

Calliergon cordifolium

Heart-leaved Spear-moss



Identification The erect, little-branched shoots of this medium-sized to large moss are green (or brown below) and may reach 15 cm long or more. Stem leaves are 2–2.5 mm wide, more or less egg-shaped in outline, somewhat heart-shaped at the base, and blunt or rounded at the tip. They often spread outwards from the stem, and have large, colourless auricles which extend across the whole of the leaf base. However, these are not sharply marked off from the adjacent leaf cells, and are not therefore very conspicuous. Branch leaves are smaller and narrower.

Similar species *C. giganteum* (p. 000) has very similar leaves, but differs in having sharply differentiated auricles at the base of the leaves. It is normally much more strongly branched, with shoots in the form of a spruce tree. *Calliergonella cuspidata* (p. 000) might also cause confusion, but lacks a distinct nerve. It also normally has pinnately branched shoots with the branches in one plane. Small forms of *C. cordifolium* may resemble *Straminergon stramineum* (p. 000), but the largest leaves of *S. stramineum* are rarely much more than 1 mm wide, and the auricles at the base of the leaf do not extend to the nerve.

Habitat *C. cordifolium* is a widespread and locally abundant moss of marshes and wet woods, especially in the lowlands.