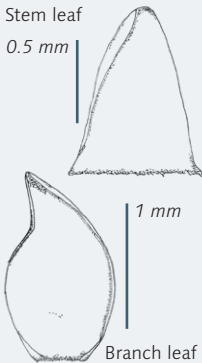
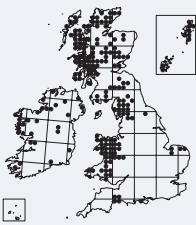


*Sphagnum contortum*

Twisted Bog-moss

Section Subsecunda

**Identification**

A medium-sized species. Found as small stands or scattered stems. Well-illuminated plants are characteristically pale orangey-brown or ochreous, but can be yellowish-green or green-brown. The branches are curved when viewed from above, with leaves that stick out away from the branch stems. Branch leaves have the upper half distinctly turned to one side, often appearing narrow owing to inrolled margins. Stems are pale, similar in colour to the leaves, never dark or black, though they can appear darker owing to staining when growing in swampy ground. A very narrow, pale stem cortex is visible at  $\times 10$ . Stem leaves are triangular, about half the length of the branch leaves. Capsules have not been recorded in Britain or Ireland.

**Similar species**

Typical forms have a characteristic colour, and in combination with associated species and habitat, can be identified with some confidence. Confirmation of plants that are submerged in swamps may require microscopical examination. The most similar species are *S. inundatum* (p. 297) and *S. subsecundum* (p. 296), which both normally have dark stems.

**Habitat**

One of the most base-demanding sphagna. In fens and flushes, often with *S. warnstorfi* and *S. teres*.