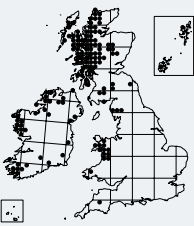


Gymnomitrium crenulatum

Western Frostwort



Identification *G. crenulatum* is smaller than the other common species of *Gymnomitrium*, and grows in small, tight, intricate cushions or dense mats of thin, dark red-brown to coppery shoots. The shoots are thread-like, usually less than 0.33 mm wide and 1 cm long with appressed and overlapping leaves less than 0.5 mm long, with a short, acute notch and triangular, acute lobes that occasionally have a short but sharply pointed tip. The leaf margins have a colourless band, with minute, rounded teeth, and are often eroded.

Similar species The dense, fragile, dark red cushions make *G. crenulatum* the most readily identifiable species of *Gymnomitrium*. Shoots often resemble fine copper wire, but they can be rather greener than this; however, the habit should be sufficient for identification. Thinner, flatter patches may resemble *Marsupella stableri* (p. 159), but closer examination of the appressed and overlapping leaves, and colourless leaf margins with rounded teeth should suffice to distinguish them.

Habitat Grows on a range of rock types, particularly on large boulders in block scree, but also on rocks in gullies or on open slopes, and is probably more tolerant of exposure than the other *Gymnomitrium* species.