



BBS Summer Meeting – Week 1 26 June– 3 July 2010

We were fortunate to be based for the week at a complex of farm cottages at Easter Corrie near Tomnavoulin. Although Sam Bosanquet commented on arrival, after driving along a dirt track, that it was probably the most remote headquarters ever for a BBS meeting, the logistics for the week were eased considerably because we were all able to stay at the base, and the departure time for the day's recording became earlier each day as the week progressed! The geographical extent of the week's recording is apparent from the range of six vice-counties, Kincardineshire (91), South Aberdeenshire (92), North Aberdeenshire (93), Banffshire (94), Moray (95) and Easternness (96). Participants for the week, or part of the week were: David Bell, Sam Bosanquet, David Chamberlain, Richard Fisk, Liz Kungu, Richard Lansdown, Mark Lawley, Oliver Moore, Chris Preston and Gordon Rothero.

▲ *Splachnum ampullaceum** and *S. sphaericum* on Glack of Breagach. R. Fisk

This meeting, a prelude to the main event, was based at Tomnavoulin in Glenlivet, with the aim of recording under-recorded hectads on the north-eastern edge of the Cairngorms National Park, extending from the coast at Lossiemouth to south of Cock Bridge, as **Liz Kungu** describes.

SATURDAY 26 JUNE [NJ22 (v.-c. 94), NN93 & 94 (v.-c. 88), NO69 (v.-c. 91 & 92)]

Both the Anglo-Welsh and Edinburgh contingents took the opportunity to record en route north. Sam and Richard Lansdown, by pure chance, opted to record in NN93, one of the few post-1970 blank Scottish hectads on their route. A stop to look at the river valley, rocks and flushes along the River Braan at Glenfender (NN917375), near Milton, proved highly productive with *Hamatocaulis vernicosus*, *Rhizomnium pseudopunctatum*, *Sphagnum teres*

and *Chiloscyphus pallescens* in the flushes, and *Schistidium platyphyllum* on rocks in the river. Their work brought the species total for the hectad to 97. A further stop in NN94 to look at the woodland along the R. Braan, north-east of Tochry (NN989405) provided an additional locality for *Schistidium platyphyllum* and also *Ulota drummondii*.

The Edinburgh contingent was joined for their day's recording by Richard Fisk and set off to record NO69, in which 111 species were noted. The first stop at Feughie Inn on the Water of Feugh was just in v.-c. 91. Here, almost immediately, David Chamberlain found *Pylaisia polyantha* on willow near the river bank. *Orthotrichum rivulare* on boulders at the edge of the river was the only other species of note. The second stop at Craighlash in v.-c. 92, brought to light *Cirriphyllum piliferum** on the floor of the Quarry. The adjacent Moss Maud supported an extensive fen community with *Rhizomnium pseudopunctatum*, *Sphagnum contortum*, *S. teres* and *Chiloscyphus pallescens*.

Mark, having arrived early at Tomnavoulin, started off recording NJ22 at Bridge of Tombae and in the disused quarry and found *Fossombronina incurva*, *Campylopus subulatus** and *Diphyscium foliosum**. *Dicranum montanum** grew on the alder by the stream.

SUNDAY 27 JUNE [NJ20 (v.-c. 92), NJ21 (v.-c. 92 & 94) & NJ23 (v.-c. 94)]

Since square-bashing was the main objective of the week, we split into three groups of three and dutifully headed off in different directions. Liz, Richard Fisk and Chris travelled a short distance north-east to NJ23, starting in the valley of Allt Beag (NJ2633) where *Solenostoma hyalinum** was abundant by the waterfalls and *Racomitrium affine** grew on boulders at the upper end of the valley. *Bryum ruderale** was found at Kirkhill Church and Cemetery (NJ278336), the next stop. After some fruitless driving around to find suitable habitats, a return via the Glack of Breagach proved very rewarding. Here a valley bog provided *Sphagnum magellanicum** for one of the only two Scottish vice-counties in



▲ *Scapania paludosa* in a flush at the Grains of Slochd Chaimbeil. S. Bosanquet

which it had not yet been recorded. There was a splendid range of Splachnaceae with *Splachnum ampullaceum**, *S. sphaericum* and *Tetraplodon mnioides* in close proximity. Other species of note on the bog were *Odontoschisma denudatum** and *Riccardia latifrons**. The base-rich flushes along the margins of the bog had both *Scorpidium revolvens** and *Rhizomnium pseudopunctatum*, and a large population of *Trichocolea tomentella* that extended over several square metres. This interesting but tiny site brought the hectad total up to 154 species.

