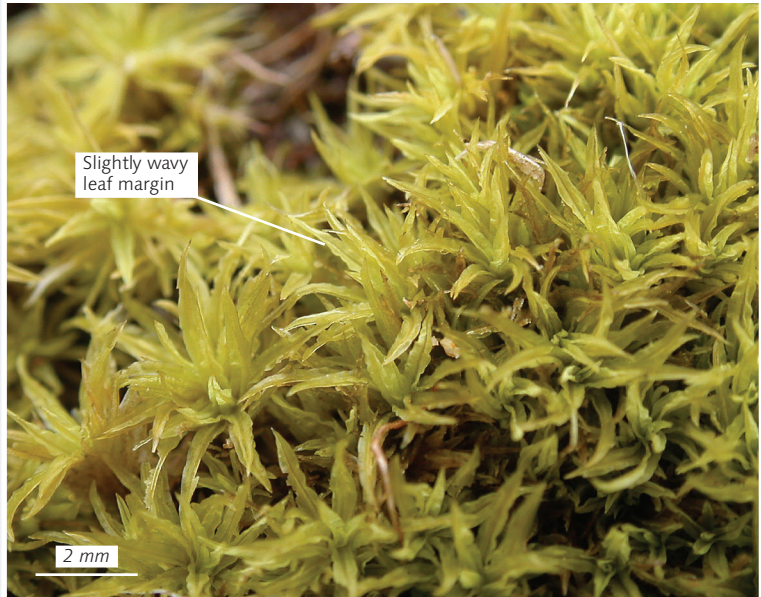
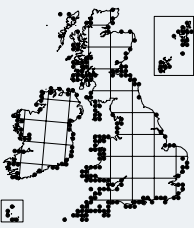


*Tortella flavovirens*

Yellow Crisp-moss



**Identification** A rather nondescript, yellow-green moss with tongue-shaped leaves, forming low turfs up to 1.5 cm tall on soil or sand. Leaves are 2–3 mm long. Moist plants have slightly wavy leaf margins, whilst dry plants have curled and contorted leaves. The colourless leaf base can be seen clearly on dry plants as it tends to hug the stem. Pulling off a few leaves with fingernails reveals the abrupt V-shaped transition between the colourless basal cells and the upper cells.

**Similar species** Unlikely to be confused with other common *Tortella* species because *T. flavovirens* has tongue-shaped rather than linear leaves, and the leaf tip is not fragile. *Trichostomum brachydontium* (p. 433) is very similar and grows in the same habitats as *T. flavovirens*, but lacks the V-shaped cell transition. The lower part of *T. brachydontium* tufts is usually browner than *T. flavovirens*, and dry leaves of *T. brachydontium* have inrolled margins, so look very narrow. The uncommon *T. inclinata* (Smith, p. 283) closely resembles *T. flavovirens* and also grows in sand dunes, but differs in its leaves being more densely packed on the stem and, microscopically, in having the upper surface of the nerve completely lacking quadrate cells. *T. inclinata* may occur inland, whereas *T. flavovirens* is exclusively coastal. Where *T. inclinata* occurs near the coast, it grows exclusively in calcareous dune slacks, but *T. flavovirens* may also occur in other coastal habitats. The very rare *T. limosella* (Smith, p. 284) is like a very small (4–8 mm tall) *T. flavovirens*, but has reflexed leaves. It has been found only once.

**Habitat** This species is exclusively coastal in Britain. *T. flavovirens* can be locally abundant in calcareous sand dunes, usually on fairly stable sand. It is also frequent on soil slopes below cliffs and sometimes in crevices in coastal rocks.