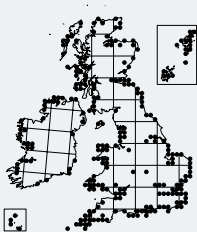


Hennediella heimii

Pottia heimii

Heim's Pottia

Key 265



Identification The short (2.5 mm), yellowish-green or brown tufts of this plant resemble many other mosses. Fortunately, *H. heimii* is frequently found fruiting, or else it would be easy to miss. The long, thick, twisted seta can be over 1 cm in length – unusually tall for the size of the plant. The capsule has a long oblique lid, and at maturity it is lifted up above the mouth by a rigid column of tissue within the capsule, giving a very distinctive appearance like a wizard's hat. This column of tissue persists for some time after the lid has fallen and spores have been released, and does not so easily drop off as in most other species. The leaves are 1.5–2 mm long, becoming longer and more parallel-sided towards the top of the short stem. The nerve ends in the leaf tip or may run out beyond the cells of the leaf blade. With a hand lens it can be seen that most leaves are toothed towards the tip.

Similar species The shoots resemble a number of other common, ephemeral mosses, such as *Tortula truncata* (p. 482), but these lack the toothed leaf tip of *H. heimii*. *H. stanfordensis* and *H. macrophylla* (p. 490) also have a toothed leaf tip, and form bright green patches with stiffer, terminal rosettes of broader leaves. The persistent lid of *H. heimii* cannot really be confused with anything else.

Habitat *H. heimii* is a specialized, mainly coastal moss of bare, salty and brackish soil, such as in saltmarshes and muddy depressions, usually a little way inland rather than where it risks being soaked by seawater. More recently it has been found inland growing on the heavily salted verges of busy roads.