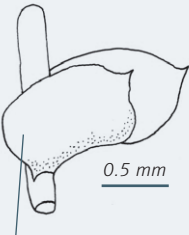
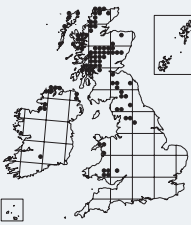
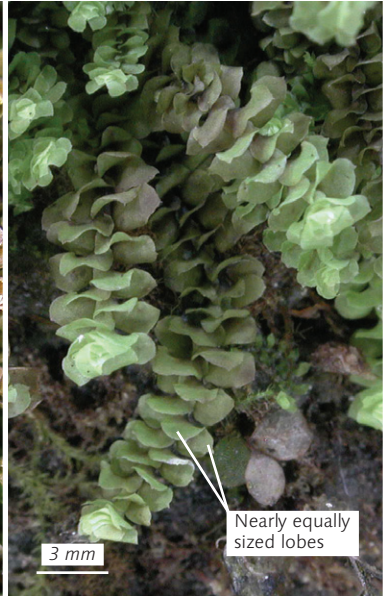


# Scapania aequiloba

Lesser Rough Earwort



Front lobe extends well across stem



## Identification

This small to medium-sized (shoots 1–3.5 mm wide; leaves up to 1.5 mm long), green or brownish-green *Scapania* grows in small patches or as scattered stems on calcareous, upland rock. The nearly equally sized leaf lobes are often bent back from each other, giving the plants an untidy appearance. The front leaf lobe extends a long way across the stem. Neither the front lobe nor the back lobe extend down onto the stem. Branches come from the sides of a shoot.

## Similar species

The way the front lobes cross the stem is shared with *S. aspera* (p. 179), but *S. aspera* differs in having front lobes with a base that runs down onto the stem, smaller front lobes compared with the back lobes, and branches coming from the back of the shoot. The similarly sized front and back lobes of *S. aequiloba* resemble those of *S. compacta* (p. 168), a larger, pale green or brown plant with lobes that are pressed together, giving the shoots a flattened appearance, and *S. subalpina* (p. 176), which has back lobes that run down onto the stem. Most other *Scapania* species in the same habitat have much smaller front lobes. *S. calcicola* (Paton, p. 350) is smaller (shoots 1–3 mm wide). Its front lobes are smaller than the back lobes, and do not cross the stem. Its gemmae turn brown with age. *S. calcicola* is an uncommon lime-lover of the mountains.

## Habitat

This is an upland species of *Scapania* that is typical of base-rich mountain crags, where it often grows over cushions of *Amphidium mougeotii* or *Anoetangium aestivum* under overhangs, but may be found growing directly on rock. Thin soil on ledges, base-rich boulders and calcareous turf in upland districts are other suitable habitats. In northern Scotland, *S. aequiloba* occurs occasionally on calcareous, coastal sand.