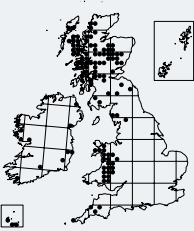


Marsupella funckii

Funck's Rustwort



Identification This very small *Marsupella* grows in dense, short turfs of erect stems, or rarely as thin, prostrate mats. It is usually dark or reddish-brown, or more brownish-green in shade. Shoots are 0.3–0.6 mm wide and up to 1.5 cm long, but usually much shorter, with leaves held away from the stem, and usually wider than long. The leaves are typically less than 0.5 mm wide and long, bilobed, with the notch rather acute and one-third to half of the leaf length; the lobes are also acute. *M. funckii* is dioicous and usually fertile.

Similar species The low carpets of dark, erect stems are fairly easily recognized in the field and only likely to be confused with small forms of *M. emarginata* (p. 155). *M. funckii* is normally smaller than the smallest forms of *M. emarginata* and the acute lobes and deep narrow notch of *M. funckii* should distinguish it. *M. alpina* (p. 161) is similar in size and colour, but has a sheathing base to the leaf inserted obliquely on the front of the stem, and grows on rocks or soil by snowbeds.

Habitat *M. funckii* grows on at least periodically moist, acidic, sandy or gravelly soil, usually in rather open places. It is probably most frequent on gravelly roads and paths, but can also occur on waste ground, mine spoil and thin soil on the tops of rocks, and very rarely directly on rock. Usually lowland, but can be locally abundant on damp but well-drained paths high in the mountains.