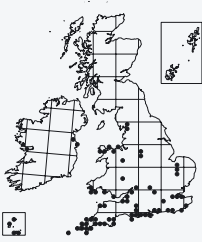


Pleurochaete squarrosa

Side-fruited Crisp-moss



Identification The leaves, strongly curved away from the stem and without a hair point, and very crisped when dry, are good field characters for this species. Plants are green, yellowish-green or golden and 2–6 cm tall. The leaves have an obvious nerve and taper gradually to the tip from the sheathing base. The basal margins of the leaves have a narrow band of clear cells (visible as a whitish margin under a hand lens), extending up the margin for some way. British plants are sterile.

Similar species Most likely to be confused with *Tortella tortuosa* (p. 000), which has even longer, narrower, tapering leaves and are also crisped when dry, but do not have a sheathing base and are not strongly curved away from the stem. In *T. tortuosa* the basal patches of clear cells are much more extensive, and the boundary between clear cells and green cells forms an obvious diagonal line extending from the margin to the nerve. *Tortula* (p. 000) and *Syntrichia* (p. 000) leaves either have hair points or a much more shortly tapering or blunter tip.

Habitat Grows loosely tufted or scattered and mixed with other plants on sandy or calcareous ground. Usually found in unshaded habitats in sand dunes, maritime grassland on cliffs, chalk and limestone grassland, and in chalk and limestone quarries.