Sam, Richard Lansdown and Oliver headed for the hills to the south in NJ21 and began recording the Conglass Water at Blairnamarrow (an area underlain by limestone). Just over 100 species were recorded from this site. Highlights here included *Pohlia prolifera* on a stream bank, *Racomitrium canescens* on limestone rocks in the calcareous grassland and *Scorpidium cossonii** in a transition fen with lawns of *Sphagnum teres*. *Anomobryum*



◀ A depressing view of the effects of muir-burn on the Ladder Hills.
O. Moore

▼ *Plagiothecium platyphyllum*, Grains of Slochd Chaimbeil.
S. Bosanquet



julaceum var. *concinatum* was found on a rock in the grassland away from the stream, and *Campylopus fragilis** was occasional on low soil banks. Robust-looking plants of *Marchantia polymorpha* var. *montivagans** were found on gravelly ground close to the stream.

They then headed to the Ladder Hills, attracted by high-altitude parking at a ski centre and the prospect of montane species in stream gullies above 700 m altitude. The main interest of the blanket bog (that dominated the ridge) was abundant *Sphagnum*

fuscum. After 3 km of bryologically dull terrain, their spirits soared when a magnificent juvenile golden eagle was flushed at close quarters. They pushed on quickly to the West Coire of Slochd Mor (NJ2617, v.-c. 92) to allow the bird to return to its meal of blue hare. However, the destination proved disappointing with the exception of Richard's find of *Calypogeia neesiana* and Sam's find of *Anastrepta orcadensis*. *Cephalozia leucantha* and *Marsupella sprucei* were also found here. They returned via the Grains of Slochd Chaimbeil (NJ257159) a mountain gully at 750 m and finally found hoped-for species such as *Pohlia ludwigii*, *Anthelia juratzkana* and *Kiaeria starkei*. In a high-altitude flush, Sam found good stands of *Plagiothecium platyphyllum* and *Scapania paludosa*. Lecht Forestry Plantation provided a few further taxa for the square, including *Ptilidium pulcherrimum* on both juniper bushes and a decorticated pine log, bringing the day's records to 153 species.

NJ20 in v.-c. 92 was tackled by both Davids and Mark. On the tracks south of Cock Bridge Mark found *Atrichum tenellum** and *Bryum subapiculatum*. This site also yielded *Racomitrium elongatum*, *Chiloscyphus pallascens* and *Ditrichum gracile**. The adjacent tetrad containing Rinn Dearg and the banks of the River Don provided *Archidium alternifolium**, *Cynodontium jeneri*, *Sphagnum teres*, *Ulota drummondii* and *Calypogeia neesiana*. Heading for higher ground on the slopes of the Ca, the team were rewarded with *Bryum weigellii* and *Kiaeria blyttii*, *Ulota hutchinsiae**, *Gymnomitron concinatum* and *G. obtusum*. Their efforts for the day yielded a respectable 157 species for the hectad.

MONDAY 28 JUNE [NJ15 & NJ25 (v.-c. 95), NJ30 & 40 (v.-c. 92)]

Monday saw David Chamberlain, Richard Fisk and Oliver head north to the lower ground south of Elgin. The Woodland SSSI at Glenlatterach did not live up



◀ Richard Fisk and the delights of Glenlatterach SSSI.
O. Moore

to the promise indicated by the maps, and proved very difficult to access, but *Hyocomium armoricum** was added to the records. The ground above the wood and towards the reservoir proved a little better, supporting remnants of a bog community and dry *Calluna* heath, with *Cephalozia leucantha* and *Odontoschisma denudatum*. Base-rich flushes along the road to the east of the Glenlatterach Reservoir (NJ1953) extended the day's total to 125 for NJ15.

