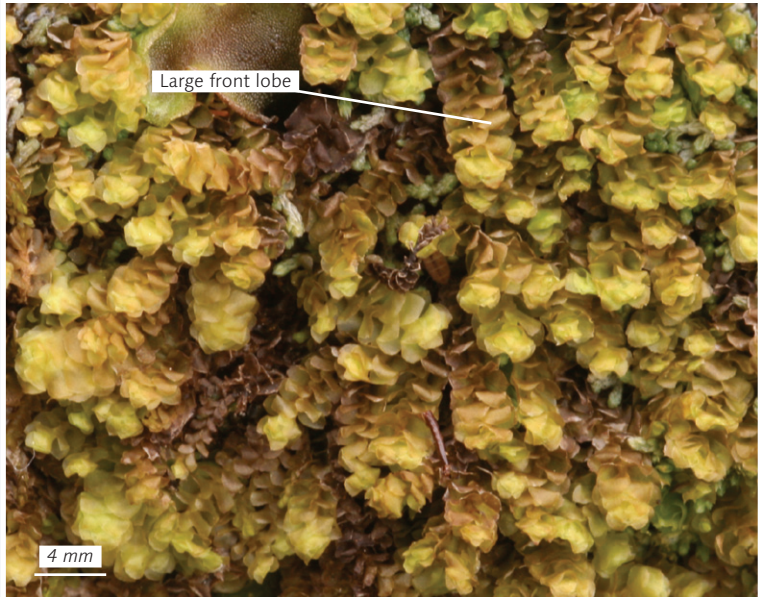
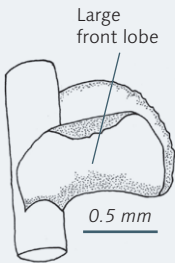
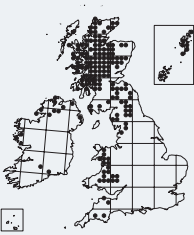


Scapania subalpina

Northern Earwort



Identification The combination of nearly equal-sized leaf lobes (1–3 mm long) and a back lobe that runs down onto the stem is unique among British *Scapania* species. *S. subalpina* is usually pale, slightly brownish-green, with green or pigmented gemmae. The front lobe tends to be loosely appressed to the back lobe, unlike the closely appressed lobes of *S. undulata*. Shoots are up to about 3.5 mm wide.

Similar species Rather tricky to identify, as several commoner *Scapania* species can look similar. *S. compacta* (p. 168) generally favours drier habitats, and its back lobe does not run down onto the stem. *S. undulata* (p. 175) normally has unequal sized leaf lobes, but some leaves on plants of *S. subalpina* can be unequal, in which case the long keel of *S. subalpina* is distinctive. *S. irrigua* (p. 173) has a front lobe that is considerably smaller than the back lobe.

Habitat A plant of the upland north and west of Britain that favours damp, sand- or gravel-filled crevices in boulders by streams or on gravelly lake shores. More rarely it is found on soil-capped boulders in gullies in the uplands.