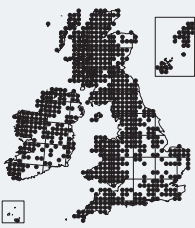


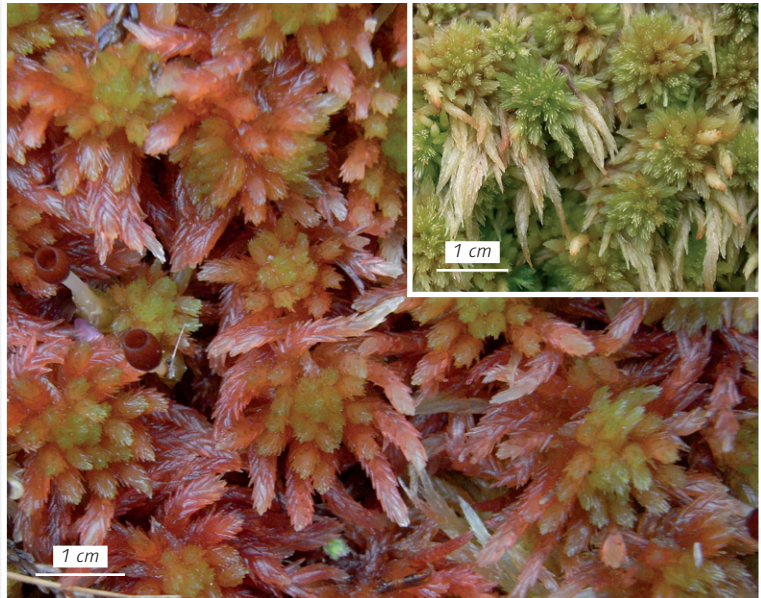
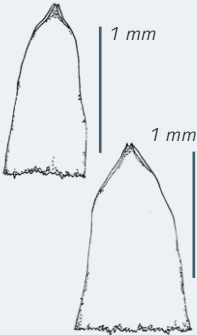
Sphagnum subnitens var. *subnitens*

Lustrous Bog-moss

Section Acutifolia



Stem leaves



Identification

Forms moderately dense cushions and small hummocks. The capitula are usually less than 2 cm in diameter, much smaller in dry or exposed sites. The outer branches of the capitula and upper stem branches are long, making shoots look top-heavy. In denser cushions, these branches turn upwards and grow over the capitulum centre. Fascicles usually have only 1 pendent and 2 spreading branches and are closely spaced; the branches tangled and hiding the stem. Spreading branch leaves are not in straight lines. Capitula usually show some differentiation, often very distinct, between a green centre and pinkish outer branches. Some plants can be very dingy, but still retain this colour contrast. Stem leaves are large, up to twice as long as wide, rather variable in shape, but always acute, usually with a pinched, sharp tip; the whole leaf may appear distinctly triangular. Capsules are common.

Similar species

The salmon-pink colour (when present), top-heavy, untidy looking shoots and the sharp tip to the stem leaf distinguish *S. subnitens* from other species in Section Acutifolia. Some plants have well-developed pink colouration, similar to other Acutifolia species, for example *S. capillifolium* (p. 288), though still with a greenish capitulum centre, but on closer examination will be seen to retain the typical form of *S. subnitens*. Extreme all-brown plants may be the rare var. *ferrugineum* (Smith, p. 71). *S. skyense* (p. 292) is usually larger, is vividly pinkish-red, has many fascicles with 2 pendent branches, branch leaves partly in straight lines, and stem leaves broad relative to their length. Also see *S. molle* (p. 293).

Habitat

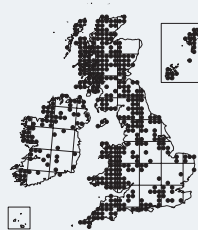
Boggy grassland, marshes, fens, flushes, ditches, wet woodland, and humid, rocky banks under heather. In the north and west, also found on blanket bogs.

