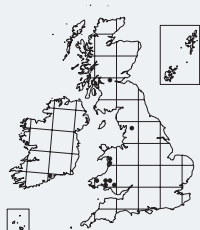


Rhytidiadelphus subpinnatus

Scarce Turf-moss

**Identification**

This medium-sized (shoots up to 12 cm long), irregularly branched moss has a reddish-brown stem. The leaves are about 2 mm long, with a broadly oval base that narrows to a sharply tapering upper part. This upper part curves strongly away from the stem, making the shoots look broad and untidy. Examination with a hand lens will show that the stem is not completely covered by the leaf bases and is visible between them. The leaf has a double nerve extending about halfway up the blade, and lightly toothed margins. Capsules are very rare in Britain.

Similar species

The broad shoots of *R. subpinnatus* look like *Loeskeobryum brevirostre* (p. 820), but the stems and branches of *L. brevirostre* are covered in branched filaments. The shoots of *R. subpinnatus* have a starry tip like *R. squarrosus* (p. 818), but the leaves of *R. squarrosus* completely sheath the stem.

Habitat

R. subpinnatus is very rare in Britain, currently known only from Wales, southern Scotland, West Lancashire and Waterford, although there are old records from other Western districts. It grows in coarse wefts among grasses and on stream banks in humid, deciduous woodland.