



BBS Spring Meeting 2012

28 March–4 April 2012

The 2012 Spring Meeting was held in v.-c 70, mainly in the northern Cumbrian plains, with one day in v.-c. 67 and incursions into v.-c. 69. The northern plains are an under-recorded area as the more southerly Lake District National Park has been a favourite haunt of past bryologists. The base for the meeting was located in Caldbeck, a scenic area with the Skiddaw massif providing a backdrop to the village. There was plenty to see for the week, with Diane Dobson and John O'Reilly having organised a plethora of sites to visit, though as with most Spring meetings there were a number of bryologists who skived off to other areas, which did add to the records for the vice counties.

The meeting was well attended, with over a dozen bodies appearing at the car park by the River Caldew on the first Wednesday. Participants for the week included Judith Allinson, Georgina and Ambrose Baker, Jeff and Joyce Bates, David

Diane Dobson, Rachel Carter, Sharon Pilkington, David Long, Tom Blockeel, Gordon Rothero, Mark Hill and Les Knight report on the Spring Meeting 2012 in VC67 South Northumberland, VC69 Westmorland and VC70 Cumberland

Bell, Joan Bingley, Tom Blockeel, Agneta Burton, Rachel and Chris Carter, David Chamberlain, Rod Corner, Jo Denyer, Diane Dobson, Jeff Duckett, Tom Edwards, Bob Ellis, Richard Fisk, Mary Ghullam, Jonathan Graham, Dave Hickson, Mark Hill, Nick Hodgetts, David Holyoak, Peter Howarth, Alison Jukes, Sue and Les Knight, Liz Kungu, Nick Law, Mark Lawley, Theo Loizou, Peter Martin, Sara McBride, Andy McLay, John O'Reilly, Sharon Pilkington, Mark Pool, Chris Preston, Clare Rickerby, Jeremy Roberts, Linda Robinson, Gordon Rothero, Lucia Ruffino, Marie Saag Alice Skinner, Jonathan Sleath, Robin Stevenson, Colin Wall

and Katherine White.

We were fortunate with the weather for the week as it was for the most part balmy and sunny, with the exception of Tuesday when snow and high winds descended on our heads.

An asterisk () in the following account indicates a new or updated vice-county record.*

WEDNESDAY 28th MARCH

A group went to Kingmoor Nature Reserve, a previously unrecorded site adjacent to an industrial complex in Carlisle. It comprises a range of mixed woodland plus rubble and some wet ground – a variety of substrates which led to a list of over 70 bryophytes for the combined area, including three *Rhytidiadelphus* species in close proximity affording useful comparisons.

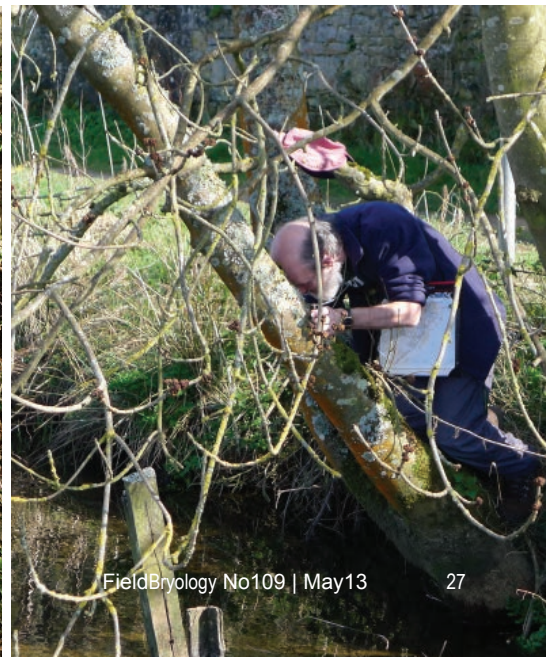
The group then went to Carlisle cemetery which is large and varied, with a small stream at the bottom end; the best finds were made by

weary people who sank onto the steps, where there were *Weissia controversa* and *Fossombronia pusilla*. *Marchantia polymorpha* subsp. *ruderalis** was found by one of the buildings in the cemetery.

