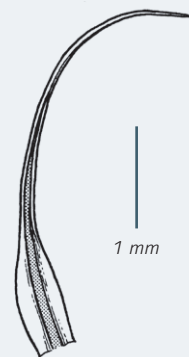
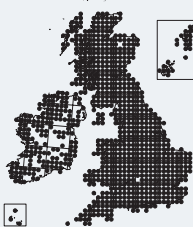


*Dicranella heteromalla*

Silky Forklet-moss

Key 146

**Identification**

In dense, yellow-green to mid-green cushions or patches up to 3 cm deep, but often smaller. Leaves are more or less curved, 3–3.5 mm long, pointing in one direction when moist, and hardly altered when dry. The leaf base is egg-shaped and tapers to a long, fine, channelled point which is toothed, especially near the tip. The nerve is about 30% of the width of the leaf base, occupies most of the tip and is often excurrent. Capsules are common, horizontal or inclined, elliptical in shape and not swollen at the base. The yellow seta becomes browner with age.

**Similar species**

The dense, silky cushions can readily be identified by the curved leaves turned in one direction, and yellow setae. *D. cerviculata* (p. 370) has a shorter capsule with a swollen base and leaves that are hardly toothed. *D. subulata* (Smith, p. 192) has a reddish (rather than yellowish) seta. The very rare *D. crispa* (Smith, p. 188) has upright capsules and leaves that are bent back from the stem. Dense, non-fertile cushions on montane rocks can be confused with *Kiaeria blyttii* (p. 374), which generally has duller green leaves. *Ditrichum heteromallum* (p. 346) holds its capsules erect.

**Habitat**

A very common moss in a variety of acidic habitats, and which is frequent on woodland banks, tree stumps, tree roots, hedge banks, dry peaty banks, and in sheltered soil in crevices on crags and gullies in the mountains.