

The summer meeting was based around the Victorian spa town of Strathpeffer, about 5 miles inland from Dingwall on the east coast of Scotland. Strathpeffer has grand Victorian buildings but has seen better days as a spa. Most of our evening meals were in Dingwall or Conon Bridge. Excursions departed from the car park of the Community Centre, and were in Easter Ross (v.-c. 106), Easternness (v.-c. 96) and East Sutherland (v.-c. 107). Main excursions were led by Keith Raistrick and Gordon Rothero, with help from David Long. Subsidiary excursions ('square-bashing') were led by Liz Kungu and Richard Fisk. Other participants were David Bell, Sara Emes, Maren Flagmeier, Dave Genney, Mary Ghullam, Mark Hill, Nick Hodgetts, Aline Horwath, Peter Howarth, Mark Lawley, Oliver Moore, Pam Murdoch and Sharon Pilkington.

► *Antitrichia curtipendula* with capsules, Glen Strathfarrar. D. Long



Saturday 3 July was the day of arrival, but this did not deter several groups from making useful records in transit (reported briefly at the end). There was also an official excursion. Keith Raistrick led a party of five to refind *Buxbaumia viridis* at Rogie Falls, where it had been discovered by Dave Genney in 2007. The party went on to the head of Loch Glascarnoch, followed by a small gorge on the Glascarnoch River.

### SUNDAY 4 JULY (v.-c. 96)

We stopped briefly in Glen Convinth, a wooded valley with a road running through it. Conscious of the need to disperse our recording for the next BBS *Atlas*, the party split into two, one in NH53 and another in NH43. The eastern group found *Bryum archangelicum*, *Ulota drummondii*, *Weissia rutilans*, *Diplophyllum obtusifolium*, *Leiocolea bantriensis*,

# BBS Summer Meeting – Week 2 3–9 July 2010

The main meeting was based at Strathpeffer, north of Inverness. **Mark Hill** reports.

*Nardia geoscyphus* and *Solenostoma subellipticum*. The western group found nothing of note, but even so made a list of 73 species. We lunched at the Divach Falls NH4927, a wooded ravine and noted beauty spot. Here we found *Conocephalum salebrosum*\*, *Dichodontium flavescens*\* c.fr., *Campylium protensum*, *Hygroamblystegium fluviatile*, *Hygrohypnum eugyrium*, *Mnium stellare*, *Zygodon conoideus* c.fr. and *Porella cordaeana*. After lunch we drove to Culligran Power Station in Glen Strathfarrar NH3740. The party exploring the steep wooded slope just west of the power station were delighted to find fruiting *Antitrichia curtipendula*, as well as *Grimmia torquata*, *Orthotrichum speciosum* (on hazel), *Weissia brachycarpa* var. *obliqua*\*, *Barbilophozia barbata*, *Jamesoniella autumnalis* and *Radula lindenbergiana*. Another group went along the River Farrar, recording *Leptobryum pyriforme*\* by a shed. The car park and roadside



▲ *Blindia acuta*, and friends, by a stream on way up from Corravachie. A. Horwath

▲ *Sphagnum riparium* in quantity, Allt Coire Lochain, Wyvis Forest. D. Long

produced *Brachythecium mildeanum*, *Bryum pallescens* and *Pohlia filum*.

## MONDAY 5 JULY (v.-c. 106)

This was our first mountain day, and we went to Corravachie at the head of Loch Glass, from where we climbed the slopes north-east of Ben Wyvis, concentrating on the zone from 500 m altitude near Coire Lochain to the summit ridge of Glas Leathad Beag at 900 m. Early birds (commendable) found *Isoetecium holtii* and *Racomitrium ellipticum* on boulders by Loch Glass, and *Cephalozia pleniceps* nearby. Then the rest of us arrived and we set off up the hill, pausing to admire a rowan whose



- ▲ *Sphagnum lindbergii* on cliffs above Coire Lochain. D. Long
- ▶ Looking west from ridge of Glas Leathad Beag. A. Horwath

branches were completely covered in *Antitrichia*. At about 500m, Gordon Rothero found *Bryum pseudotriquetrum* var. *pseudotriquetrum*\* c.fr. and a large sheet of *Sphagnum riparium*\*. A little later he demonstrated a beautiful tuft of *Tetraplodon angustatus* c.fr. and we stopped for lunch. Splinter groups then went in various directions. David Long's group found *Lophozia opacifolia* and the true (calcifuge) *Moerckia hibernica*\* (female). *Sphagnum lindbergii* occurred on cliff slopes down to 570 m as well as in open flushes at 900 m. In one place it was on steep, wet rocks. Nick Hodgetts found *Bryum weigeli*, *Molendoa warburgii* and *Lophozia obtusa*. Richard found *Plagiothecium platyphyllum*, and Mark Lawley recorded *Arctoa fulvella* and *Herzogiella striatella*. By the end of the day, all but the most hardened mountaineers had seen species new to them, and we returned in the sure knowledge that hectad NH47, which had no previous bryophyte records, is not dull.

