

## 15 Sea mats

### *Lophopus crystallinus* a freshwater bryozoan

**Current status** Rare RDB (GB).

Widely reported in Europe but its status is unknown. Sparsely scattered in England, only recorded from four sites since 1970 one of which is the Barton Blow Wells, South Humberside where it was recorded from 1982-1984. This is the only member of the *Lophopodidae* in the UK.

They grow on a variety of substrates including water plants, rocks, shells, wood and dead leaves.

Feeding on minute organisms suspended in water, they reproduce both sexually to produce a short lived free swimming stage and asexually, forming statoblasts which can survive extreme conditions and remain dormant for several years. Associated with aquifer fed fluctuating water bodies, wet woodlands and mesotrophic lakes.

**Threats** Eutrophication of water bodies; water abstraction and over-tidying of water bodies, especially the removal of fallen wood.