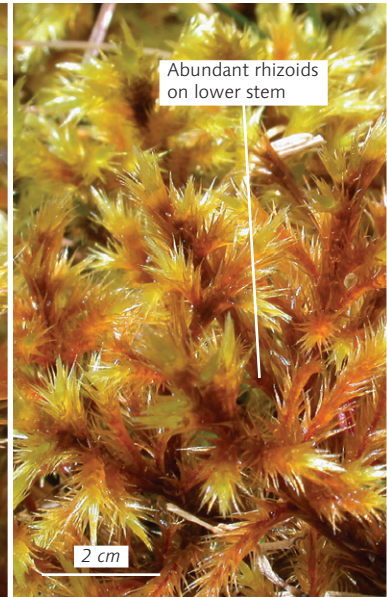
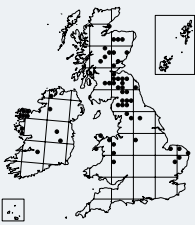


*Tomentypnum nitens**Homalothecium nitens*

Woolly Feather-moss



Identification A striking and distinctive, large, golden pleurocarp, with upright stems 5–10 cm long, straight, tapering, pleated leaves 4 mm long, and abundant, brown rhizoids on the lower stem and leaf bases. It grows amongst brown mosses, usually in dense patches. Capsules are rare.

Similar species No other mosses that grow in calcareous fens have long, narrow, pleated leaves, and rhizoids on the stems. The most superficially similar species is *Homalothecium lutescens* (p. 739), but that has no rhizoids on its stems, and grows in dry grassland. Other pleurocarps of fens, such as *Drepanocladus* (pp. 713–714), *Warnstorfia* (pp. 715–717), *Calliargon* (pp. 718–719) and *Brachythecium* (pp. 741–752) species, lack rhizoids on the stems and have leaves that are either strongly curved, or much shorter and broader. The very different-looking *Breutelia chrysocoma* (p. 640) and *Aulacomnium palustre* (p. 625) also have stems covered by rhizoids.

Habitat A scarce and declining species of calcareous fens, usually those which are rich in sedges (*Carex* species) and brown mosses such as *Campylium* and *Scorpidium*. It is very rare in southern Britain, but remains tolerably frequent in upland mires in the central Scottish Highlands, and in the Borders and northern England, where it tends to grow where flushes spread onto flatter ground.