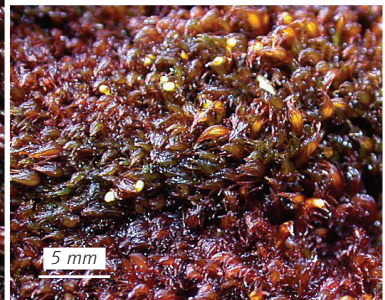
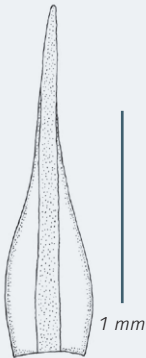
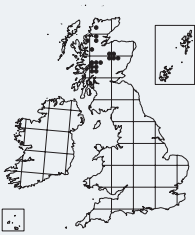


Andreaea nivalis

Snow Rock-moss



Identification

This is the largest of the *Andreaea* species, with some stems reaching 10 cm in length. It grows in reddish-brown cushions or mats, sometimes mixed with other bryophytes, and some patches can be large. The leaves are much more translucent than in other *Andreaea* species, often 2 mm long or more, usually curved and/or turned to one side when moist, and retain this shape (but are somewhat shrunken) when dry. The narrowly spearhead-shaped leaves taper gradually to an acute tip which is filled by the prominent nerve.

Similar species

Because of its habitat and large size, this moss is only likely to be confused with *A. frigida* (Smith, p. 113). That species has wider, blunt-tipped leaves and is usually darker red. *A. frigida* does not grow in such extensive mats as *A. nivalis*.

Habitat

Growing on rocks that are permanently wet or frequently irrigated, both on crags and on boulders in and by burns, and always associated with areas where snow lies late in the year. It can also form extensive patches on fine, shallow, stony soils in flatter, irrigated areas of snowbed vegetation.