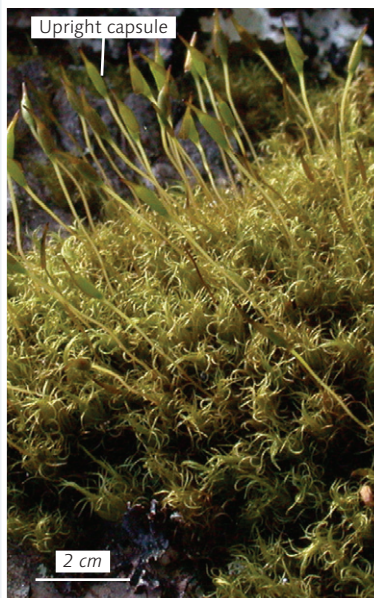
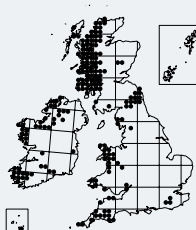


Dicranum scottianum

Scott's Fork-moss



Identification Very similar in general appearance to *D. fuscescens*, but usually somewhat smaller. The leaves are about 5–6 mm long, usually erect to slightly curved when moist, and more or less crisped when dry. The leaves are narrowly spearhead-shaped and taper to a long, fine tip which normally has no teeth and looks less rough than that of *D. fuscescens*. The nerve is very strong and can occupy up to 30% of the leaf base. Capsules are reasonably frequent, and are erect and straight, or slightly curved.

Similar species In the field, confusion with *D. fuscescens* (p. 382) is a constant problem, even for experienced bryologists, and microscopical determination is often necessary. When present, the erect, rather straight capsule of *D. scottianum* is a useful character, as is the wide nerve and lack of teeth at the leaf tip. On damp crags, confusion is also possible with curved-leaf forms of *Campylopus flexuosus* (p. 395), when the wide nerve can be misleading, but *C. flexuosus* has large reddish cells at the basal corners of its leaves.

Habitat *D. scottianum* is a hyperoceanic moss with a strongly western distribution in Britain, apart from the sandstone in the south-east and north-east of England. It usually forms neat, dark green cushions on dry, vertical, acidic crags in humid sites, often near the coast. It can also occur on trees, but just how frequent it is in this habitat is masked by confusion with *D. fuscescens*.