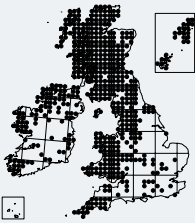


Racomitrium fasciculare

Green Mountain Fringe-moss

Key 204



Identification The sprawling growth form, with shoots several (up to 10) centimetres long, and short branches with bunched leaves are the most distinctive features of *R. fasciculare*. Its 2–3 mm long, tapering, typical *Racomitrium* leaves never have a hair point. Patches on rocks that receive regular sunshine are usually yellow-green, whereas those on shady crags are more often dirty olive-green.

Similar species Members of the *R. canescens* aggregate (p. 540) have similarly short branches, but grow as upright plants on soil and almost always have hair points. *R. heterostichum* (p. 537) can look very similar to *R. fasciculare* when it lacks hair points, and very often grows with it. In such cases, the short branches of *R. fasciculare* are the only means of recognizing this species in the field, and confirmation with a microscope may be necessary for ambiguous plants. The same is true of the usually larger *R. aquaticum* (p. 535).

Habitat This species is generally common in the uplands, although at some sites it can be puzzlingly scarce. Exposed sites, including siliceous boulders, drystone walls and sunny buttresses are favoured, but *R. fasciculare* sometimes grows on shaded rock faces. There are a few lowland records from railway cuttings, gravestones and old slate or tile roofs.