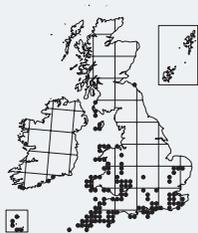


*Scleropodium tourettii*

Glasswort Feather-moss

**Identification**

This irregularly branched, medium-sized moss forms lax or (less commonly) dense patches. Plants vary considerably in size, larger forms having shoots several centimetres in length, but often smaller. Its very strongly concave leaves are broadly oval-oblong, 1.5 mm long, and narrow at the tip to a short and often abrupt point. Moist shoots are swollen and cylindrical, but they are not so neatly rounded in cross-section when dry as they are in *S. cespitans*. The single nerve is rather thin. Capsules are very rare, as in *S. cespitans*. The seta is roughened and the lid is conical.

**Similar species**

The swollen shoots and lax growth form are the best pointers in the field for distinguishing this species from *S. cespitans* (p. 754). The leaf tip tends to be broader, but the two species overlap in this respect, and compact forms of *S. tourettii* may closely resemble *S. cespitans*. Habitat can be a useful pointer: *S. tourettii* does not occur in the waterside habitats favoured by *S. cespitans*. *Cirriphyllum crassinervium* (p. 757) has similar concave leaves, but they are contracted to a more distinctly tapering tip, and the stout nerve often has a fork or spur in the upper part. The leaves of *C. crassinervium* lose their shape on drying, becoming much more shrunken than in *S. tourettii*. *Pseudoscleropodium purum* (p. 753) is nearly always clearly distinct in its regular, more or less pinnate branching. *Rhynchostegium murale* (p. 760) is a smaller plant that normally occurs closely attached to rocks, stones and tree roots. It is commonly fertile, and is then distinguished by its beaked lid and smooth seta.

**Habitat**

*S. tourettii* occurs in open or partly shaded places, in turf, on stony ground, over rocks, and on rock ledges and cliff tops. It favours warm, dry places and rarely occurs far from coastal regions, having a mainly southern distribution in Britain. Trampled, thin turf is especially favoured, for example where a coastal path crosses a rock outcrop.