David Long's group (David Bell, Peter Howarth) braved the suburbs of Carlisle (v.-c. 70) and on getting out of the car picked up *Marchantia polymorpha* subsp. *ruderalis** on the pavement near the Carlisle Infirmary. After noting a few ruderals on the disused railway sidings they crossed the remains of Hadrian's Wall alongside the River Eden. On damp sandstone by the river *Fissidens crassipes* was noted and *Bryum radiculosum**, *Gyroweisia tenuis* and *Rhynchostegium murale* found on old walls. The tributary stream flowing through Engine Lonning Wood nearby had a good selection of woodland species; with *Bryoerythrophyllum recurvirostrum* and *Cryphaea heteromalla* epiphytic on the trunks of old *Sambucus*. Next they located (with some difficulty) Knowefield Wood and Hadrian's Wood on the north side of Carlisle, both of relatively low bryological

◁Carlisle cemetery: searching for those elusive ephemerals.
D. Dobson

▽Left: a diligent Richard Fisk at Kingmoor. D. Dobson.
Right: Mark Pool evaluating riverside epiphytes.
S. Pilkington



interest. For the afternoon they abandoned suburbia to re-join the River Eden upstream at Wetheral Woods (v.-c. 70), with good exposures of sandstone on the wooded river banks. The rocks supported several noteworthy species: *Cirriphyllum crassinervium*, *Mnium marginatum*, *Plagiomnium cuspidatum*, and one shady sandstone face in particular supported *Bryum sauteri** in a most unusual habitat, *Fissidens exilis* and *Tortula marginata**.

Sharon Pilkington, Mark Pool, Nick Law and others headed over to NY03 Workington to survey Siddick Pond, a reed-fringed pool and wet woodland. After some confusion on arrival, where the hosts were expecting a group of lepidopterists rather than bryologists, a respectable species list was produced for the site. Notables included *Oxyrrhynchium speciosum**, *Ditrichum gracile** and *Marchantia polymorpha* subsp. *ruderalis**, all wanted for v.-c. 70. Predictably, Mark found the latter in the car park on arrival.

In the afternoon the group moved on to an

adjoining hectad (NY02) to look at Curwen Park, a popular recreational area near the River Derwent in Workington. With the river, a mill stream, old walls, ruins and deciduous woodland, there was plenty to see and a very respectable list of common species was produced. Highlights included *Gyrowesia tenuis*, *Orthotrichum cupulatum* and some nice patches of *Bryum radiculosum** on mortared walls.

THURSDAY 29th MARCH

The River Petteril is a tributary flowing north to join the larger River Eden in Carlisle. David Long's group (David Bell, Agneta Burton, Clare Rickerby, Mark Lawley, Peter Howarth) parked where it flows under the M6 after departing Wreay Woods, a tranquil wooded glen, with mature mixed wooded slopes and sandstone outcrops that is owned by the Cumbria Wildlife Trust. They followed the east bank upstream then the west bank downstream, ending up with a mishap-free paddle to get back to the cars.



▷Right: *Anomodon attenuatus* at Eden Gorge. T. Blockeel

◁Left: Richard Fisk showing Alison Jukes the *Fissidens gracilifolius**. D. Dobson



Scleropodium cespitosum grew on a silty *Salix* base, and *Fissidens crassipes* and *Hygroamblystegium fluviatile** on waterside rocks. A small tributary gully proved interesting, with *Zygodon conoideus* on fallen *Acer* twigs and *Heterocladium heteropterum* and *Tetradontium brownianum* on shady rock faces. *Lophocolea fragrans* was also found on damp rock where the *Tetradontium* was growing.

