

*Ulota crisper/bruchii**U. crisper* var. *crisper*/*U. crisper* var. *norvegica*

Crisped/Bruch's Pincushion

Key 281

*U. crisper*

Capsule narrows just below mouth

*U. crisper*

1 mm

*U. crisper**U. crisper*

Identification

These mosses form yellowish-green cushions 0.5–1 (–2) cm tall, with a blackish-brown lower part to each shoot. The upper leaves of *U. bruchii* are 2.5–4 mm long, while those of *U. crisper* are 2–3.5 mm long; however, there is considerable overlap in this and other features of the two species, and some plants cannot be confidently named without microscopical examination of the peristome.

Leaves are spearhead-shaped, and the nerve ends in or below the tip. The leaves of *U. crisper* become strongly crisped when dry, whereas those of *U. bruchii* become moderately crisped, but again there is overlap.

Both species frequently form capsules in summer, borne on a seta about 2.5 mm long, and these persist all year round. *U. crisper* tends to produce capsules slightly earlier in the season than *U. bruchii*, but this is not consistent. The calyptra covering immature capsules is covered in long hairs, as in most other *Ulota* species. Mature capsules are brown and longitudinally furrowed. Those of *U. bruchii* are 2–3.2 mm long, whereas those of *U. crisper* are 1–3 mm long, but as with their leaves there is considerable overlap in size. *U. bruchii* tends to produce capsules with a neck that tapers more longly into the seta. A more reliable distinguishing feature is provided by mature (but not yet senescent) capsules: those of *U. crisper* are wide-mouthed and narrow immediately below the mouth, whereas those of *U. bruchii* taper to a narrow mouth. Again, though, even some plants with mature capsules cannot confidently be ascribed to one or other of these two species, except by microscopical examination of features of their capsules.

*U. bruchii*

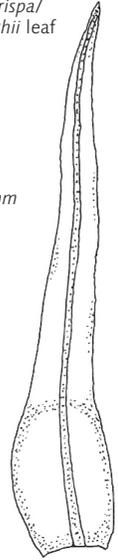
Capsule tapers to mouth

*U. bruchii*

1 mm

*U. bruchii**U. crispa/bruchii* leaf

1 mm



Similar species

The leaves of *U. drummondii* (p. 661) curl slightly, but do not crisp when dry, its outer peristome is often almost white rather than pale brown, and its inner peristome is usually absent. *U. drummondii* often forms patches with creeping marginal shoots, rather than cushions, and plants may be tinged reddish. The calyptra of *U. calvescens* (p. 662) is usually only sparsely hairy, and its leaves are longitudinally ridged near the base. Capsules of *Orthotrichum pulchellum* (p. 652) are shorter and wider, and its calyptra is not hairy. *Daltonia splachnoides* (p. 669) has a fringed calyptra, and flattened shoots.

Habitat

U. bruchii and *U. crispa* grow on the twigs and branches of many species of tree and shrub, such as elder (*Sambucus nigra*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and willows (*Salix*), as well as on trunks that are not heavily shaded. Rarely, these mosses grow on rocks underneath trees. These two species may occur together, but *U. bruchii* is commoner than *U. crispa* in many districts, and *U. crispa* has been over-recorded for *U. bruchii*. In general, *U. crispa* is more frequent in upland areas than *U. bruchii*.