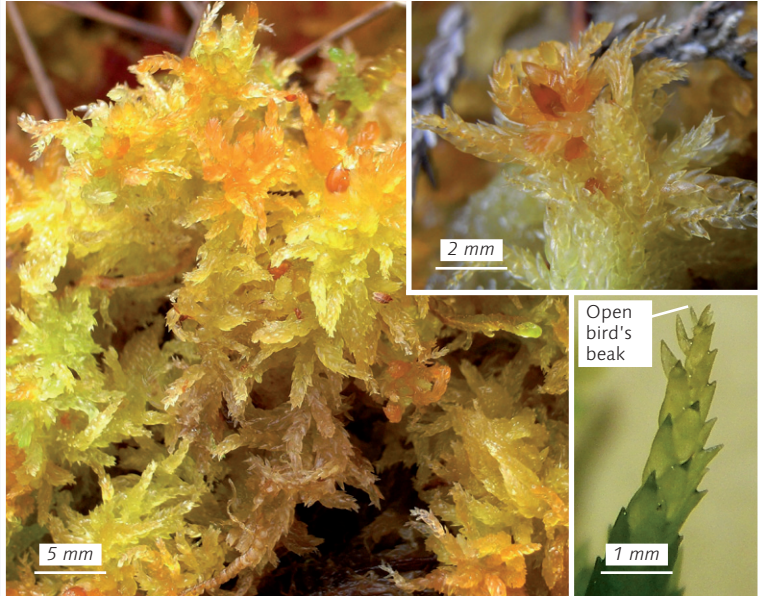
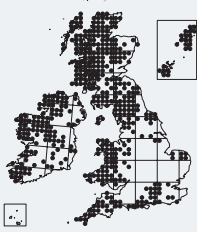


Sphagnum tenellum

Soft Bog-moss

Section Cuspidata

**Identification**

The smallest British *Sphagnum*. Occurs as small, flat patches or low cushions, about 10–20 cm across, or as scattered stems. Usually rich yellow-orange or yellowish-brown, sometimes a mix of green and yellow-orange, and occasionally, when frequently submerged, a dull green. A small and delicate plant, which tends to fall apart when handled. In profile, some branches have the two leaves at the tip spreading, hence looking like an open bird's beak or crab's claws. Spreading and pendent branches look similar. Branch leaves are strongly concave, arranged along the branches like strings of pearls. The concave stem leaves are almost as large as the branch leaves and spread out from the stem, which is readily visible. Capsules are frequent.

Similar species

Being so small and delicate, it is unlikely to be confused with other species.

Habitat

Occurs on acidic, bare, peaty ground, especially frequent in small hollows on bogs. Also on wet heaths and on well-drained, but very humid, heathery slopes in districts with high rainfall.