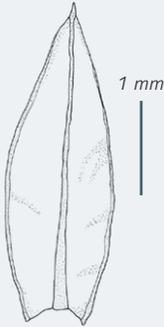


*Bryum pseudotriquetrum**B. pseudotriquetrum* var. *pseudotriquetrum*

Marsh Bryum

Key 171



Identification

The shoots of this relatively large *Bryum* form green to reddish or brown tufts and patches up to several centimetres tall. The stems are often reddish, and this colouring may extend onto the leaves, which are equally spaced along the stem, 2–3.5 mm long, with a border of narrow cells and a thick nerve that is usually only shortly excurrent. Most plants have leaves with a base that runs down onto the stem, a feature shared with few other *Bryum* species, and hence important for identification, although this feature is not always well-developed. The lower part of the stems is covered with a brown mat of rhizoids. The pendulous, or less often inclined capsules are brown when mature in summer and autumn. They are quite frequent, large (3.5 mm long) and borne on a long seta (2–3 cm).

Similar species

B. pseudotriquetrum has male and female organs on separate plants, and is indistinguishable in the field from *B. bimum* (Smith, p. 566), which has male and female organs together in the same inflorescence on one shoot. *B. bimum* is often treated as *B. pseudotriquetrum* var. *bimum* because it is so similar, and grows in similar habitats. It is less common than *B. pseudotriquetrum* in many districts. Stunted forms of *B. pseudotriquetrum* may resemble *B. pallens* (p. 584), but that plant lacks a red leaf base, tends to have wider leaf cells, and has leaves that do not or only slightly run down onto the stem.

Red plants differ from *B. alpinum* (p. 599) in the wider mid-leaf cells, well-developed leaf border and a leaf base that usually runs down onto the stem, features which can be seen with a hand lens.



Shoots of the very rare or extinct *B. turbinatum* (Smith, p. 545) somewhat resemble those of *B. pseudotriquetrum*, but lack a red leaf base. Also, its mature and empty capsules are distinctive in being not only wide-mouthed and narrowing markedly just below the mouth when dry, but also relatively short.

B. schleicheri var. *latifolium* (Smith, p. 546) is also very rare. It forms yellow-green tufts up to 10 cm tall, and has broad, concave, acutely tipped leaves. It is currently known from a single flush on a hill in Stirlingshire.

The leaves of *B. pallescens* (p. 590) do not run down onto the stem. *B. laevifilum* (p. 587) has filamentous gemmae in its leaf axils (as *B. pseudotriquetrum* occasionally does), but *B. laevifilum* usually grows on bark. *B. weigeli* (p. 581) also has a leaf base that runs down onto the stem, but it does so more widely than in *B. pseudotriquetrum*. Blunt forms of *B. pseudotriquetrum* growing in wet places might be confused with *B. marratii*, etc. (p. 582), but in those species the nerve ceases below the tip.

Non-fruiting plants of *Funaria hygrometrica* (p. 561), *Entosthodon* species (pp. 562–564), *Physcomitrium pyriforme* (p. 565), *Pohlia* species (pp. 603–611) or *Aphanorrhagma patens* (p. 567) might also conceivably be confused with *B. pseudotriquetrum*.

Habitat *B. pseudotriquetrum* is the commonest British *Bryum* in marshes, fens, and flushes. It also occurs on damp soil by lakes, in dune slacks, and on wet rocks on cliffs.