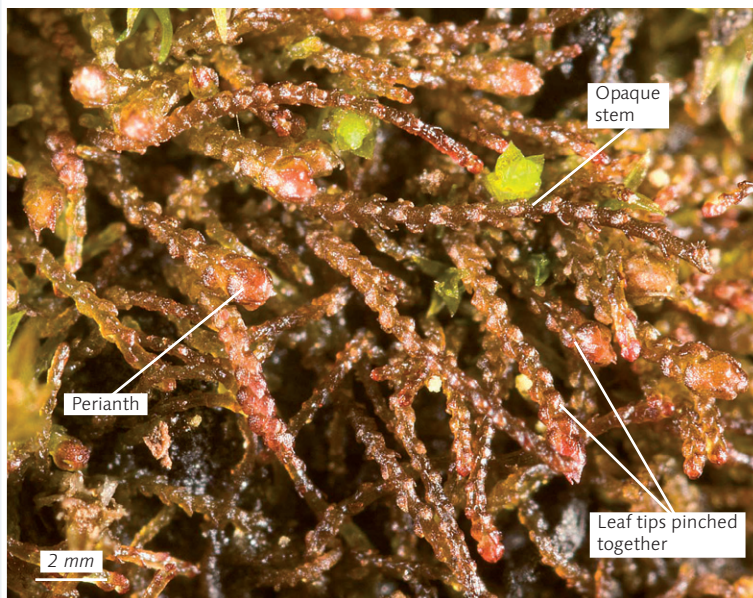
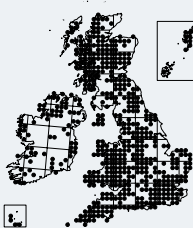


*Cephaloziella divaricata*

Common Threadwort

Key 56



**Identification** As suggested by its English name, this is our commonest threadwort. It is also the most tolerant of desiccation, so one can be fairly confident that colonies of *Cephaloziella* on dry rock faces or boulders in the uplands are *C. divaricata*. It forms patches of slender (shoots less than 0.5 mm wide), brown or green plants, with bilobed leaves 0.1–0.2 mm long, that have their tips pinched together. Perianths are prominent on female patches, but male plants are less distinctive, so it is virtually impossible to prove in the field that a colony is dioicous. Pale or reddish gemmae are common.

**Similar species** *C. divaricata* is dioicous, unlike most other *Cephaloziella* species (pp. 104–105, 107–108). The rare *C. massalongi* (Paton, p. 150), which grows on copper-rich substrates at a few sites, is also dioicous; it is only possible to distinguish the two species microscopically. However, collecting copper threadworts is inadvisable as they are rare and declining. In the uplands, confusion is also possible with *Sphenolobopsis pearsonii* (p. 131) and *Eremonotus myriocarpus* (p. 130), both of which have longer, more acute leaf lobes. Very slender *Marsupella* species, including *M. funckii* (p. 157), look similar, but have their perianths hidden by bracts.

**Habitat** *C. divaricata* grows in a wide range of acidic habitats: damp or periodically dry, peaty, sandy and gravelly soil, acidic rock and mine spoil. Heaths, the tops of coastal cliffs, mountain slopes and block screes are all typical habitats. It avoids carpets of *Sphagnum* in bogs. Generally, *C. divaricata* grows in unshaded places, but is sometimes found on rock faces and tree trunks in western woodlands.