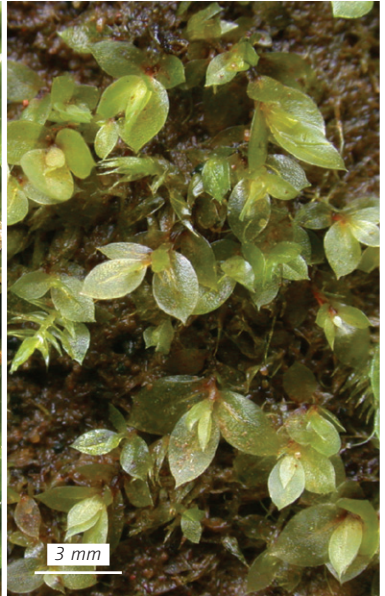
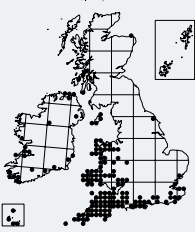


Epipterygium tozeri

Tozer's Thread-moss



Identification A delicate, small moss, with reddish stems to about 5 mm tall, occurring as scattered plants, or loose open patches. Its pale green, somewhat reddish-tinged, shoots are often more or less flattened in one plane, and project from vertical or inclined soil banks. The rather distant glossy leaves are of two distinct sizes – larger (2–3 mm) lateral leaves that are broadly egg-shaped, and smaller dorsal leaves that are more acute and spearhead-shaped, and slightly run down onto the stem. Both have a distinctive combination of wide, lax cells, a strong, plane border, and a prominent nerve that ends well below the tip. Capsules are rare, egg-shaped (but widest above the middle) to pear-shaped, somewhat pendulous, and produced in winter or early spring. Egg-shaped to spherical bulbils (0.1–0.3 mm) are probably frequently produced at the base of the stem, but are rarely sought; smaller, pale brown gemmae that are elliptical occur on the rhizoids.

Similar species Most likely to be confused with *Pohlia* species, especially *P. melanodon* (p. 610), which shares the pale, glossy appearance and size of *E. tozeri* and often grows with it. The rather flattened growth form of the shoots, wider, bordered leaves with lax cells, and the nerve ending well below the tip will distinguish *Epipterygium*.

Habitat On shaded, disturbed, non-calcareous, loamy and sandy, vertical or steeply inclined banks beside lanes, ditches and rivers. *E. tozeri* colonizes these banks when they are fairly bare, and is frequently associated with other small, ephemeral, gemmiferous or tuber-bearing bryophytes and species of *Fissidens*. It may also be found in more permanently bare habitats, such as the dry soil of overhanging creek banks in south-western Britain.