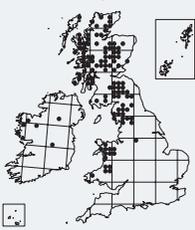


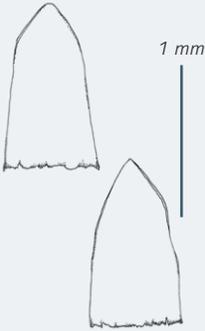
Sphagnum warnstorffii

Warnstorff's Bog-moss

Section Acutifolia



Stem leaves



Identification



A medium-sized species, forming soft carpets. Always in flushes, often as small, occasionally extensive stands. Most often all deep crimson (really vividly coloured), but can be green. The lower part of the shoots is often blackish-red. Capitula are flat-topped and stellate. The upper spreading branches, just below the capitulum, are more or less straight. Branch leaves are in obvious straight lines, with a very narrow, straight tip. Stem leaves are similar to those of *S. capillifolium*. Capsules are unknown in Britain and Ireland.

Similar species

Specimens fitting the above description, intimately mixed with *S. teres* (p. 282) or *S. contortum* (p. 299), can be confidently named as *S. warnstorffii*. In and adjacent to flushes, there may be complex small-scale patterning of different *Sphagnum* species. *S. warnstorffii* will be closest to, or actually in, a flow of more base-rich water. Where the ground is just a few centimetres higher, species such as *S. capillifolium* (p. 288) may be found, indicating more acidic, nutrient-poor conditions. *S. capillifolium* subsp. *rubellum*, which is most similar to *S. warnstorffii*, has some upper branches slightly curved (viewed from above), and branch leaves that are quite noticeably turned to one side. When fully dry, its branch leaves are somewhat spreading, but very few are even slightly recurved. In contrast, *S. warnstorffii* has straighter upper branches, straight leaves, and when fully dry, most branch leaves are obviously recurved. However, it is best to check identification under a microscope until sufficient experience of this species has been gained in the field.

Habitat

Occurs in base-rich flushes, never on nutrient-poor bogs or wet heaths. Typically grows with *S. teres*, less often with *S. contortum*.