

Rare and interesting

Oli Pescott & Chris Preston

present the 14th instalment in this column reporting recent rare and interesting records.



△Fig. 1: *Ulota bruchii* on exposed granite boulder at Penhale Pit, St Austell. D.A. Callaghan

This instalment of R & I sees the return of the altitude records section, as well as the inauguration of a new section, ‘Significant losses’, at the suggestion of Des Callaghan. Significant losses will be an opportunity to record those instances where thorough searches of sites have failed to refind previously known notable species. These records will not be entered into the BBS database as ‘negative records’, but we hope that R & I will provide a suitable forum for these unfortunate occurrences to be noted. In this context, Des notes his failure to refind *Cephaloziella nicholsonii* and *Orthodontium gracile* in their Cheshire stations. The *C. nicholsonii* site is the northernmost English locality, and it appears that vegetation encroachment is responsible for its loss here. The sandstone of Cheshire is a national stronghold for *O. gracile*, but Des reports that it is losing out to its congener *O. lineare* in the region, although whether this is a case of competition, or of an innocent bystander taking advantage of a decline that was already in motion, is not clear. Gordon Rothero’s 2014 BBS Summer Meeting has provided a number of new altitude records that exceed the previous maxima by some

margin; however, these records are mostly within the expected ranges of the species based on the tetrad occurrence altitude diagrams presented in the new *Atlas* (Blockeel *et al.*, 2014). Altitudes labelled ‘estimated’ in the list below are based on the grid reference.

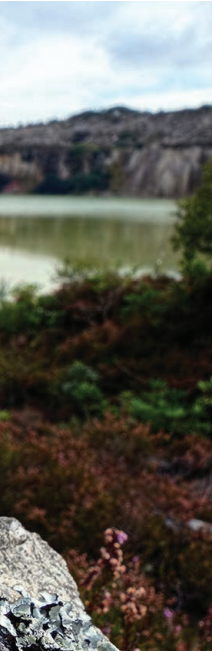
Following on from the rediscovery of *Calypogeia suecica* in Ireland, noted in our last instalment (Pescott & Preston, 2014), another rare bryophyte, *Dicranum undulatum*, last recorded for Ireland by David Bellamy in 1960, has also been refound. This species had been thought to be extinct (Lockhart *et al.*, 2012). This exciting event generated considerable media interest, including a radio interview with its finder George Smith.

Thank you again to the Regional Recorders who contributed or passed on records.

Altitude

***Plagiochila asplenoides*. 88:** 750 m alt. (estimated), Cam Creag, Meall nan Tarmachan, Lawers SSSI, NN5838, 2014, British Bryological Society meeting. The previous maximum was 570 m.

***Jamesoniella autumnalis*. 48:** A small patch



on living wood, 450 m alt. (estimated), Cwm Cynllwyd, Nant yr Hafod, SH90552500, 2014, S.L. Pilkington. The previous maximum was 300 m.

***Jungermannia borealis*. 98:** On wet limestone, 105 m alt., Glencoe SSSI, Meall Mor, NN11275693, 2014, G.P. Rothero & J.E. Smith. The previous minimum was 200 m.

***Trichodon cylindricus*. 88:** 750 m alt. (estimated), Cam Creag, Meall nan Tarmachan, Lawers SSSI, NN5838, 2014, British Bryological Society meeting. The previous maximum

was 450 m.

***Didymodon topiaceus*. 88:** 750 m alt. (estimated), Cam Creag, Meall nan Tarmachan, Lawers SSSI, NN5838, 2014, British Bryological Society meeting. The previous maximum was 500 m.

***Calliergon giganteum*. 88:** 750 m alt. (estimated), Cam Creag, Meall nan Tarmachan, Lawers SSSI, NN5838, 2014,

British Bryological Society meeting. The previous maximum was 585 m.

Dispersing or increasing

***Bryoerythrophyllum ferruginascens*. 6:**

Limestone grassland, Westbury Beacon, Westbury sub Mendip, ST48995111, 2014, A.J.P. Branson & S.L. Pilkington. Species first recorded in VC in 2012. Now recorded in 13 more 1-km squares.

***Leucodon sciurioides*. 41:** Epiphyte on *Acer pseudoplatanus*, 10 m alt., Bute Park, Cardiff, ST171778, 2014, G.M. Tordoff. S.D.S. Bosanquet points out that this is the first Glamorgan record since the 1970s and is clearly a new arrival. Bute Park is the main city park in Cardiff. No other patches have been located in the park despite further searches.