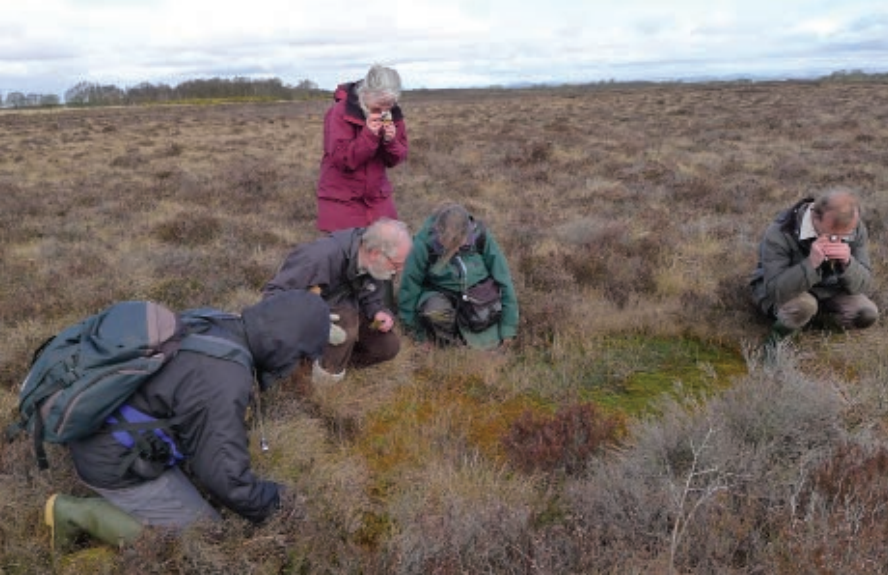
One of many sites to straddle more than one hectad during the week, Tarn Moss (visited by Sharon's group) is a large, hydrologically complex basin mire close to the A66 trunk road. Dismissed by one top northern bryologist as likely to be rather dull, it nonetheless produced a good tally of species in the course of the morning. There were no major finds but the group found a respectable number of *Sphagnum* species, including *S. magellanicum*.

After lunch, two smaller groups travelled a few kilometres east to Newton Reigny Moss, a charming and unusual wetland concealed in a dip below a village. Past peat-digging has left a kind of wet ridge-and-furrow landscape colonised by willows – so wellington boots were *de rigueur*. The site produced a long list of common species, with *Calliergon cordifolium* abundant in wet places, along with *Plagiomnium elatum* and masses of *Climacium dendroides*. Highlights included a small patch of *Campyliadelphus elodes*, last recorded in 1961 by Derek Ratcliffe. After

a fruitless search for another earlier record by D. Ratcliffe, *Cinclidium stygium*, we thought this species might be lost from this site until a stem turned up unexpectedly in one of Sharon's moss packets afterwards. A large erratic in a field just outside the reserve also proved interesting, supporting an assortment of unlikely bedfellows including *Hedwigia stellata*, *Porella platyphylla*, *Pterogonium gracile* and *Grimmia trichophylla*.

Lord and Lady Inglewood had kindly allowed access to their Estate at Hutton in the Forest. Woods close to the house were the most productive, with walls and water as well as woodland; the overall list topped 100 species, including six *Fissidens* species. *Physcomitrium pyriforme* engendered lively discussion as to whether it might actually be *Entosthodon*, but caution prevailed and *Physcomitrium* was recorded. The most notable species were *Marchantia polymorpha* subsp. *ruderalis** and *Bryum ruderale**.

On the way to Caldbeck, Tom Blockeel called in at the Whinlatter Forest Park near Keswick NY22 and recorded in the conifer plantations. Predictably, *Colura calyptrifolia* was found on a conifer twig, and also plentifully on an unidentified deciduous roadside tree. The forest flora consisted of common species, but *Campylopus subulatus* was found on stony ground by a path. Epiphytes included *Orthotrichum striatum** and *Frullania teneriffae*, both on



deciduous trees by the Whinlatter Pass road.

John O'Reilly went to Blackburn Wood in the morning but found little of interest, with *Sphagnum angustifolium* being the highlight. He went to Shank Wood in the afternoon, with again little of interest to record but noted *Microlejeunea ulicina*.

Chris Preston and Mark Hill arrived at lunch time and devoted the afternoon to the exploration of under-recorded hectad NY24. Vice-county records included *Bryum radiculosum**, *Brachythecium mildeanum** and *Ditrichum gracile**. Wigton church has a window donated by the town's famous son, Melvyn Bragg; the churchyard produced *Marchantia polymorpha* subsp. *ruderalis** and *Didymodon vinealis**.

