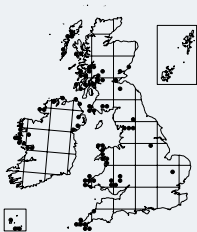


Riccia beyrichiana

Purple Crystalwort



Identification

This is one of our largest *Riccia* species, forming persistent rosettes or mats up to 2.5 cm across. Branches are oblong to slightly curved, widest above the middle, up to 2.5 mm wide, usually shiny, greyish-green above, and frequently tinged reddish on the margins. The median groove is narrow at the extreme tip, but broad and flat-bottomed behind. Margins are swollen and rounded in section, and may have very short, colourless hairs near the tip. Old parts of the thallus become channelled and often bear capsules.

Similar species

R. beyrichiana is unlike all other *Riccia* species (pp. 261–269) in its large, channelled, long-persistent, shiny thalli with swollen margins; *R. bifurca* (Paton, p. 595) is a miniature version of this species, with branches only up to 1 mm wide and lacking colourless hairs.

Habitat

This species grows on acidic soils in exposed sites subject to seasonal inundation, such as damp hollows on cliff tops and rocky sea coasts, old quarries, footpaths and tracks, on sand dunes, and mud by reservoirs. *R. beyrichiana* sometimes occurs on thin, leached soils over limestone in south Wales.