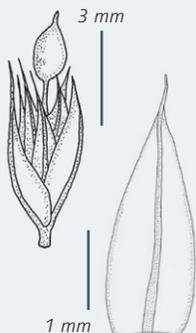


Protobryum bryoides

Pottia bryoides, *Tortula protobryoides*

Tall Pottia

Key 261



Capsule held just clear of leaves

Identification Shoots form dull green or brownish patches up to 1 cm tall. Upper leaves are much larger than those below, being 2.5 mm long, with a longly excurrent nerve. Young shoots grow in the autumn, and dark brown capsules abound in winter and spring. These capsules are up to 2 mm long, and have a characteristic elliptical outline. The lid does not fall. Setae are 2–5.5 mm long, lifting the capsules just above the leaves.

Similar species *Tortula modica* (p. 483) has light brown capsules that shed their lid. *T. lanceola* (p. 381) has capsules with a shape very like those of *P. bryoides*, but it is smaller in all its parts (shoots up to 5 mm tall, leaves about 2 mm long, and capsules 1–1.75 mm long) and its capsules shed their lid to reveal a peristome. Forms of *Phascum cuspidatum* (p. 486) may closely resemble *P. bryoides* when the latter's capsules have not yet grown clear of the leaves, but nevertheless they should already be longer than wide, in contrast to the spherical capsules of *Phascum cuspidatum*. *Microbryum rectum* (p. 488) is much smaller (shoots less than 1 mm tall) and has spherical rather than elongated capsules. *Pottiopsis caespitosa* (p. 437) is smaller (vegetative shoots little more than 1 mm tall, or 3 mm tall including the seta and capsule), and its capsule is scarcely longer than wide.

Habitat *P. bryoides* favours unshaded, base-rich soil in lowland quarries and gravel pits, on paths, waste ground, banks beside roads, tracks and paths. Natural habitats include shallow soil over limestone, and soil banks on sea cliffs.