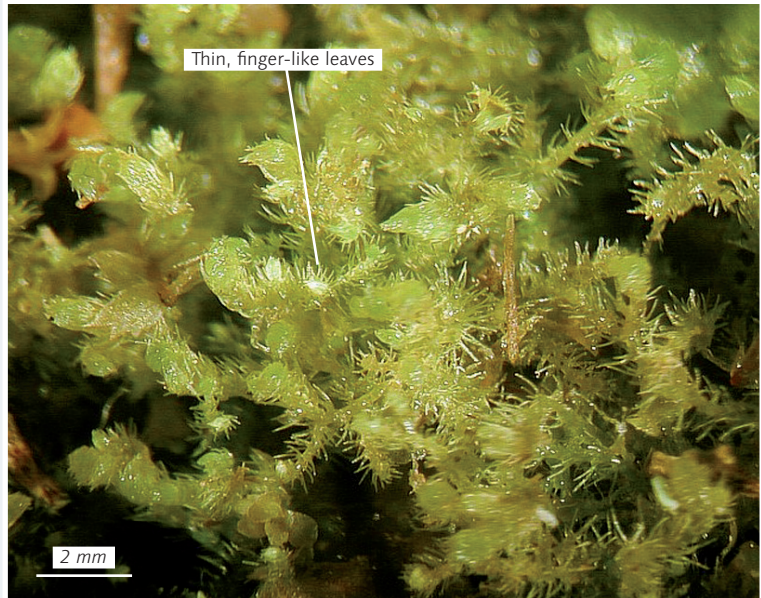
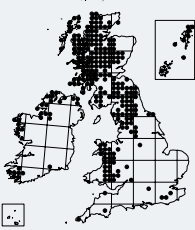


*Blepharostoma trichophyllum*

Hairy Threadwort

Key 49



**Identification** This bright or pale green, slender liverwort has thread-like shoots that are less than 0.5 mm in diameter, and spreading, 3- or 4-fingered leaves. Each finger is made up of a single row of cells. *Blepharostoma* grows as interwoven mats, or as scattered stems, and is easily overlooked. Its perianths are wider than the rest of the shoots, making it more conspicuous when they are present.

**Similar species** Very few British liverworts are as slender as *B. trichophyllum*, and none combine its thread-like shoots and spreading, slim-fingered leaves. These spreading leaves give it a fluffy appearance shared only by the considerably larger and very different looking *Trichocolea tomentella* (p. 84). *Kurzia* species (p. 78) and *Telaranea* species (p. 79) have leaves that curve in towards the stem. *Lepidozia reptans* (p. 80) has an obvious wide base to its leaves, not just fingers. A few non-bryophytes may resemble *B. trichophyllum*: filamentous algae are usually even more slender, are unbranched and lack leaves, whilst gametophytes of Killarney fern (*Trichomanes speciosum*) are irregularly branched and also lack leaves.

**Habitat** *Blepharostoma* is quite wide-ranging in upland Britain. It is most frequent on crags and in gorges, especially where the rock is calcareous, growing over or through cushions of acrocarpous mosses (notably *Anoetangium aestivum*), or directly on soft rock. In sheltered woodland it is sometimes also found on tree trunks or mixed with *Nowellia curvifolia* on logs. It can also tolerate open conditions, such as soil gaps in calcareous grassland in upland districts, or the stony edges of flushes and streams.