**Rhytidiadelphus triquetrus**
Big Shaggy-moss

**Identification**  
*R. triquetrus* is a very large, bushy moss that forms shoots from 5 to 15 or 20 cm long, with irregularly branched, red stems. Whether wet or dry, the leaves stick out in all directions (unlike *R. loreus*). The leaves, which can be up to 6 mm long, are straight and have a pale, chaffy appearance, giving the shoot a unique, rather untidy character. The leaf has a double nerve, which extends about halfway up the blade, and the margins are lightly toothed. Capsules are rare to occasional.

**Similar species**  
No other mosses have this large, bushy character or chaffy leaves. *Loeskeobryum brevirostre* (p. 820) looks similar, but its stems and branches appear furry, being covered by many branched filaments.

**Habitat**  
*R. triquetrus* grows on calcareous ground in woodland, and also on acidic ground in woods of native pine (*Pinus*). It can also be found in open grassland on chalk, on sand dunes and in churchyards.

Photos Fred Rumsey (left) & David Long (right)  
Drawing & Text Martin Godfrey