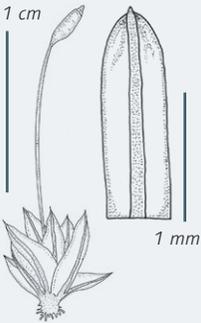
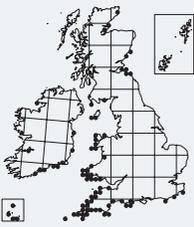


*Tortula atrovirens**Desmatodon convolutus*

Rib-leaf Moss

**Identification**

Shoots form patches or tufts about 2 mm tall, with the lower part often embedded in soil. The leaves twist spirally when dry, but spread when moist, and are concave, 2–3 mm long, with a rather rounded tip, very recurved margins and a yellow nerve that is strikingly wide and thickened (up to a third of the width of the leaf towards the leaf tip) and extends slightly beyond the tip. Capsules abound in winter and spring. They are about 1.25–1.5 mm long, erect or slightly inclined on a seta 3–6 mm long, and have a well-developed peristome.

**Similar species**

The leaves of *T. cernua* (Smith, p. 355) taper more towards the tip, have a nerve that is less thick, and elongated cells at the margins. Its horizontal or drooping capsules mature in summer, and are borne on a wavy seta. It is a very rare moss of disturbed limestone soil in quarries in northern England. *T. leucostoma* (Smith, p. 355) is another very rare species; the pale margins of its leaves taper towards the tip. It is best identified by microscopical examination of its leaves and capsules. *T. leucostoma* grows on calcareous rocks in the Scottish mountains. *T. lanceola* (p. 481) has leaves similar in shape to those of *T. atrovirens*, but the nerve does not thicken towards the leaf tip and is more longly excurrent, and it has capsules that are shorter relative to their length. *Henediella* species (pp. 490–491) may look similar, but the leaves are toothed near the tip.

**Habitat**

*T. atrovirens* is almost exclusively coastal, growing on well-drained, unshaded, often base-rich soil in crevices of rocks on cliffs, and on walls on sea banks.