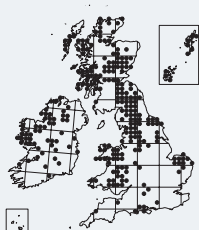


Philonotis calcarea

Thick-nerved Apple-moss



Identification The vividly pale green shoots are large, often as tall as 10 cm or more. Leaves are also large (1.8–3 mm long), arranged in rows, and point towards one side of the shoots. Spherical capsules are rare in summer.

Similar species *P. calcarea* typically has longer leaves (1.8–3 mm) than *P. fontana* (0.8–1.5 mm, p. 636), and the leaves of *P. calcarea* curve to one side of the shoots. In addition, the leaves surrounding the male inflorescence of *P. calcarea* have a pointed tip with the nerve reaching the tip, whereas those of *P. fontana* have a rounded tip with the nerve ceasing below the tip. Except for *P. seriata* (p. 638), other species of *Philonotis* are smaller than *P. calcarea*. *P. seriata* resembles *P. calcarea* in having its leaves arranged in rows, but those of *P. seriata* are spirally arranged on its stems, and do not all point in the same direction. Small forms of *P. calcarea* with relatively straight leaves and long, excurrent nerves can appear very similar to *P. tomentella* (Smith, p. 653) and microscopical examination is needed for identification. The leaves of *Conostomum tetragonum* (p. 632) are arranged in 5 ranks. *Paludella squarrosa* (p. 573) may be a similar colour to *Philonotis* species, but its leaves curve strongly away from the stem. *Aulacomnium palustre* (p. 625) and *Breutelia chrysocoma* (p. 640) are bushier in habit.

Habitat Like other members of the genus, *P. calcarea* thrives in wet ground, but unlike other *Philonotis* species, it is a moss of base-rich or calcareous places – springs, flushes, mires, wet rock ledges and ravines, and dune slacks.