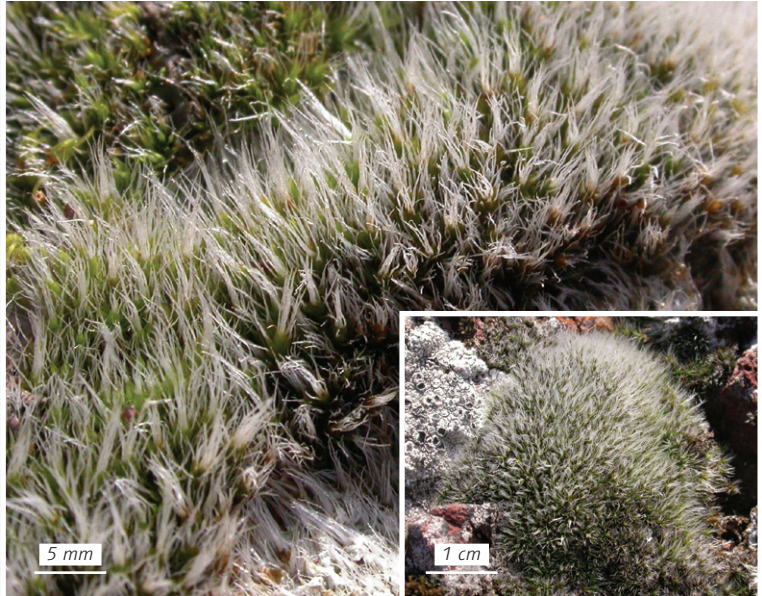
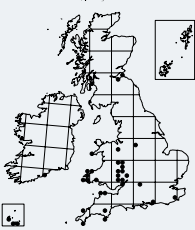


# *Grimmia laevigata*

Hoary Grimmia



**Identification** *G. laevigata* forms neat cushions, normally about 1 cm tall that are often wider than tall, and are always noticeably hoary owing to the usually long, conspicuous hair point of the 3 mm long leaves. The best field characters are the convex leaf backs lacking an obvious keel and the leaf margins which are plane. When dry, the leaves are closely appressed to the stem, but they spread when moist. Capsules, which are smooth when dry, are rare.

**Similar species** The hoariness, smooth leaf backs and plane margins distinguish *G. laevigata* in the field from most other *Grimmia* species apart from the much rarer *G. tergestina* (Smith, p. 433). *G. tergestina* is usually even more hoary, forms patches that are fragmented into blocks and is more confined to base-rich rocks (schists and limestone). Certain identification of *G. tergestina* requires microscopical examination. *G. ovalis* (p. 520), also with a smooth leaf back and plane margins, has a much narrower leaf tapering to a hair point that is narrowed at its base. The compact cushions and relatively unbranched stems will preclude confusion with *Hedwigia stellata* (p. 665).

**Habitat** *G. laevigata* is predominantly a lowland moss of exposed, often sunny, acidic or slightly base-rich rocks. It is most often found on rock slabs, boulders or sarsen stones, but may also be locally frequent on old sandstone roof tiles, particularly near the Welsh Borders.