

Riccia bifurca

Lizard Crystalwort



Identification *R. bifurca* is a small species in rosettes or patches up to 1.5 cm across; the thallus branches are linear and up to 1 mm broad, greyish-green above with sides often reddish- or violet-pigmented, with a deep but narrow median groove; older parts are channelled and long-persistent, the margins are rounded and symmetric and somewhat swollen but lack cilia. Capsules are frequent, borne within older parts of the thallus.

Similar species *R. crozalsii* (q.v.) is similar in size and habit but has numerous incurved cilia on the branches; older parts of the thallus are convex and not channelled and are not persistent. *R. subbifurca* (q.v.) is also similar but often has a few cilia on the branches, it is yellowish-green in colour and the older parts of the thalli are flattened, not channelled and not long-persistent.

Habitat A very rare southern species restricted to moist hollows and paths on exposed coastal heaths and cliff-tops, sometimes growing with *R. beyrichiana*.