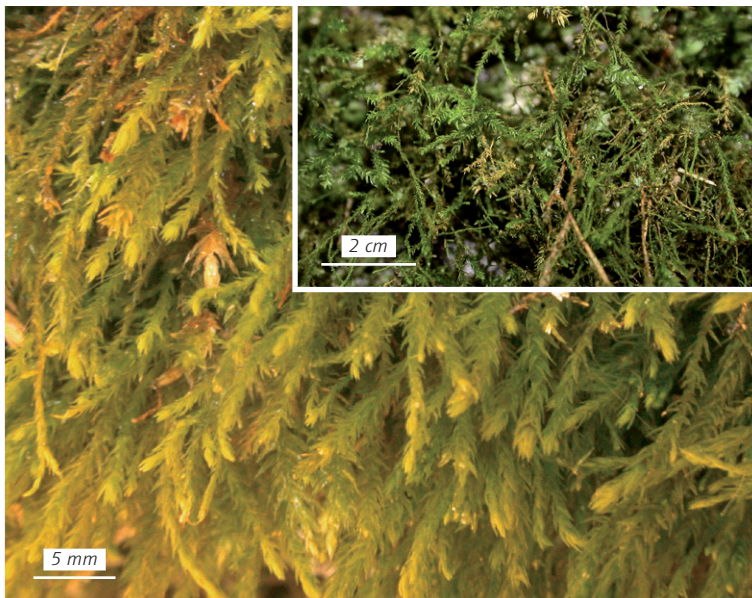
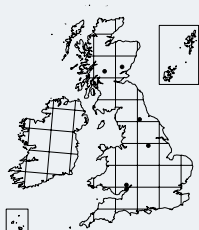


Anomodon longifolius

Long-leaved Tail-moss



Identification *A. longifolius* forms patches of very slender, yellowish-green shoots up to 2 cm long, and looks rather like a *Heterocladium* species (p. 687), albeit with the paler colour of *A. viticulosus* (p. 694). Erect, irregularly branched shoots arise from creeping primary stems. Leaves are 1–2.5 mm long, with a base that runs down onto the stem. The nerve vanishes below the tip. Moist leaves spread away from the stem, becoming loosely appressed as they dry. Capsules have never been found in Britain.

Similar species The far commoner *A. viticulosus* (p. 694) – with which *A. longifolius* often grows – is much bigger (shoots 2–8 cm long; leaves 2–3 mm long), and has a blunter leaf tip. The very rare *A. attenuatus* (Smith, p. 744) is also larger (shoots up to 5 cm long; leaves 1–2 mm long), with a blunter leaf tip. Slender forms of *Leskea polycarpa* (p. 689) have a blunter leaf tip, and *Leskea* favours tree trunks in the flood zone of streams and rivers. Large plants of *Amblystegium serpens* (p. 702) somewhat resemble *A. longifolius*, but *Amblystegium serpens* has a shorter nerve and is usually darker green. *Heterocladium heteropterum* and *H. flaccidum* (p. 687) are dull green rather than yellowish-green.

Habitat *A. longifolius* grows on sheltered, steep or vertical rock-faces in low-lying, wooded valleys, and particularly favours ravines. It usually occurs on limestone, but has also been found on calcareous sandstone and schist. At some sites it forms extensive sheets, but at others it is restricted to a few patches. It is a very rare plant and must not be collected at known sites.