Kiaeria glacialis
Snow Fork-moss

Identification
A handsome moss, forming yellow-green cushions or patches to 12 cm deep. The leaves are up to 8 mm long, erect and wavy, often point in one direction at the tip when moist, and are little altered when dry. The narrowly spearhead-shaped leaves taper gradually to a long tip which may be slightly toothed, and the cells in the basal corners form a distinct, brown group. Capsules are not common and are cylindrical, curved, swollen at the base (see drawing on p. 373), and borne on a long seta.

Similar species
Easily confused with Dicranum fuscensens (p. 382) or montane forms of D. scoparium (p. 378) which may have untoothed leaves that lack ridges of tissue on the back of the nerve. The rather erect leaves with tips turned in one direction give K. glacialis a certain look, but some experience is probably required before confident field identification is possible. It is also similar to K. starkei (p. 375), but is normally much bigger.

Habitat
Grows on damp mineral soil, often amongst boulders or on broad crag ledges, and by meltwater channels where snow lies late in the year, often with least willow (Salix herbacea).