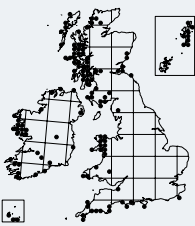


*Porella obtusata*

Broad Scalewort



**Identification** Habitat is usually the first indicator of *P. obtusata*, thanks to its preference for sunny, igneous or siliceous rocks, where it tends to grow in rather thick mounds or carpets. Shoots are 2–4 mm wide, and leaves are 2 mm long and wide. Its leaves, lobules and underleaves are all broader than those of other *Porella* species. The leaves often curl upwards at the front edges, like those of *P. platyphylla*.

**Similar species** The broad (about twice as long as wide), rounded lobules distinguish typical *P. obtusata* from *P. platyphylla* (p. 206) and *P. arboris-vitae* (p. 208). *P. platyphylla* is dull green rather than glossy like *P. obtusata*. *P. arboris-vitae* usually has toothed underleaves and lobules; on some forms, however, teeth are sparse or absent, but the plants still taste bitter.

**Habitat** Characteristic of base-rich igneous rock outcrops or base-rich sandstone near the west coast, but also found on igneous rocks in eastern Scotland. It sometimes grows just above the high-tide mark, with *Ulota phyllantha* and *Schistidium maritimum*. Further from the sea, *Pterogonium gracile* is a typical associate.