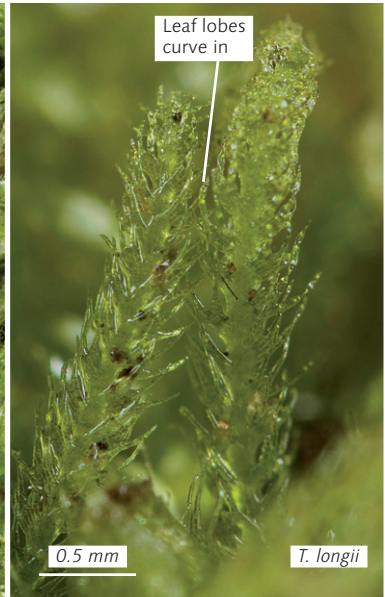
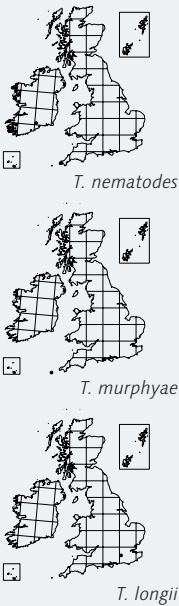


Telaranea nematodes/murphyae/longii

T. europaea = *T. nematodes*; *T. tetradactyla* = *T. longii*

Irish/Murphy's/Long's Threadwort



Identification

The three British members of *Telaranea* are all small, much branched, slender plants (leafy shoots about 1 mm wide), with very fine 3- or 4-lobed leaves, typically just under 0.5 mm long. All grow as glistening, pale (or more rarely dark) green mats, although those of *T. nematodes* tend to be rather sparse. Identification requires a microscope, although the site where the plants are growing is a good indication of what they are likely to be.

Similar species

Reminiscent of a few relatively widespread species. *Blepharostoma trichophyllum* (p. 77) is less branched and grows mostly on crags or in ravines. *Kurzia* species (p. 78) have opaque, non-glistening stems and grow on peatlands, or on peat or humus in ravines. *Lepidozia reptans* (p. 80) is usually more robust, is not translucent or glistening, and its leaves are much less finely divided.

Habitat

Only one of these three species is a native British plant: *T. nematodes* grows on peaty banks or rocks in shaded, humid woodland near the coast in south-west Ireland (and at one site in Cornwall). Woods with *Rhododendron* seem strangely suitable for it. The other two species are introductions from the southern hemisphere that have gone wild in a few gardens. *T. murphyae* is locally abundant around the Abbey Gardens on Tresco, Isles of Scilly, and also grows at Higher Moors, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly, and in Poole and Bournemouth. *T. longii* is currently known only from the RHS garden near Wisley, Surrey, and the Younger Botanic Garden near Dunoon, Argyll.