FRIDAY 30th MARCH

Colin Wall, Tom Blockeel and Mark Hill explored the Eden Gorge from Baron Wood NY5144 up to the Chain Rock cliffs NY5242. The group started at Baronwood Farm, where Tom found *Riccia subbifurca** in a stubblefield. The Eden Gorge is bryologically well known as a site for *Anomodon attenuatus* and *Thamnobryum angustifolium*, first found here by Mark Lawley in 2008, and formerly for *Orthodontium gracile*, last seen by John Birks in 1968. Not knowing where Lawley's finds had been made, Tom found the *Anomodon* on a sycamore in NY5144 and

on silty rocks in NY5242, growing with *A. viticulosus*, *Bryoerythrophyllum recurvirostrum*, *Homalia trichomanoides* and *Neckera crispa*. These were new locations. The species is now known from four monads along the river. We failed to refine *O. gracile* or *T. angustifolium*. *Hygroamblystegium fluviatile** was on rocks in the river and *Oxyrrhynchium speciosum** on silty ground. For the most part we recorded species that were already known from the site, but *Fissidens rufulus*, *Leucobryum juniperoideum*, *Racomitrium affine*, *Schistidium apocarpum* and three epiphytes were new.

The good weather continued and the prospect of a 'mountain day' appealed to a good number, in spite of the long drive into the northern Pennines. Moor House (v.-c.'s 69 and 70) is an important National Nature Reserve occupying 9500 acres. The bryophytes were last surveyed in detail in the 1960's (Eddy & Welch, 1969). The group were met by our 'guide' Jeremy Roberts on the approach from the west, enabling them to drive up the track to Great Dun Fell (v.-c. 69), parking at over 700 m on the south-east flank. This compensated for the long drive and gave easy access to the montane flushes and screes. An area of mine waste yielded little of note, but the neutral to basic flushes on the north slope enabled the re-finding of *Blindia acuta*, *Chiloscyphus pallescens*,



◁Far left: Excitement at finding the first patch of *Sphagnum pulchrum* on Glasson. S. Pilkington

◁*Dicranum undulatum* - a highlight of Glasson Moss. S. Pilkington

Sarmentypnum exannulatum, *S. sarmentosum* and *Scapania uliginosa*. A small colony of *Meesia uliginosa* was expertly pointed out by Gordon Rothero to the group. A little *Mylia taylorii* gave an oceanic flavour to the screes, then the group crossed Little Dun Fell into Crowdundle Beck (the vice-county boundary) where the promise of limestone bore rich fruit with *Bryum elegans**, *Seligeria pusilla**, *Didymodon ferrugineus*, *Entodon concinnus*, *Orthothecium intricatum*, *Plagiobryum zieri*, *Pseudoleskeella catenulata*, *Scapania aspera*, *Schistidium trichodon*, *Seligeria recurvata* and *Tortella bambergeri* on the dry slopes and outcrops on the v.-c. 70 side. Pete Martin found *Dicranodontium asperulum* on Cross Fell. These rounded off wonderfully a memorable day.

A group including Robin Stevenson, Mary Ghullam, Bob Ellis, Sue and Les Knight, Alison Jukes, Diane Dobson and Richard Fisk descended on the Naworth Estate. Robin, Mary and Bob split off to do Scarrow Hill and the steep-sided Pottsleugh Woods (with John O'Reilly) on the estate, whilst the others wandered around the castle and then went down to the river. Richard Fisk found *Fissidens gracilifolius**, a new vice-county record, on a wall by a stream coming down towards the castle. Determined not to be distracted by the car park mosses we spent a while looking at the limestone walls around the main house. The

damp north wall was particularly productive. Here Richard found *Grimmia trichophylla*, *Zygodon viridissimus* and new to the v.-c. *Tortula marginata** (also found that day at another site by David Chamberlain, Liz Kungu and Chris Preston, and on Sunday at Abbeytown). Other notable records were *Marchantia polymorpha* subsp. *ruderalis**, *Orthotrichum tenellum* and *Fissidens incurvus* down by the River Irthing. Scarrow Hill and Pottsleugh Woods didn't yield much of interest, though there was a nice find of *Nowellia curvifolia* and John found the new v.-c. record *Lophocolea semiteres** in Pottsleugh Woods.

