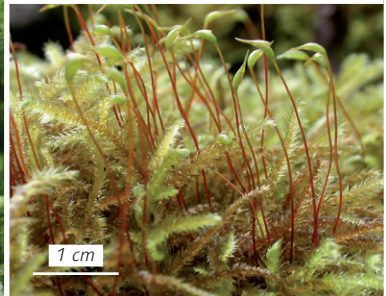
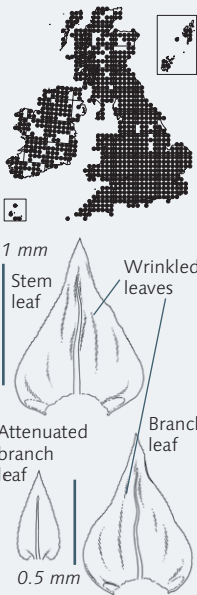


Eurhynchium striatum

Common Striated Feather-moss

Key 364



Identification

E. striatum is fairly common, and forms cushions or mats that may extend over large areas. Shoots are generally pale or yellow-green, and more or less pinnately branched with branches spreading almost at right angles. The stems and branches are straight, making shoots look rigid. The leaves spread widely and hardly alter on drying, reaching 1.5–2 mm long. They are triangular (almost perfectly so above the base, with straight sides), but narrowed and heart-shaped at the point of attachment, and acute, but not attenuated at the tip. The margins are very finely toothed. A very important character, easily observed with a hand lens, is the wrinkled leaves, caused by shallow folds along their length. Capsules (2–3 mm long) are occasionally present, and have a beaked lid.

Similar species

Loeskeobryum brevirostre (p. 820) is very similar, but has reddish stems, abundant, tiny, leaf-like structures on the stem, and a short, double nerve. *E. striatum* (p. 765) has weakly ridged leaves, but differs in its bushy rather than pinnate habit, its opaque, dark green colour and the leaves less widely spreading. In woods, *E. striatum* often grows with *Thamnobryum alopecurum* (p. 684) and can be confused with forms of *T. alopecurum* that are not obviously tree-like – these forms can be distinguished by the more coarsely toothed and unwrinkled leaves. *Homalothecium* species (pp. 738–739) have leaves that are pleated rather than wrinkled as in *E. striatum*, and are narrower and triangularly spearhead-shaped. *E. meridionale* (*Plasteurhynchium meridionale*) (Smith, p. 849) is very rare, confined to coastal limestone, mainly on Portland in Dorset, and differs in its erect branches, very widely spreading leaves (nearly at right angles to the stem) and narrower, more finely pointed leaf tip.

Habitat

E. striatum grows on the ground and around stones in woodland, especially on base-rich soils, but also on neutral to slightly acidic substrates. It is characteristic of long-established woodland. However, it also occurs in other places that are not exposed to full sun, such as hedge banks, rocky ground and rock ledges.

Photos Fred Rumsey (left), Michael Lüth (top right) & David Holyoak (bottom right)
Drawings Sean Edwards Text Tom Blockeel