Sphagnum inundatum

S. auriculatum var. *inundatum*, *S. subsecundum* subsp. *inundatum*

Lesser Cow-horn Bog-moss

Section Subsecunda



Stem leaf

1 mm



Branch leaf



Identification

A medium to large species. In open habitats *S. inundatum* appears golden orange-brown, while in shade it is yellow-green or all green. The capitulum is somewhat stellate, with outer branches straight or curved only at the tip. The branch leaves are spreading, not appressed to the branch, giving the capitulum and upper branches a spiky appearance, hence, despite the common name, not looking like cows' horns. On the lower part of the branches, some leaves are asymmetrical, the upper half turned to one side when viewed from above. Fascicles usually have 5 or more branches, all with well-developed leaves. Typically there are 2 strongly divergent branches, 2 deflexed to pendent, and 1 more or less hanging vertically down the stem. The stem is dark brown to almost black, or green in shaded forms. Stem leaves are nearly always more or less triangular. The whole shoot is about 10–15 mm wide and parallel-sided. Capsules are occasional.

Similar species

Well-coloured plants of open habitats, as described above, are elegant and neat, resembling a large version of *S. subsecundum* (p. 296). Small forms of *S. inundatum* can only be distinguished from that species by microscopical examination. Typical *S. inundatum* is very different from typical *S. denticulatum* (p. 298); however, forms do occur which cannot be determined to species level with confidence in the field, or sometimes even after microscopical examination.

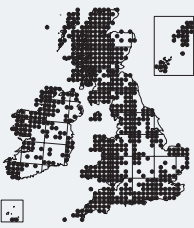
Habitat

Despite its name, it is rarely found submerged. It occurs in slightly more base-rich habitats than *S. denticulatum*, for example poor fens, swampy ground, mildly base-rich pools, in ditches and at the edges of flushes.

*Sphagnum denticulatum**S. auriculatum*

Cow-horn Bog-moss

Section Subsecunda



Stem leaf

1 mm



Branch leaf



Identification

A medium to large species. Plants are green, yellow-brown to dull coppery red, sometimes with a purplish tint. The outer capitulum branches are swollen and smooth in outline, the leaves with flat edges, that sheath and clasp those above. At least some of these branches are curved, as viewed from above, with the leaves towards the branch tip quite tightly appressed to each other, forming a pointed end. Branch leaves are large and not only very slightly turned to one side when viewed from above. Fascicles are of 3–4 similar looking branches, sometimes with a fifth vestigial branch. Stems are green, dark brown or black. Stem leaves are large, concave, parallel-sided below, or wider above the base, with a rounded tip. However, they can appear somewhat triangular in the field, owing to the concave shape and wide insertion on the stem. They are usually shorter and less concave than the branch leaves. Capsules are occasional.

Similar species

This species is extremely variable. Variation in *S. denticulatum*, and probably to a lesser extent in *S. inundatum* (p. 297), is such that, while both species have typical forms that are very different, forms do occur which are intermediate and cannot be distinguished in the field. Doubtful specimens will usually be forms of the more variable *S. denticulatum*. However, some plants cannot be determined to species level even after microscopical examination. See also *S. platyphyllum* (p. 300).

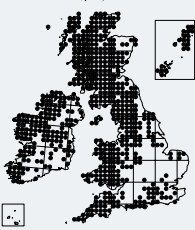
Habitat

Found in boggy pools, acidic flushes, springs, ditches and irrigated rock slabs. Usually in markedly acidic and nutrient-poor habitats, but does occur in habitats that are moderately enriched with nutrients.

Sphagnum papillosum

Papillose Bog-moss

Section Sphagnum



Identification *S. papillosum* forms mats and low hummocks. The whole plant is typically pale ochre-brown, but can be green or yellowish. There is never any trace of red. The capitulum centre and spreading branches are always a similar colour. Fascicles have 2 spreading and 1 or 2 pendent branches. Upper spreading branches are short and blunt-tipped. Branch leaves are often distinctly spreading at an angle of 45–90° to the branch. Capsules are occasional.

Similar species Uniformly ochreous plants on bogs are distinctive. Green forms on bogs are virtually identical to green *S. magellanicum* (p. 280). However, in these open habitats, both species typically assume their more characteristic and very different colouring. On bogs, any trace of red in the leaves or stem of a plant in Section *Sphagnum* signifies that the plant is *S. magellanicum*. Green or ochreous forms at the margins of bogs, or beside flushes, may be very similar to some forms of *S. palustre* (p. 279) and to *S. affine* (p. 277), and can only be distinguished with certainty under a microscope.

Habitat Typically found on raised and blanket bogs, in valley mires and beside flushes.