SATURDAY 31st MARCH

The 'Solway Mires' are an extensive system of lowland 'mosses' along the Solway Firth, celebrated for fine *Sphagnum* communities, particularly the local speciality *Sphagnum pulchrum*. Bowness Common SSSI is one of the most extensive, so groups were dispatched to two different parts of it. A fairly large party went to the western end of Bowness Common NY1859 and NY1959. Part of this vast and featureless bog had recently been burnt, but although this had damaged the heather it seemed to have had little effect on most bryophytes. We were delighted to see good quantities of *Sphagnum magellanicum*, *S. molle* c.fr. and *S. pulchrum*, as well as two tufts of *Dicranum undulatum* (*D. bergeri*). Of the liverworts *Cladopodiella fluitans*, *Kurzia pauciflora* and *Odontoschisma sphagni* were plentiful; *Mylia anomala*, *Odontoschisma denudatum* and *Riccardia latifrons* were frequent; the only identifiable *Cephalozia* was *C. connivens*. Most remarkably, we saw absolutely no *Polytrichum commune* (there were many hummocks of *P. strictum*) and hardly any *Sphagnum fallax*.

David Long and Gordon Rothero's group went to the eastern part, near Lily Tarn (v.-c. 70) which offered a variety of habitats. They were rewarded with 14 species of *Sphagnum*, notably *S. fuscum*, *S. magellanicum*, *S. molle* and fine stands of *S. pulchrum*, much admired. *Kurzia pauciflora* was found on the *Sphagnum*, but the best find, well spotted by Judith Allinson, was a small patch of *Dicranum undulatum*. Tree trunks in a nearby scrubby *Betula/Salix* woodland were home to *Colura calyptrifolia*, *Metzgeria consanguinea* and *Microlejeunea ulicina*.

After lunch the western party went to Abbeystown, in the same hectad, where Chris Preston found *Tortula marginata** c.fr. on sandstone in the churchyard. Some of the party had to return to Caldbeck for committee meetings. The rest went on to Salta NY04, admiring a fine colony of *Bryum pallescens* c.fr. on a farmyard wall beneath a galvanized roof. Salta Moss, where Derek Ratcliffe had seen *Calliergon giganteum* and *Sphagnum molle* in the mid-1970s, had been burnt to a frazzle towards the end of the decade, and is now a sad wreck.

Sharon's group visited Glasson Moss NNR, one of a series of raised mires near the Solway Firth. This moss has been worked for peat in the past, and navigating around the cuttings proved to be an interesting challenge. Intact mire in the middle produced some real delights, including *Dicranum undulatum*, *Sphagnum pulchrum*, *S. fuscum* and lots of *S. molle* in full blush. Liverworts were also present in great abundance and included *Odontoschisma denudatum* and *Lophozia incisa*. Birch woodland at the edge of the moss boosted the day's total, whilst *Lophocolea semiteres** on a peaty path near the cars was new to some people.

John O'Reilly and Jonathan Sleath went to Wedholme Flow NNR, the third of the Solway

Mosses, where they found the usual swath of *Sphagnum* species. Other species they found included *Cryphaea heteromalla* (on Willow), *Odontoschisma denudatum*, *Kurzia sylvatica* (quite abundant), *Riccardia palmata*, and the notable species *Pallavicinia lyellii*, which was found on *Molinia* tussocks in the rand zone.

A small group consisting of Mary Ghullam, Bob Ellis, Robin Stevenson, Richard Fisk, Sue Knight and Jonathan Graham went to Drumburgh Moss NNR, one of the raised mires of the Solway Plain. The raised mire yielded *Sphagnum*'s aplenty, including *Sphagnum magellanicum*. The alder wood and swamp around the site was also visited adding epiphytes such as *Ulota bruchii*, *U. phyllantha*, *Orthotrichum affine* and *O. pulchellum* to the list. The notable species *O. striatum** was also recorded.

Tom Blockeel, Nick Law and Colin Wall visited a poorly recorded coastal hectad NX92 south of Workington, of which less than 20% is land. A local nature reserve by a housing estate on the southern edge of Workington (the Harrington Reserve) produced a good list of 64 taxa in spite of its small extent. It has a stream with small areas of willow carr and woodland. Highlights included *Cololejeunea minutissima* on sallow, *Syntrichia papillosa* on elder and *Physcomitrium pyriforme* on mud. Afternoon visits to coastal slopes and a stream near Lowca boosted the day's hectad total to 98 taxa.

