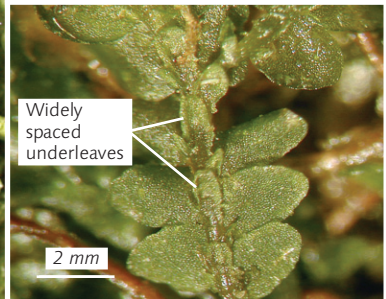
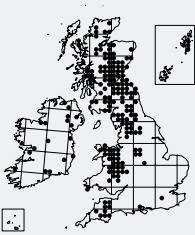


Porella cordaeana

Cliff Scalewort



Identification *P. cordaeana* often looks very distinctive, but can nevertheless be tricky to identify. Its branched, often pinnate shoots (2.3–4 mm wide), large leaves (2 mm wide and nearly as long), and dull, dark green colour are all typical of *Porella* species. Generally it looks rather lax and flat, with little up-curling of leaf edges. The narrow lobule under each leaf runs well down onto the stem and has a twist near its acute tip. The underleaves are spaced out along the stem and hardly overlap each other. Unfortunately, these characteristics are not always well-developed and forms of *P. platyphylla* can mimic them.

Similar species *P. platyphylla* (p. 206) is the most similar species and on the continent is even known to hybridize with *P. cordaeana*. Its lobules are blunt-tipped and have somewhat raised margins, but no twist, whilst its underleaves are usually close-set, so the tip of one overlaps the base of the next one. Colonies of *P. cordaeana* near western rivers can be distinguished from *P. pinnata* (p. 210) by the latter's very small, narrow, untwisted lobules, which do not extend down the stem.

Habitat A locally frequent plant of silty tree bases and rocks by lowland rivers – a habitat where *P. platyphylla* is also quite frequent. Less often it grows on base-rich, siliceous rocks in wooded ravines, on sheltered cliffs on higher ground, or on boulders on the edge of lochs. It tends to avoid limestone, unlike *P. platyphylla*.