Calypogeia fissa
Common Pouchwort

Key 52, 67, 77

Shallow notch

Deeply bilobed underleaves

5 mm

Side lobe

1 mm

1 mm

1 mm
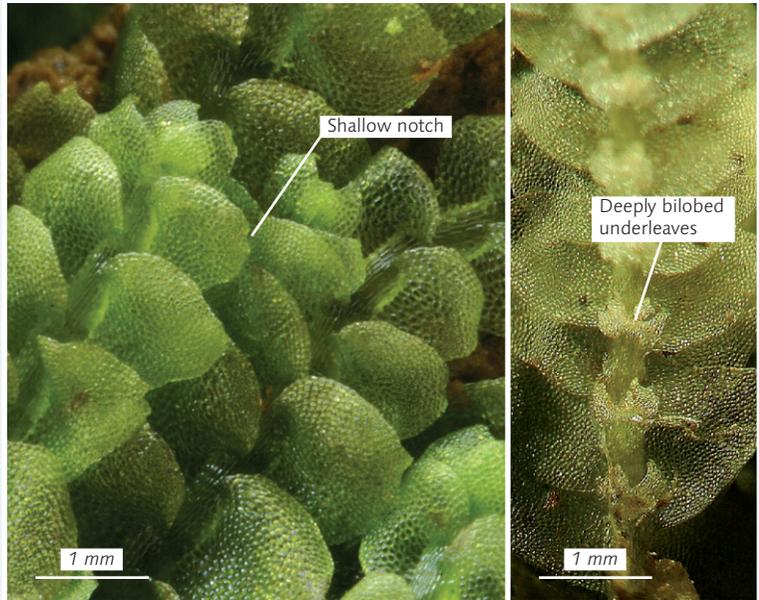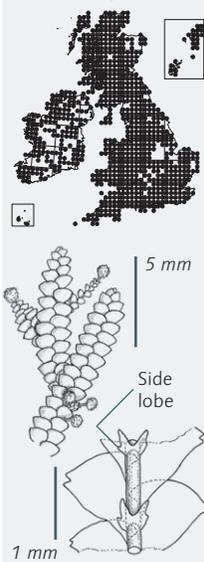
Identification This rather variable plant is our commonest *Calypogeia*, and one of the most frequently encountered British liverworts. It usually grows appressed to a substrate, with shoots 1.5–3.5 mm wide, composed of 2 rows of slightly overlapping, not-quite-opposite leaves held at 90° to the stem. Plants growing through *Sphagnum* are more straggly, with widely spaced leaves. Leaves are slightly less than 2 mm long and wide. The leaf shape is typical of the genus, but is usually more pointed than in most other *Calypogeia* species. Many leaves end with a shallow notch, although some plants lack this almost entirely. A better clinching character is provided by the underleaves, which are deeply bilobed and have an extra lobe on each side. Pale green gemmae are usually present at the shoot tip.

Similar species Often confused with *C. muelleriana* (p. 86), as some plants are rather intermediate. However, almost all apparent intermediates can be named with care. *C. muelleriana* has rounded leaf tips that almost never end with a notch and are only rarely bluntly pointed like those of *C. fissa*; more importantly, its underleaves are shallowly notched and have no extra lobe on their sides. *C. azurea* (p. 87) is similar in size, but has blue oil bodies that make the whole shoot look bluish. *C. sphagnicola* and *C. suecica* (p. 89) are much more slender (shoots less than 1 mm wide) and have very specific habitat requirements. *C. integristipula* and *C. neesiana* (p. 88) tend to have more opaque leaves and have entire underleaves. *C. arguta* (p. 90) has 2 divergent teeth on the leaf tip. *Odontoschisma denudatum* (p. 103) has its leaves pressed together, rather than flattened against the substrate.

Habitat A widespread and often abundant plant that grows on acidic soil, peat, soft rock, rotting logs, and *Sphagnum* or purple moor-grass (*Molinia*) tussocks. Woods, hillsides, bogs and heaths are all typical habitats.

Photos Des Callaghan (left) & Michael Lüth (right) Drawings Sean Edwards Text Sam Bosanquet