SUNDAY 1st APRIL

A large party with minibus and two cars went to Caudbeck Flow NY57, just south of Bewcastle. The site was somewhat disappointing because it was relatively dry, not indeed what most of us would have called a flow. There were however, a good many basic runnels, with *Drepanocladus cossonii*, *Palustriella falcata*, *Sarmentypnum*

▷Top: *Breutelia chrysocoma* at Bowscale Tarn. T. Blockeel

▷Bottom: *Sphagnum contortum* at Swineside. D. Dobson

sarmentosum, *Sphagnum subsecundum** (some tufts with deceptively pale stems) and *Thuidium delicatulum*. *Sphagnum magellanicum* grew close to some of the runnels, a distinctly different habitat from the flat bogs on which it is normally found. Gordon found some good patches of *Scapania aspera* on stones in a flush and also found *Anomobryum concinnum**. After lunch, the party divided. One group went to Bewcastle, admiring the famous Celtic cross in the churchyard and going down to Kirk Beck. *Schistidium platyphyllum* was in good quantity on rocks in the beck (only a little *S. rivulare*). Liz Kungu found *Ditrichum gracile**, *Mnium stellare*, *Orthotrichum rivulare*, *Plagiomnium elatum* and *Thuidium assimile* when she stayed on after the others had departed.

David Long's group were joined by Dr Rod Corner and made the long drive across to RAF Spadeadam and River Irthing near Gilsland Spa (v.-c. 70), an area known for its limestone outcrops, for its extensive conifer afforestation (part of Kielder Forest) and for the numerous warning signs for the Spadeadam military range. This is an operational military site and Diane had kindly arranged permission for the survey though the visit necessitated some prior access arrangements and some security vetting at the military HQ. Thereafter we were left to get on with bryology, first on the north bank of the Irthing at Crammel Linn, which forms the vice-county boundary with Northumberland. This area had attractive limestone outcrops, pools and cascades. *Entodon concinnus* was the first



good omen on the grassy banks, followed by *Schistidium platyphyllum* and *Fontinalis squamosa* in the stream, and *Cololejeunea calcarea*, *Hymenostylium recurvirostrum* and *Seligeria pusilla* on the rocks, while *Campylopus atrovirens*, *Lejeunea patens* and *Saccogyna viticulosa* were evidence of an oceanic influence. After lunch by the river, the group moved into a different square out onto a vast area of open blanket bog, which proved somewhat disappointing until it was redeemed a little by a series of small bluffs and calcareous flushes by Rairing Syke. These did not quite come up to expectations, though *Ditrichum gracile** and *Thuidium delicatulum* grew in the calcareous grassland and *Scorpidium cossonii*,



S. revolvens, *Seligeria recurvata* and *Sphagnum flexuosum* in the flushes. Finally we moved back to the army HQ and explored the nearby King Water valley where *Colura calyptrifolia* on *Sorbus* and *Loeskeobryum brevirostre* were the highlights.

Tom Blockeel and Nick Law spent the day at Bowscale Tarn in the Mosedale Valley NY3331. The tarn lies at 475m and is backed by a series of fine N- to NE-facing crags rising to 600m. We were fortunate that the light was bright and clear at this beautiful site, but Wordsworth's 'undying fish that swim through Bowscale-tarn' were not to be seen. Most of the rock is acid and this limited the bryophyte flora, but we recorded *Anthelia julacea*, *Gymnomitrium obtusum*, *G. crenulatum*, *Andreaea alpina*, *Rhabdoweisia fugax*, *Grimmia donniana*, *Entosthodon obtusus*, *Cynodontium bruntonii* and *Sarmentypnum sarmentosum*. A special delight was *Oedipodium griffithianum*, growing on soil in recesses on the crags with gemmae and immature sporophytes. The v.-c. record *Grimmia incurva** was found on a large boulder amongst small scree by Pete Martin who visited the site on 29th.

