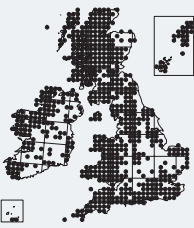


*Sphagnum denticulatum**S. auriculatum*

Cow-horn Bog-moss

Section Subsecunda



Stem leaf

1 mm



Branch leaf



## Identification

A medium to large species. Plants are green, yellow-brown to dull coppery red, sometimes with a purplish tint. The outer capitulum branches are swollen and smooth in outline, the leaves with flat edges, that sheath and clasp those above. At least some of these branches are curved, as viewed from above, with the leaves towards the branch tip quite tightly appressed to each other, forming a pointed end. Branch leaves are large and not only very slightly turned to one side when viewed from above. Fascicles are of 3–4 similar looking branches, sometimes with a fifth vestigial branch. Stems are green, dark brown or black. Stem leaves are large, concave, parallel-sided below, or wider above the base, with a rounded tip. However, they can appear somewhat triangular in the field, owing to the concave shape and wide insertion on the stem. They are usually shorter and less concave than the branch leaves. Capsules are occasional.

## Similar species

This species is extremely variable. Variation in *S. denticulatum*, and probably to a lesser extent in *S. inundatum* (p. 297), is such that, while both species have typical forms that are very different, forms do occur which are intermediate and cannot be distinguished in the field. Doubtful specimens will usually be forms of the more variable *S. denticulatum*. However, some plants cannot be determined to species level even after microscopical examination. See also *S. platyphyllum* (p. 300).

## Habitat

Found in boggy pools, acidic flushes, springs, ditches and irrigated rock slabs. Usually in markedly acidic and nutrient-poor habitats, but does occur in habitats that are moderately enriched with nutrients.