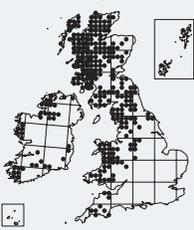


Sphagnum quinquefarium

Five-ranked Bog-moss

Section Acutifolia



Stem leaf



Identification

A medium-sized species. Occurs in soft cushions, large hummocks or as carpets over sheltered banks. Capitula are green, a mix of green and pink or, less commonly, largely or all deep red. Capitula are convex to hemispherical. Branch leaves are usually in straight lines, especially those in the capitulum, and when well-developed this is very striking. Almost all fascicles have 3 spreading branches (normally 2 in other species in this Section), and are uniformly and neatly spaced down the stem. Stem leaves are rounded-triangular, but with a pointed tip. Stems are green or, at most, with patches of pink in plants with pink or red leaves. Capsules are occasional.

Similar species

Other species in Section Acutifolia do not have almost all fascicles with 3 spreading branches. It is commonly associated with and similar to some forms of *S. capillifolium* (p. 288), but that species usually has only 2 spreading branches per fascicle, a flatter capitulum (in subsp. *rubellum*) and stem leaves with the basal part parallel-sided. Other Acutifolia species that can be red or partially so and which may occur in the same habitat are *S. russowii* (p. 285; flat-topped, stellate capitula) and *S. subnitens* (p. 291; salmon or dingy pink colour, branch leaves not in straight lines, messy looking, top-heavy shoots and long stem leaves with a pinched tip). The rare *S. skyense* (p. 292) occurs very locally in the same habitat in western areas.

Habitat

Almost always found on well-drained ground, and absent from bogs and flushes. Common on banks in western oceanic woodlands; on north-east- to north-west-facing heather-dominated banks in western districts with high rainfall; locally extending to similar habitats in more eastern areas.