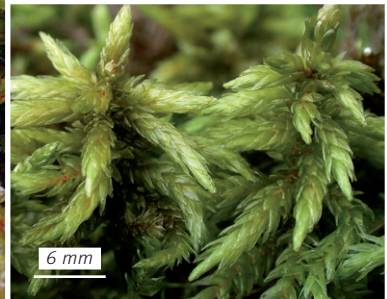
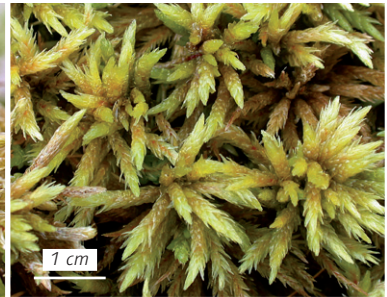
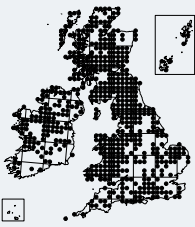


Climacium dendroides

Tree-moss

Key 332



Identification *C. dendroides* often grows in patches, with erect stems 2–3 cm tall, arising from the prostrate, usually hidden, rhizome-like primary stems. The individual shoots resemble miniature palm trees, with rather rigid, stubby, yellow-green branches at the tip of the stems. The erect stems may be very short in dry sites, whereas shoots are much more tree-like in moister places. Leaves are about 2–3.5 mm long. The stem leaves are well-spaced and rounded at the tip; the branch leaves are narrower, acute, coarsely toothed near the tip and often have longitudinal folds; the leaf cells are elongated. Capsules are rare because male plants appear to be much less frequent than females.

Similar species *Thamnobryum alopecuroides* (p. 684) is the other British and Irish moss with a markedly tree-like habit, and is more frequent than *C. dendroides*. Its main branches are longer and much more closely and richly branched than those of *C. dendroides*, so that it resembles an ordinary deciduous tree rather than a palm. In addition, the older parts of *T. alopecuroides* are mid-green or dark green, the stem leaves are more pointed, and the leaf cells are rounded.

Habitat *C. dendroides* is most frequent in damp places, especially where water levels fluctuate during the year. In its favoured habitats it can compete well with flowering plants in short turf. It grows at the edges of lakes and reservoirs, in dune slacks and turloughs (seasonal lakes over limestone), flushes, wet grassland, damp scrub and woodland. It is sometimes found in drier, base-rich or sandy grassland. It occurs rather rarely as a colonist of gravel pits and damp colliery spoil.