Mark, Chris and Liz headed far south to Black Moss (NJ4601), Muir of Dinnet, where again an SSSI that looked exciting from the map proved to be difficult to access, and the fen turned out to be eutrophic and overgrown with only a limited bryophyte flora. Chris's find of *Bryum radiculosum** on the wall of a derelict cottage was the only plant of interest. Tarland churchyard and cemetery (NJ481043) was a duty stop for the urban 'grots' followed by a visit to the higher ground heading

up the Coinlach Burn from Bridgefoot (NJ412040). This proved a productive excursion; finds included *Rhizomnium pseudopunctatum*, *Sphagnum capillifolium* subsp. *capillifolium**, *Sphagnum teres*, *Cephalozia pleniceps*, *Hygrobiella laxifolia* and *Leiocolea bantriensis*, bringing the total species recorded to 141 for NJ40. Having walked up to the hectad boundary by mid-afternoon, Liz had the 'brilliant' idea of just popping into the adjacent hectad, as that was also under-recorded, they were so close, and those waterfalls looked interesting. This incursion into NJ30 provided 105 species from the burn valley and blanket bog south of Roar Hill (540 m), including Mark's find of *Solenostoma parvicum** at the waterfall in the burn, but the diversion resulted in a rather late return home that evening.

Sam, Richard Lansdown and David Bell headed north to NJ25, and started off the day by the River Spey at the Bridge of Souden, where they found

Amblystegium fluviatile, *Hypnum andoi**, *Orthotrichum rivulare* and *Conocephalum salebrosum**. After a duty stop at the car park for Millbuies Country Park, the team headed for Cockmuir Wood (NJ231564) where, in an otherwise sparse site, Richard found several populations of *Aneura mirabilis* under *Sphagnum fallax* in very

◀ Richard Lansdown, Gordon, David Chamberlain and Sam contemplate the descent into Ailnack Gorge, whilst Liz and Chris bring up the rear, 29 June. O. Moore





◀ Find the bryologist 1. The perched lunch party (Richard Fisk, David Bell, David Chamberlain, Gordon, Oliver, Liz and Chris) can be seen at the top in the grand scenery of Ailnack Gorge. But where is Mark? *R. Lansdown*

TUESDAY 29 JUNE [NJ11 (v.-c. 94)]

The Water of Ailnack (pronounced An-yack, apparently) drains a large part of the north-eastern Cairngorms, so it is a large river and one which flows through a deep ravine for some 10 km before it joins the River Avon. Much of this ravine is cut through Dalradian Limestone and calcareous Old Red Sandstone, giving large exposures of calcareous rocks with both northerly and southerly aspects. Over the past few years the site has produced a remarkable number of rare bryophytes, including two new to the British Isles (Blockeel *et al.*, 2009), so this was to be the carrot to balance the 'square-bashing' stick. The plan was to visit the site of some of the rarities and then explore untouched ground further upstream. In the event, we managed barely another 500 m as the low water gave us the chance to explore the rocks on the south side which are not accessible at normal water levels.

The ravine is spectacular and access is only possible in a few places in the lower section.

Fortunately, the site for a number of the rarities has a relatively gentle access down a steep grassy slope which allowed homage to be paid to *Schistidium atrofusum*, *Didymodon icmadophilus*, *Hypnum vaucheri* and the two newcomers, *Tortula inermis* and *Schistidium helveticum*. There were other good things in this area, including *Schistidium robustum*, *Tortella bambergi*, *Racomitrium canescens*, *Pseudeskeella catenulata* and *Encalypta raptocarpa*. It was possible to scramble down to the river here, and the dry spell of weather allowed easy access along the river for some distance. The short bryophyte turf that develops on silt and gravel by the river is a good habitat and here were patches of *Moerckia flotoviana*, *Nardia geoscyphus** and *Solenostoma confertissimum**, as well as sparse stems of *Scapania cuspiduligera*. The low water allowed access to the crags on

wet birch woodland. Faries Temple and Corbies Craig, a wooded gorge and poor fen surrounded by conifer, was the lunch stop where Sam found *Polytrichum commune* var. *perigonale** on the forestry track and *Solenostoma obovatum*. The final target for the day was Gull's Nest SSSI where the route in along the Mannoeh Road proved considerably more interesting than the site itself. *Atrichum tenellum* was found on the damp ground at the quarry, but unfortunately the only *Fossombronina* was sterile. Nearer to Pikey Hill, a few male plants of *Haplomitrium hookeri*, extensive sheets of *Marsupella funckii* and fruiting *Dicranella subulata* were found on the track. The SSSI again proved of limited bryological interest, except for the good range of *Sphagnum*, including three mounds of *S. austini*, and *Cephalozia loitlesbergeri* growing on *S. capillifolium* subsp. *rubellum*. This assiduous recording added 168 species to the hectad.

