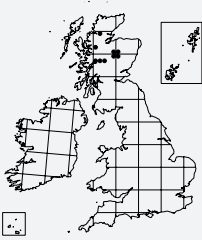


Andreaea blyttii

Blytt's Rock-moss

**Identification**

In flattened, shiny, black cushions, normally coalescing to form larger patches, often encrusted with lichens. The stems can be up to 2 cm long, but the flattened habit makes the plants seem smaller. The narrow leaves are erect or turned to one side when dry, and are rather brittle. They usually turn to one side when moist. The leaves are abruptly narrowed from an oblong base to a thin upper part; the nerve fills the upper part of the leaf, but is ill-defined below (this is difficult to see with a lens). The prostrate stems with ascending tips, and the narrow, shiny leaves give the impression of small pieces of black metal wire.

Similar species

Very similar to *A. rothii* (p. 000), but the very narrow upper part of the leaf and the habit and texture of the patches are useful characters which can be confirmed under the microscope by finding small spores.

Habitat

Growing on angled rocks, and only rarely on steep faces where snow lies very late in the year, and thus confined to the highest mountains in Scotland.