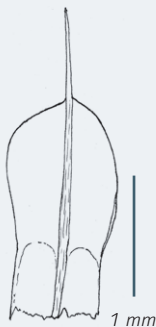
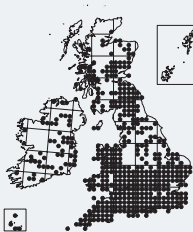


Syntrichia laevipila

Tortula laevipila

Small Hairy Screw-moss

Key 112



Identification *S. laevipila* grows in bright, yellow-green patches, going greyish when dry, around 1–1.5 cm tall. The leaves are 2.5–3.5 mm long, spread when moist, and become twisted when dry. Each leaf is constricted just below the middle, and has a blunt, rounded tip. The leaf margins are plane, or slightly recurved in the middle. The nerve is excurrent in a long, silvery hair point. Occasionally, the hair point may have a few obscure teeth. Cylindrical capsules are quite common. Some forms have clusters of small, leaf-like gemmae at the shoot tip.

Similar species *S. virescens* (p. 498) has a more distinctly toothed hair point, and a notched leaf tip. When found on trees, *S. laevipila* is unlikely to be confused with *S. papillosa* (p. 500) or *S. latifolia* (p. 501), but when growing on the ground it might be confused with *S. ruralis* (pp. 494–495) or *S. intermedia* (p. 496) whose hair points are more distinctly toothed. The leaves of *S. ruralis* are also not contracted in the middle. *Tortula muralis* (p. 479) also has a smooth hair point, but in that species the margins are recurved almost to the leaf tip. Forms of *S. laevipila* with reddish hair points differ from the very rare *S. norvegica* (Smith, p. 382) in the plane leaf margins and untoothed hair points. Forms growing on rock should be checked microscopically to discount the rare *Tortula canescens* (p. 478).

Habitat Grows most frequently on a wide variety of trees and occasionally on walls and rocks. It is common and widespread.