p. 267) and *R. subbifurca* (p. 268). *R. glauca* is similar in size, but often yellowish-green, the median groove of its branches is very short, shallow, flat and not sharply V-shaped, its thallus margins spread rather than ascend, and its ventral scales are ephemeral and not visible on the margins. *R. subbifurca* is smaller, with branches only about 1 mm wide, pale or yellow-green, with a median groove which is shallow and flat-bottomed (not V-shaped), and margins which are somewhat swollen and have a rounded edge. The only other species with a sharp median groove is *R. nigrella* (p. 269) which is dark green and has conspicuous dark purple or almost black ventral scales along the margins.

Habitat A common species in arable fields, gardens, on bare soil on waste ground, gravel tracks, footpaths, cliff tops, and sometimes on thin soil on rock ledges and on mud by lakes and reservoirs. It grows on both acidic and base-rich substrates.