#### TUESDAY 6 JULY (v.-c. 106)

The second mountain day was to Strathconon Forest (NH25), a more oceanic site halfway between the east and west coasts. We climbed pretty hard to begin with, aiming for Loch Coir' a' Mhuilinn at about 600 m and noting *Calypogeia azurea* in a blanket bog on the way. Gordon found

*Grimmia incurva*\* and *Tetralophozia setiformis* on rocks on the east side of the loch. Mark Lawley found *Marsupella alpina*. Flushes on the west side produced *Sphagnum angustifolium*\* c.fr. (the first time it has been found with capsules in Britain), *Harpanthus flotovianus*, and a good patch of *Moerckia hibernica* (this time male). Steep, rocky slopes supported a scattering of oceanic bryophytes, including *Campylopus atrovirens*, *Dicranodontium uncinatum*, *Hylocomiastrum umbratum*, *Anastrepta orcadensis*, *Anastrophyllum donnianum*, *Bazzania tricrenata*, *Douinia ovata*, *Lepidozia pearsonii*, *Plagiochila carringtonii*, *Pleurozia purpurea* and *Scapania ornithopodioides*. Except for *B. tricrenata* these were in fairly small quantity. Clearly, we were not yet far enough west to experience the elusive northern hepatic mat. Meanwhile another party had visited the east coast on a square-bashing sortie. They found *Ditrichum gracile*\*, *Eucladium verticillatum* and *Leiocolea turbinata* at Tarbat Ness, and *Physcomitrium pyriforme*\* at Portmahomack. They saw nothing of interest at the Talich Wildlife Reserve, but Liz's car had its oil-sump holed on the way in, so for them the day ended pretty miserably.

#### WEDNESDAY 7 JULY (v.-c. 106 & 107)

This had been planned as a third mountain day, but there was a strong wind in spite of the bright sunshine, so we stayed in the eastern lowlands. First stop was Dornoch Links. There were no really good wet dune slacks, but there was plenty of *Climacium*



knew that Migdale Rock is similar to Marian's Rock (the other extant *G. elatior* site), a granitic intrusion with complex mineralogy, including biotite and hornblende; most significantly, these are the only Scottish localities for *Potentilla rupestris* (rock cinquefoil). There were other interesting saxicolous mosses: *Grimmia decipiens*, *G. funalis*, *G. ovalis*, *Pterogonium gracile* and *Schistidium pruinatum*. Wet woodland by Spinningdale Burn produced *Calliergonella lindbergii*\*, *Haplomitrium hookeri* (on a stony track), *Lejeunea lamacerina*\* (found by Aline when she got lost), *Metzgeria violacea*, *Ptilidium pulcherrimum* and *Trichocolea tomentella*\*. A final visit, to the wooded banks of the River Evelix, west of Dornoch, added only *Dicranella schreberiana* to the list for the meeting.

*dendroides*, with *Brachythecium mildeanum*, *Campyliadelphus elodes*, *Distichium inclinatum*\* and *Drepanocladus polygamus* on open and mainly moister ground, and fruiting *Syntrichia ruraliformis* beside a path. The group then divided. The larger party stayed in v.-c. 107, visiting Spinningdale Burn and Migdale Rock near Bonar Bridge. The rock produced the best find of the meeting, *Grimmia elatior* at its second extant site in Britain. Gordon

Meanwhile, a smaller party recorded poorly known hectads near Tain (v.-c. 106). Quarryhill produced little of note, but a small, burnt-over and still burning bog at Loinnbuie by Loch Eye produced *Campylopus brevipilus*\*, *Sphagnum molle* and *Cephalozia macrostachya*\*, with *Fossombronina*



◀ Blanket bog on way up to Loch Coir' a' Mhuilinn. A. Horwath

*wondraczekii* by a nearby track. Sandstone cliffs at Shandwick, near Balintore, were very poor in bryophytes, but supported the locally uncommon *Syntrichia montana*. This time, Liz was in luck; Bannerman's garage in Tain had already fixed her car, and she drove off in good heart.

While most of the group were visiting more distant sites, Nick went to Torr Achilty near Strathpeffer. He found 93 species, including *Pohlia melanodon*, *Bazzania trilobata* and *Saccogyna viticulosa* at their only site on the meeting, as well as some more *Radula lindenbergiana*. We sadly neglected Strathpeffer itself, making no records from its walls and pavements.

#### THURSDAY 8 JULY (v.-c. 106)

The third mountain day was to Loch Gorm and Bealach Ban, just north of Loch Fannich and also about halfway between the east and west coasts.

