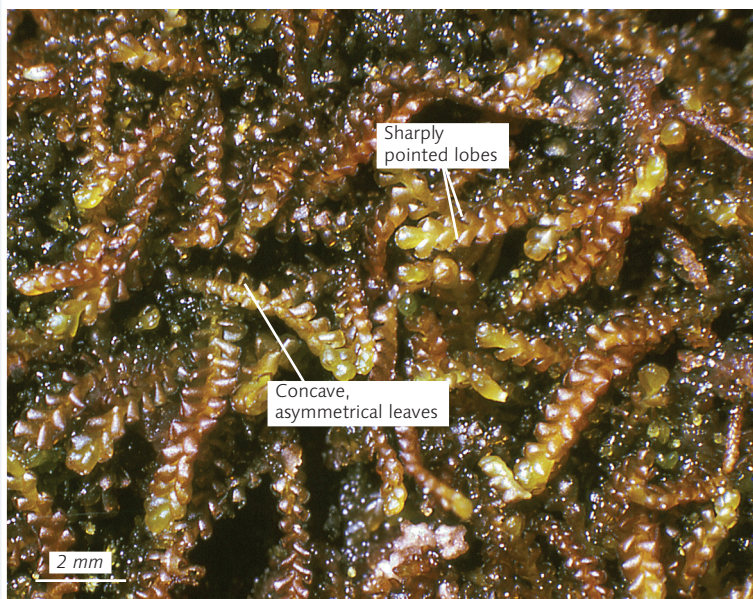
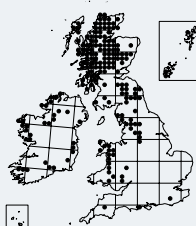


Anastrophyllum minutum

Comb Notchwort



Identification At first glance, *A. minutum* looks like any number of other bilobed leafy liverworts. However, its loose, dark or yellowish-brown mats and slightly asymmetrical, very concave leaves with sharply pointed lobes give it a distinctive appearance. Shoots are 0.4–1.2 mm wide, with leaves less than 1 mm long and wide. The leaves are vaguely reminiscent of a *Scapania* species, but are unkeeled. Attenuated, gemmiferous shoots are sometimes present, tipped by green (or more rarely red) gemmae. Underleaves are absent.

Similar species The brown colour and bilobed leaves are similar to the features of several *Marsupella* species (pp. 155–161), but these all have symmetrical leaves, none have gemmae (although they are often absent from *A. minutum*), and those with acute leaf lobes are generally smaller than most *A. minutum*. The asymmetrical leaves are reminiscent of *Scapania* species, although none of them combine a brown colour with narrow, acute leaf lobes. They are also rather like *Douinia ovata* (p. 165), which has even more asymmetrical, more acute leaves and is often very pale green. Plants with red gemmae can look very like *A. hellerianum* (p. 133), but are usually more than twice as large and seldom grow on logs. The very rare *A. saxicola* (Paton, p. 244), with wider (1.2 mm) leaf lobes and even more deeply concave leaves, grows in the Cairngorms. *Cladopodiella francisci* (p. 99) has symmetrical leaves.

Habitat The most widespread British *Anastrophyllum* species and a frequent plant of the uplands, at least in parts of Scotland. However, it is very scarce in many parts of the country that hold suitable habitat. This includes steep, rocky or heathery slopes, where *A. minutum* grows on the ground below the heather, dry hummocks in bogs, ledges in ravines, and peaty banks, even in moderately exposed sites. At the southern edge of its range it is found under leggy heather or in block scree.