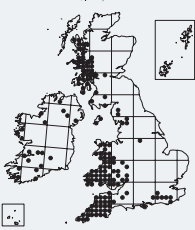


Fissidens celticus

Welsh Pocket-moss

**Identification**

A minute, elegant *Fissidens* with shoots up to 4.5 mm tall and only 1–1.5 mm wide. The shoots have numerous leaves (often 10 pairs or more) of rather equal size, so that the shoots are parallel-sided (often likened to a palm frond). The leaf is unbordered. The nerve runs all the way to the leaf tip, and may protrude slightly. A good field character is that the nerve has a distinct bend in it about halfway along (seen in other species as well, but not as well-marked). Only female plants are known in this species, and capsules are not produced.

Similar species

F. exilis (p. 411) is shorter, with fewer pairs of leaves, and capsules are frequent. The parallel-sided shoots of *F. celticus* distinguish it from juvenile shoots of larger species including *F. taxifolius* (p. 415).

Habitat

As with many small species, the key to finding this moss is to learn to recognize the habitat. It grows on shaded soil banks, especially beside streams and ditches in woodland. It favours rather bare patches that have been eroded by flood water, but which are compact rather than crumbling. It grows on acidic soil, especially grey clay, but avoids peaty or very acidic substrates. Associated species include *Calypogeia arguta*, *Dicranella heteromalla*, *Dicranella rufescens*, *Diplophyllum albicans* and *F. bryoides*.