A group including Diane Dobson, Judith Allinson, David Hickson, Alison Jukes, Jo Denyer, Lucia Ruffino, Peter Martin, Jonathan Sleath and Agneta Burton headed off up

the Swineside Valley on the eastern side of the Skiddaw massif. This is a valley with a diversity of habitats including river, scree, mire, grassland, calcareous and acid flushes and up the Grainsgill Beck valley an old mine with mine spoil and other features. Although no wow factor species were found a respectable 85 species were recorded. The group started up the Grainsgill Beck, with riverine species such as *Platyhypnidium riparioides*, *Brachythecium rivulare* and *Hycomium armoricum* recorded. The mine areas were searched looking for elusive mine specialities but none were found. The group eventually ended up in the main valley looking at the scree slope and mire system the other side of the track to the River Caldew, where Jo pointed out *Sphagnum contortum*.

MONDAY 2nd APRIL

The Geltsdale RSPB reserve SE of Brampton overlaps v.-c.'s 70 and 67 and was the main destination for a large group who were expertly guided by John O'Reilly. It is an extensive but relatively unexplored area of acid moorland with calcareous streams and flushes in the valleys. We started by exploring the Black Burn valley including an attractive wooded ravine, where *Hycomium armoricum* and *Nardia compressa*



<Left: Bowscale Tarn. T. Blockeel; △Above left: *Moerckia flotoviana* at Geltsdale. J. Denyer; △Above right: BBS's newest member of the group looking on in Geltsdale. J. Denyer

were recorded. Thereafter the party spilt up, with David Long's group crossing into v.-c. 67 to study flushes above High Midgeholme where John O'Reilly had found *Moerckia flotoviana*. After some searching this was re-found. John O'Reilly did a tetrad further up the Black Burn in the afternoon on the v.-c. 67 side at Butt of Black Burn, where he found *Fissidens celticus** (new to 67), *Fontinalis antipyretica* var *gracilis* and *Dicranum fuscescens*.

Alison Jukes, Keith Watson, Dave Hickson, Richard Fisk, Mark Lawley, Mary Ghullam, Bob Ellis and Diane Dobson visited Gowbarrow Park on the shores of Ullswater. This is a National Trust site which incorporates the famous Aira Force waterfall. The group headed up the river to the falls noting the riverine species *Isothecium holtii* and *Hygroamblystegium fluviatile** (the latter surprisingly not noted in the v.-c. before being found in a number of locations during the Spring Meeting). The group split after lunch, with one group heading up to the crags above the falls. The new v.-c. record *Bryum elegans** (also found up at Moorhouse NNR on Friday) was found by Mark Lawley. Other notable species included *Fissidens celticus*, *Hedwigia stellata*,

Hedwigia integrifolia, *Heterocladium wulfsbergii*, *Riccardia palmata*, *Plagiothecium curvifolium*, *Barbilophozia hatcheri*, *Metzgeria violacea* and *Tortella bambergeri*. By the end of the day it was decided we all deserved a treat and thus we headed off to the tea shop in the car park for hot drinks and cake.

TUESDAY 3rd APRIL

David Bell, Rod Corner, Clare Rickerby, Peter Howarth, David Long and Gordon Rothero, in spite of warnings of wintry weather, went on a mission to try to re-find the threatened *Leiocolea rutheana* in one of its two sites in the north of England on Helton Fell (v.-c. 69) east of Ullswater. Sadly, this search was unsuccessful and its survival there looks unlikely. Nevertheless, in the vicinity of Jeanie Brewster's Well, Gordon refound *Jamesoniella undulifolia*, growing with *Mylia anomala* on hummocks of *Sphagnum* in a rich flush. Gordon also found *Barbilophozia kunzeana** new to v.-c. 69, growing as scattered stems in a large *Sphagnum* hummock at the same site. *Trichocolea tomentella* grew nearby. As snowflakes started to fall, they beat a retreat to a lower altitude at Askham (v.-c. 69), where

in the old churchyard a limestone tombstone was festooned with *Leucodon sciuroides*, and in the chinks between the sandstone blocks of the church wall, *Polytrichastrum alpinum* grew in a most unusual habitat. However, the undoubted highlight, only confirmed later, was the discovery of *Orthotrichum consimile** by David Bell on *Sambucus* in the nearby woodland.