That evening the party was joined by Gordon, who stayed for the rest of the week and was persuaded to lead the whole party to Ailnack gorge the next day.



the south side for those willing to get their feet wet, but these were a little disappointing being generally wet and having an abundance of common plants like *Scapania subalpina*, *Palustriella commutata*, *Leiocolea bantriensis*, *L. collaris* and *Gymnostomum aeruginosum*, although there were some nice things like *Eremonotus myriocarpus* and *Didymodon spadiceus*. Mark found *Tortella fragilis* and *Pseudoleskeella rupestris* within a metre or so of each other on a boulder. Drier crags higher up had huge cushions of *Grimmia funalis* and a devious route up past these gave Sam and Richard Lansdown access to the upper ramparts on the south side. Here, in the flushes above, they found *Catoscopium nigratum* and *Dicranella grevilleana**

The lower paddlers re-joined the rest of the group for a perched lunch, entertained by Sam and Richard's antics on the steep slope opposite, and then set off upstream, some by a narrow sheep track above a big drop, to cross some enormous tufa deposits that form substantial crags. The tufa was mostly calcified *Palustriella commutata*, but in the flushes here *Philonotis calcarea* and *Amblyodon dealbatus* were found. At this point we decided to quit the ravine and make a little progress upstream before dropping down again to crags above the river. The rock is complex here with metamorphosed limestone jumbled up with acidic flagstones, so that calcifuges like *Coscinodon cribrosus* and *Grimmia donniana* occur in close juxtaposition to the calcicoles *Leucodon sciuroides* and *Ditrichum flexicaule*. The bryophyte turf by the river again came up trumps with Sam's find of the

day – fruiting *Tayloria lingulata**, a strikingly different habitat to its usual montane flushes.

We reached a natural end-point for the day when the route ahead at river level would have involved serious water activity; a scramble to the top on the slope takes you from something akin to bryophyte nirvana to the hell of burnt grouse muir, although a mire area here did produce both *Sphagnum austinii* and *Kurzia sylvatica** as a final flourish. Although this was by no means an under-recorded hectad to start with, we recorded 203 species during the day.

WEDNESDAY 30 JUNE [NJ26 & 27 (v.-c. 95), NJ30 & 31 (v.-c. 92), NJ32 (v.-c. 93, 94)]

Unfortunately, Richard Lansdown had to depart early and left on Wednesday morning. Sam, Richard Fisk and Chris had an ulterior motive for heading north to Lossiemouth in NJ26 & 27; if it hadn't been for the promise of *Potamogeton x suecicus* (*P. filiformis* x *pectinatus*) it is doubtful if they would have been persuaded to contemplate such dull ground. The day consisted of dotting in and out of a number of sites in the hope of recording a reasonable number of species. By the end of the day, all the hard work had been rewarded with 108 species for NJ26, being the cumulative total recorded from Cooper Park, Elgin (NJ2162), Palace of Spynie (NJ2365), Spynie Loch and Quarry (NJ2265), Lossie Forest (NJ2667) and Lossiemouth dunes (NJ242699). *Henediella heimii* was recorded on the dunes, *Orthotrichum obtusifolium* on a tree trunk in Cooper Park, *Conocephalum conicum** by the river in Elgin and *Racomitrium canescens* on the calcareous rocks of Spynie Quarry.

