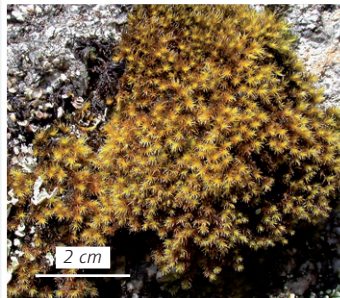
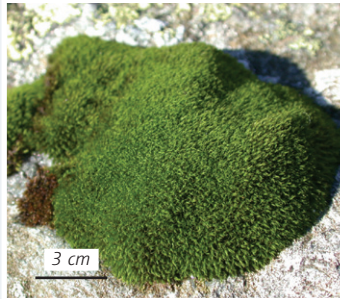
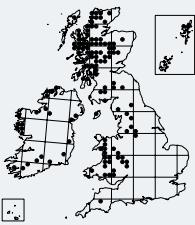


Racomitrium sudeticum

Slender Fringe-moss

Key 116



Identification Many colonies of this member of the *R. heterostichum* aggregate can be recognized in the field, especially when they have their distinctive, short (less than 1.5 mm long), egg-shaped capsules. Leaves are about 3–4 mm long. *R. sudeticum* has narrower leaves than its relatives, and these are tipped by a short hair point, which many leaves may lack. The typical form is a tight cushion of yellow-green shoots, about 2 cm long, but some colonies have shoots twice that length, sprawling like *R. heterostichum*, and need to be checked microscopically.

Similar species Sprawling patches or atypically large plants can look like *R. affine* or *R. heterostichum* (p. 537), but typical cushions of narrow-leaved plants with short hair points are distinctive. Capsules are not produced as frequently as those of *R. heterostichum*, but when present they are diagnostically short. *R. ellipticum* (p. 533) also has short capsules, but these are shiny and dark brown when ripe, and the leaves of *R. ellipticum* are noticeably opaque through a hand lens and always lack a hair point.

Habitat This is more of an upland species than *R. heterostichum* or *R. affine*, and it is very rare in the western lowlands. *R. sudeticum* is often abundant at altitudes above 300 m, especially on rocky hillsides or on blocks in scree. It may also grow on soil by late-lying snowbeds.