Sharon's group visited Finglandrigg Wood NNR (NY2857) a former raised mire now supporting a mosaic of (very) wet woodland, wet heath and marshy grassland. Despite bitter temperatures and strong winds the group found 87 species. The wet woodland proved to be especially productive, yielding *Orthotrichum striatum** (Mark Pool's speciality for the week), *Metzgeria consanguinea*, *Neckera pumila*,

Nowellia curvifolia, *Odontoschisma denudatum* and *Calliergon cordifolium*. Mary Ghullam found *Lophocolea semiteres** growing rather atypically on a living birch. The group braved bone-chilling winds in the exposed marshy grassland just long enough to find *Plagiomnium elatum*.

Tom Blockeel visited Orton Moss NY35, a former raised mire now covered by mixed acid woodland, parts of it wet with willow's and birch. *Calliergon cordifolium* was common in the wet areas and there were seven species of *Sphagnum*, including *S. russowii*, but otherwise the flora consisted mainly of common acidophiles. One patch of *Cololejeunea minutissima* was found on willow.

Diane's group headed off to Watchtree Nature Reserve. This was part of an old airfield that

▽What we woke up to on Tuesday! (Northern Fells). D. Dobson



was used as a burial site for the foot and mouth disaster and then turned into a wind farm and nature reserve. The group started off in the morning along one of the old runways recording ruderal species such as *Barbula convoluta*, *B. unguiculata*, *Didymodon fallax*, *D. insulanus* and the notable species *Didymodon tophaceus*. They then headed into the various bits of woodland on site, where Alison Jukes finally saw a patch of *Cryphaea heteromalla*. Lunch was had at the reserve centre where hot drinks and cakes available from the centre were used to revive the group. With the weather conditions worsening into bitter winds and horizontal snow only a few hardy souls braved the afternoon to add a few more species to the count.

Mark Lawley visited Miltonrigg Wood, a Woodland Trust site with an area of ancient woodland to the east of Brampton. He refound the notable species *Dicranum tauricum*, that was last recorded in 2002 and also *Ulota drummondii*.

WEDNESDAY 4th APRIL

On the final day we woke again to find a covering of snow on the ground. The fells were beautiful in the sunshine, the relief picked out by the snow on the exposed slopes. It was fortunate that our destination was a lowland wood, where the bryophytes were still visible. Messengermire Wood proved to be a fairly typical coniferous woodland. *Microlejeunea ulicina* grew just inside the gate, and there was a good range of other epiphytes, though none in great quantity. Ditch sides yielded *Hookeria lucens*, and David Hickson found a soil mound which added variety.

The next site, Catlands quarry, was more exposed, cold and windy, but not snow-covered; the list of mainly calcicoles included plentiful *Entodon concinnus*. After that the small remaining group retired to Mae's Tearoom to thaw out and celebrate the end of a very intensive

and successful week with tea and cake. Everyone was very appreciative of Diane's meticulous organisation.

Mark Lawley, Clare Rickerby, Andy McLay, Lucia Ruffino went to Wythop Wood, a Forestry Commission site on the shores of Bassenthwaite. Two hectads, NY22 and NY23 were covered with 57 and 93 species found respectively. Here the notable epiphytes *Cryphaea heteromalla*, *Orthotrichum pulchellum*, *Cololejeunea minutissima* and *Orthotrichum striatum** were recorded.

Recording for BRECOG continued apace, Jeff Bates carried on all week with various companions at different times. The team of apprentices from the Scottish Wildlife Trust who joined this BBS meeting came to Finglandrigg Woods to help with BRECOG and learn the procedure; Sara McBride and her companions group were very stimulating companions and are rapidly becoming proficient bryologists.

Mark Hill collated the records and calculated that in total there were 5027 records, of which 2888 were of separate species in a hectad. 28 hectads were visited, with an average of 103 species in each.

Many thanks to all who came to the meeting, to those who inputted the records for each site, to those who confirmed identification and to those who contributed to this report. Many thanks to Mark Hill who collated all the records.

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References

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