◀ 1. *Dicranella grevilleana* in Ailnack Gorge. S. Bosanquet

2 & 6. *Tortula inermis* (2) and *Hypnum vaucheri* (6) two of the many exciting species to start the day off at Ailnack. O. Moore

3. The paddlers; Liz demonstrates the river dance to Gordon! O. Moore

4. The awe-inspiring scale of Ailnack Gorge shown by the perched lunch party: Richard Fisk, David Bell, David Chamberlain, Gordon, Oliver, Liz and Chris are dwarfed by the landscape. R. Lansdown

5. Find the bryologists 2. Sam (under the crags) and Richard Lansdown (on the skyline) on the south-east bank of Ailnack taken from the vantage point of the perched lunch party. G. Rothero

7. *Didymodon spadiceus* on the far bank at Ailnack. O. Moore

NJ27, which includes only Lossiemouth and a thin strip of adjoining coast, proved even more of a challenge and in the end only 24 species were recorded, including *Gyroweisia tenuis*. Returning to base early gave Sam time to record the moorland flushes down by the Easter Corrie stream where he found *Cladopodiella francisci**. Recording on the area around the cottages produced *Orthotrichum rupestre**.

David Chamberlain, Liz and Gordon headed south to NJ31, but were persuaded by Liz to stop off in a most uninspiring corner of NJ30 by the River Don at Garchory to finish recording the hectad started on Monday. This increased the hectad total to 136 species, which probably under-estimates the diversity of this area as none of the hill ground of Mona Gowan and Morven (872 m) has been explored. *Plagiothecium laetum* was the star find here.

NJ31 was the main target for the day, with a walk in through conifer plantations along the lower Glen Nochty and a visit to the broad-leaved wood at Tolduquhill, en route for the Green Hill of Strathdon SSSI. This area is scheduled for its serpentine outcrops and juniper heath, but the most interesting area for bryophytes was a north-west-facing outcrop of limestone crags and scree on the northern boundary of the site (NJ 302145). Here they found *Racomitrium elongatum*, *Schistidium atrofusum*, *S. confertum**, *S. robustum* and *Scapania cuspiduligera*. *Calypogeia sphagnicola* grew on the *Sphagnum* and *Bryum pseudotriquetrum* var. *pseudotriquetrum* was found in the flushes on the north side of Green Hill. *Mnium marginatum* and *Grimmia montana* were also found here, and by the end of the day 157 species had been recorded from NJ31.

Mark, David Bell and Oliver headed east to NJ32. Cabrach House and Village and the ground down to the Allt Deveron proved surprisingly diverse with *Grimmia ramondii** locally abundant on boulders by the burn in the shade of the aspens and *Ditrichum lineare** on the forestry

track. Other finds included *Antitrichia curtispendula*, *Pterigynandrum filiforme* and *Sphagnum teres* in a mire. Craig Watch to the west included serpentine rock outcrops but these again had a predictably limited flora with *Racomitrium elongatum* the only plant of note. Recording in the Wood of Allt Gauch (NJ3728, v.-c. 94), a dry birch wood to the west of the River Deveron, brought the total for the hectad to 149 species.

THURSDAY 1 JULY [NJ 22 & 23 (v.-c. 94), NJ33 (v.-c. 94) & NJ46 (v.-c. 94)]

Mark, Chris and David Bell set off for Dufftown and Glen Fiddich in NJ33. Along the Dullan Water south of Dufftown, in a wooded river valley with some limestone rock at the sides, *Conocephalum conicum**, *Bryum pallescens**, *Dicranum montanum* and *Leucodon sciuroides* were found. Nearby at Kirktown of Mortlach, *Orthotrichum obtusifolium* was growing on elder between the road and an arable field north of the Church. Whilst recording along the River Fiddich from Bridgehaugh to Allt Screen, *Antitrichia curtispendula* was found on the bark of a decaying birch stump and *Solenostoma paroicum** was seen at the side of Craigy Stripe (NJ336356). *Rhizomnium pseudopunctatum* and *Tritomaria exsectiformis** were also found. A final visit to the Black Water south of Bridgend added *Encalypta vulgaris*, *Isothecium holtii*, *Orthotrichum rupestre* and *Frullania fragilifolia* to the day's effort, and the cumulative total reached 181 species, the third highest hectad total for the week.

