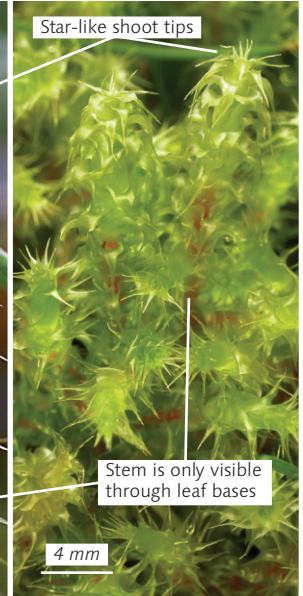
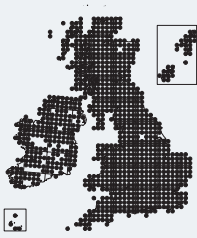


*Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*

Springy Turf-moss

Key 341

**Identification**

The shoots of this extremely common moss are a few to 10–15 cm long, and distinctive in the way the tapered part of the 2–2.5 mm long leaves bend back at a right angle to the base so that they spread out and away from the stem in all directions, giving shoots a star-like appearance. The broad leaf base completely sheathes the red stem so that it is only visible through the leaves. The leaf has lightly toothed margins and a short, double nerve. Capsules are generally uncommon, but frequent in some areas of south Wales, and may be overlooked elsewhere.

**Similar species**

*R. loreus* (p. 817) is also irregularly pinnate and has spreading leaves, but its leaves curve rather than bend sharply back, and it does not have a characteristic star-like appearance. *R. loreus* is also usually quite a bit larger than *R. squarrosus*. In the rare but somewhat similar *R. subpinnatus* (p. 819), the leaf base does not completely sheath the stem. *Loeskeobryum brevirostre* (p. 820) looks similar, but its stems and branches appear furry, being covered by many branched filaments.

**Habitat**

*R. squarrosus* is a ubiquitous species of unimproved or semi-improved grassland. Where the grass is short, either through mowing or grazing, it can form extensive, almost pure swards. It is also occasional in heathland, and in flushes and other wetlands.