▼ *Anastrophyllum donnianum* above Loch Gorm. D. Long

► *Pseudocalliergon trifarium* in flush near Loch Gorm. D. Long

We approached from the north, plodding for about 2 hours to get to our destination. Loch Gorm is at 530 m, sheltered by north-east-facing crags. David Long immediately found *Pterigynandrum filiforme* on rocks beside it. After lunch the party fanned out to explore the crags. Most of the oceanic species seen near Loch Coir' a' Mhuilinn were refound. *Moerckia hibernica* was found for a third time. New for the meeting were *Aulacomnium turgidum*, *Campylopus schimperi\**, *Dicranoweisia crispula*, *Distichium capillaceum*, *Encalypta ciliata*, *Isopterygiopsis muelleriana*, *Kiaeria falcata*, *Orthothecium intricatum*, *Paraleptodontium recurvifolium*, *Pseudocalliergon trifarium*, *Trichostomum hibernicum*, *Bazzania pearsonii*, *Cololejeunea calcarea*, *Herbertus stramineus* and *Scapania aequiloba*. We tramped back to the cars knowing that the walk had been well worth it.

Meanwhile, a lowland group had stuck to the east, visiting Strath Rory NH67 and Polinturk NH68, recording 131 species. In Strath Rory, a ditch at only 180 m had abundant *Sphagnum riparium*.





◀ *Marchantia polymorpha* subsp. *polymorpha* by  
Kincardine Burn. D. Long

*Pohlia filum* was abundant along the edge of a track, and *Pohlia bulbifera*, *Racomitrium affine*\* and *Kurzia pauciflora* were new for the meeting.

#### FRIDAY 9 JULY (v.-c. 106)

This was the only wet day, and it rained pretty solidly until about 3.30 in the afternoon. Most of the day was spent exploring hectad NH58, which, along with NH47, had no bryophyte records before we went there. In the morning, two groups visited other hectads. One group found *Solenostoma paroicum* in Easter Fearn Burn NH68 and noted a fair amount of *Dicranella subulata* c.fr. on the banks of an unmetalled road. This had been seen on the previous day, but we suspected that it is overlooked. The other group visited the Balnagown River NH77 and found some calcicoles, including *Eucladium verticillatum*, *Seligeria recurvata* and *Plagiochila britannica*. By the afternoon, we were all in NH58, working in three separate parties. This hectad is distinctly difficult to access, without roads except for those in forestry plantations in the north east and south west. Gordon's group found *Lejeunea patens*, *Lophozia longidens* and *Solenostoma obovatum*, not seen elsewhere on the meeting. Mark Lawley and Oliver found *Pogonatum nanum*, *Racomitrium elongatum* and *Pleurozia purpurea* (rare this far to the east). David Long's group, working up Kincardine Burn, found another low-altitude patch of *Sphagnum riparium*, this time at 100 m. Other interesting finds were *Bryum archangelicum*, *Platyhypnidium lusitanicum*\*, *Polytrichum commune* var. *perigoniale*, *Solenostoma hyalinum* and *S. paroicum*.

The meeting ended convivially with dinner for the survivors in the Conon Bridge Hotel. It was a good meeting, and we are grateful to Keith, Gordon and David Long for arranging such a varied and attractive programme. The eastern Highlands are less rich than the west. Many common western bryophytes, such as *Breutelia chrysocoma*, *Campylopus atrovirens*, *Lejeunea patens* and *Pleurozia purpurea*, are scarce, and the rocks are pretty uniformly acid. In exchange, there are a few extras, notably *Aulacomnium androgynum*, which was seen in several places, and *Orthotrichum speciosum*, found only once. We cheated just a bit by sneaking off westwards on two of the days, but we also did some square-bashing in the east, so on the whole we did our duty. We were rewarded with *Grimmia elatior* and plenty of other rarities. The discovery of *Moerckia hibernica* in three new localities suggests that it is not as rare as David Long had supposed, but its habitat is so unremarkable that finding it must always be a chancy business.

The two hectads with the highest totals were by chance the two that had no previous records. We raised NH58 to 201 and NH47 to 191. In total, we made about 2,250 records from 19 hectads (more than 2,800 records if tetrads are counted). We made 21 vice-county records on official excursions, and in spite of trying quite hard, either failed to collect or threw away nine others. An unofficial excursion to the Alness area (NH66) on 3 July had added *Orthotrichum rivulare*\*, *O. tenellum*\*, *Conocephalum conicum*\*, *C. salebrosum*\* and *Solenostoma hyalinum*\* to the list for v.-c. 106. Another unofficial excursion, to Kinlea Wood (NH64), added *Microlejeunea ulicina*\* to v.-c. 96. Liz and David Bell stopped on the Black Isle (NH6751) on the day after the meeting and found *Drepanocladus polygamus*\* and *Grimmia decipiens*\*, both new for v.-c. 106.

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