David Chamberlain, Liz and Richard tackled NJ46, starting with the wooded valley of the Burn of Letterfourie at Drybridge, followed by a rather moist stop at a conifer plantation on the Hill of Maud. After lunch a visit was made to the coast at Portnockie, where David's finds of *Bryum caespiticium** on a wall and *Tortula viridifolia* on the path bounding the golf course were the main plants of interest. A final stop was made at Donald Bain's Croft Plantation where Richard found *Bryum sauteri** and *Pohlia lutescens* during the walk along the Glen Burn, but realized too late that the *Pohlia* was required for v.-

c. 94. However, David failed to reach the final target of Davie's Castle, owing to a missing bridge, and a decided lack of enthusiasm for any more conifers. The day's total reached a dutiful 131.

Sam, having decided we had not yet done our duty by our resident NJ22 hectad, proposed a long walk up to Corryhabbie Hill (781 m) and then returning via Glen Fiddich and Glen Suie to Glen Livet and hence back to Tomnavoulin. He was joined in this adventure by Gordon and Oliver, who gamely agreed to abandon his car for the day at the start of the walk, to be retrieved some time later, provided it started! The start at the gravel quarry at Corryhabbie Cottage (NJ276306) yielded little of interest, but added an extra eight species to NJ23. On the route up the hill they found *Anastrepta orcadensis*. The flushes on the north-facing slope proved to be of far more interest, with several patches of *Plagiothecium platyphyllum**, and *Bryum weigelii* abundant in two flushes.

Oliver found *Calypogeia azurea** growing through *Sphagnum subnitens*, and *Scapania uliginosa* grew in a spring. Fertile *Tetraphis pellucida* occurred at 600 m. After surveying the north corrie and summit of Corryhabbie Hill, Gordon quickly realized that the Elf House cave in Upper Glen Fiddich (NJ296292) might be indicative of limestone outcrops and well worth a visit, and so it proved to be. *Dicranella grevilleana* was abundant with thousands of plants on the damp calcareous soil, and *Scapania cuspiduligera* was frequent throughout the limestone area. *Schistidium robustum* was also frequent on the rocks, and there were hundreds of patches of *S. trichodon* on the limestone scree. *Aloina rigida*, *Solenostoma subellipticum*, *S. confertissimum* and *Nardia geoscyphus* were all present in small quantity, and *Seligeria* was well represented with *S. acutifolia*, *S. donniana* and *S. pusilla*. Two patches of *Encalypta ciliata* were found on the crags and *Scapania aequiloba* was frequent.



◀ The *Bryum weigelii* flush on Corryhabbie Hill. O. Moore

After this 12 km trek, the walk home might have seemed long and dull, but far from it. Upper Glen Fiddich provided further records of *Aloina rigida* and also *Pohlia filum* on the trackside bank. Fruiting *Amblyodon dealbatus* and *Meesia uliginosa* grew around a flush in upper Glen Suie and more *S. trichodon* was seen on the limestone, as was *Nardia geoscyphus* on thin soil overlying the limestone. Fruiting *Catoscopium nigrum* and another population of *D. grevilleana* grew on the damp limestone soil by the stream, while south of Suie a small quantity of *Haplomitrium* was found by the track ford. After the long trek down Glen Livet, a close examination of the aspens at Tombee produced *Orthotrichum speciosum* before the walk back to Tomnavoulin. 191 taxa were recorded during the day, taking the total for NJ22 to an impressive 257 species, the richest hectad for the week.

FRIDAY 2 JULY [NJ14 (v.-c. 95), NJ21 (v.-c. 94), NJ41 (v.-c. 92), NJ55 (v.-c. 94)]

Sam, Oliver and David Bell set off south to finish off NJ21 before heading to their main target of the day – NJ41. They got off to a toxic start, searching the spoil heaps at Lecht lead mine where *Ditrichum lineare* proved to be the main species of interest. Having done their duty by NJ21 and brought the hectad total up to 156, the party set their sights on NJ41. Starting close to Clashnearby, Sam found a small population of *Sphagnum angustifolium* in a mineral-rich flush system known as Roman Mire. Oliver spotted *Pohlia drummondii* and *P. bulbifera* on a damp track above the mire. A small streamlet and scattered rocks added to the tally, but the going was slow. After lunch they came across an ephemeral pool where Oliver noticed numerous tiny thalli of *Riccia sorocarpa* on the exposed damp mud. Sam found a few patches of *Lophozia longidens* amongst stable scree in the How of Mar vicinity, and *Racomitrium elongatum* and *Calypogeia sphagnicola* were also added to the list. David glanced away from a good population of *Barbilophozia hatcheri* to admire two wood tiger moths in the grass and heather. Oliver's car cut out

at Mossat, right next to a specialist aquatic garden centre. The party coasted into the car park for an ice-cream and some joshing between Sam and Oliver over the garden gnomes, but the search for unusual *Riccia* species was in vain. The disused quarry at the Saplings of Logie added a few 'grots', but *Bryum argenteum* proved elusive. Glenkindie Bridge brought them quite close to the river, and Sam found some handsome *Orthotrichum rivulare* and *Schistidium rivulare*. It had all seemed like hard work, so they were quite surprised to have recorded 148 species in this hectad.

David Chamberlain, Liz and Chris headed east to NJ55 where the first target of the day looked promising; an abandoned flooded quarry named Limehilllock. Surely no problems with access there, and presumably an interesting site. The track in was across a depressing, abandoned, industrial landscape, and the fence round the quarry was rather stout with rather alarming 'Beware Explosives' danger signs. A very polite, but rather bemused workman who came to find out what we wanted could hardly believe we wanted to look at mosses.

▼ Sam at the Elf House. O. Moore



Retreat outside the fence resulted in a short 'grot' list before we moved on. The next site was little better; in fact Knock Hill looked so bryologically boring it was abandoned in favour of Cottartown Moss (NJ5257) where a bog and mire complex yielded a reasonable list of *Sphagnum*, including *S. subsecundum** and *S. teres*, and *Polytrichum commune* var. *perigoniale* was found on the track. The wooded bank of the River Deveron (NJ5950) was surprisingly productive, and the star find was Chris's *Habrodon perpusillus**, resulting in a long time spent staring at an old *Acer* at the edge of the road up to Ardmeallie House. This is the most northerly record for *Habrodon*. *Cinclidotus fontinaloides** grew on the boulders in the river, *Brachythecium velutinum** on the damp woodland soil and *Orthotrichum lyellii** on the roadside trees. An additional couple of dutiful roadside stops at Scraib Wood and north of Berrydrum added some of the usual species before the final stop at Moss of Crombie NNR, again a most uninspiring site for bryophytes. The margins of this vast raised bog had been extensively cut over in the past and access onto the dome of the raised bog was extremely difficult. The bog

itself was dominated by leggy *Calluna*, though the expected range of *Sphagnum* and common bog species were present. After a long trek to the centre of the bog, Liz managed to find a solitary hummock of *Sphagnum austinii* (NJ57265246, indicative of what this site might have been like in the past), before heading for home, pleasantly surprised to have recorded 149 species from this problematic hectad.



Gordon, Mark and Richard set off north-west to NJ14 in v.-c. 95; Knockando, down by the River Spey was surprisingly productive with 121 species recorded, including *Grimmia longirostris**, *Hygrohypnum duriusculum*, *Orthotrichum rivulare* and *Pterigynandrum filiforme* from boulders bordering the Spey, and *Campylopus subulatus** and *Ptilidium pulcherrimum* in the nearby woods. Yellow Bog (NJ147490) complemented the Knockando site, with 12 *Sphagnum* species and also *Atrichum tenellum*, *Bryum pallescens** and *Philonotis caespitosa*, bringing the total to 170 for NJ14.

SATURDAY 3 JULY [NH64, NH75 & NH85 (v.-c. 96)]

Departure day saw some of the group heading on to Strathpeffer for the second week, and as this was relatively nearby some recording en route was appropriate. The River Nairn at Howford Bridge in NH85 provided both *Hygroamblystegium fluviatile** and *Leptodictyum riparium**. *Leptobryum pyriforme** was recorded in NH64 at Englishton, *Barbula convoluta* var. *sardoa** at Moss Side on disturbed ground by the road, and *Sphagnum capillifolium* var. *capillifolium** in a pine plantation at Carse Wood. *Scorpidium cossonii** was recorded in NH74, on the outskirts of Inverness.

During a very successful week we recorded 20 under-recorded hectads and found 59 vice-county records. However, it was a rather salutary lesson to realize when all the cards were completed that we had missed another 53; this is one of the unfortunate complications of recording in six different vice-counties.

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