Fruiting, gametangia or with gemmae

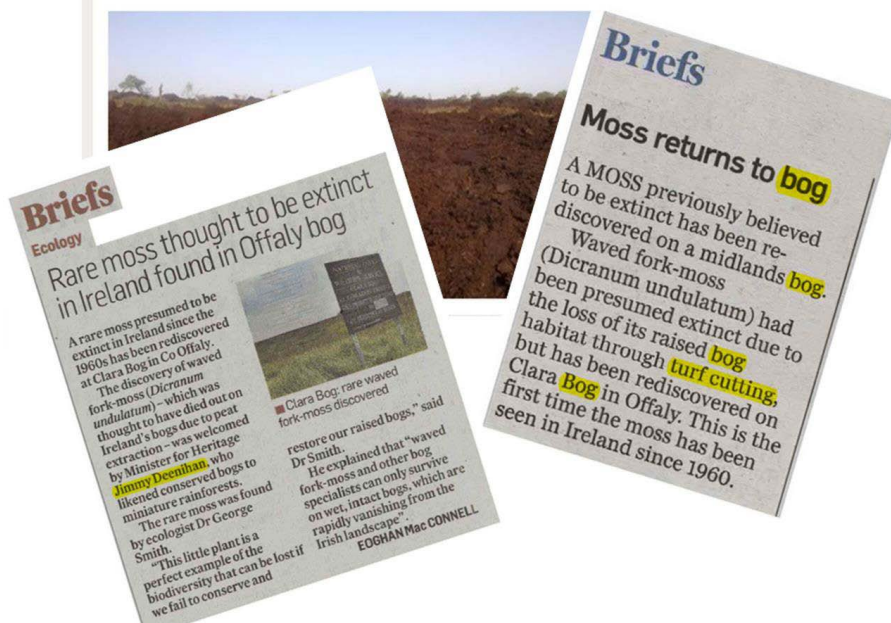
***Lunularia cruciata*. 49:** Shrub-bed weed, Plas yn Rhiw, SH2328, 2014, T.H. Blackstock. One of several 2014 records of female-expressing thalli by THB (also for vice-

▽Fig. 2. *Sphagnum austinii* fruiting on Rannoch Moor. F.J. Rumsey



Rare Moss fin in Clara bog

Our Mooney Goes Wild panel look at a rare moss previously thought to have been extinct in Ireland which has been found on a Clara bog in County Offaly.



△Fig. 3. The rediscovery of *Dicranum undulatum* in County Offaly generated considerable media attention, although one website appeared to get the story the wrong way around. O.L. Pescott

counties 50 and 52). This phenomenon was last noticed in North Wales in 1989.

***Sphagnum austinii*. 88:** Mire, 288 m alt., Rannoch Moor, NN42035761, 2014, F.J. Rumsey. A dioicous species that is rarely observed fruiting (Fig. 2).

***Dicranum undulatum*. 89:** Calcareous stony runnel with *Schoenus ferrugineus*, 330 m alt., Monzie, Glen Fender, NN90556757, 2014, F.J. Rumsey. FJR reports that this species is typically found fruiting at this site.

Nationally rare or scarce

***Fossombronina caespitiformis*. 6:** On thin soil over rock ledge in limestone grassland, Westbury Beacon, Westbury sub Mendip, ST4905051069, 2014, A.J.P. Branson & S.L. Pilkington. Second VC record.

***Cololejeunea rossettiana*. 6:** On natural rock exposures and in disused quarry in wooded combe, Biddle Combe, Wells, ST5679047078, 2014, T. Kaye & S.L. Pilkington. A new site. A large, discontinuous population along much of lower combe.

***Scapania uliginosa*. 69:** North-facing flush,

with *Scapania undulata* and *Philonotis fontana*, 680 m alt., head of Hayeswater Gill, near High Street Beacon, NY434102, 2014, F. Cameron. This is only the fourth locality for this species in VC69.

***Sphagnum fuscum*. 70:** Eycott Hill, NY3829, 2014, J. O'Reilly. The fourth post-1970s record for this species in VC70.

***Oedipodium griffithianum*. 69:** Earthy bank with *Nardia scalaris*, 720 m alt., Gavel Crag, Kentmere, NY437098, 2014, F. Cameron. Only the second record in VC69 in the past 20 years.

***Oedipodium griffithianum*. 72:** Earth bank, under overhang, 330 m alt., North bank, Nether Coomb Sike, NT13287 11776, 2014, E.M. Kungu. Last recorded in Blackhope Glen by W. Nichol in 1868.

***Buxbaumia aphylla*. 96:** Windblown *Pinus sylvestris*, 314 m alt., Tore Hill, Abernethy Forest RSPB, NH9958416883, 2014, S. Taylor. Growing with *Buxbaumia viridis*. This appears to be the first time both species of *Buxbaumia* have been found growing together on a single tree.

***Entosthodon pulchellus*. 6:** Rocky limestone grassland, Cheddar Gorge, ST4682954289, 2014, S.L. Pilkington. A small number of mature plants with dehiscent capsules on a south-facing slope. Other populations also found recently at Wavering Down and in Burrington Combe.

***Amphidium lapponicum*. 69:** North-facing cliff-face, 650 m alt., Ruthwaite Cove, Dollywaggon Pike, Helvellyn range, NY345134, 2014, F. Cameron. The second record for this species in VC69 since 1984.

***Dicranum undulatum*. H18:** Active flush in raised bog, 56 m alt., Clara Bog East, N25232985, 2014, G.F. Smith. The first Irish record since 1960. Listed as Extinct by Lockhart *et al.* (2012) in the Irish Red Data Book (Fig. 3).

***Pleurochaete squarrosa*. 6:** Limestone grassland, Westbury Beacon, Westbury sub Mendip, ST48995111, 2014, A.J.P. Branson & S.L.

Pilkington. A new site, further south than any others in VC6.

***Gymnostomum calcareum*. 6:** On damp, vertical limestone face in a disused quarry, Cook's Wood Quarry, Stoke St Michael, ST66894789, 2012, S.L. Pilkington. Many thousands of plants on the sheltered face, extending over many metres.

***Didymodon acutus*. 8:** Flint-chalk track, Porton Down, Salisbury, SU2388236067, 2014, S.L. Pilkington. Latest of numerous small colonies recently found on tracks around the site.

***Orthotrichum scanicum*. 57:** On *Quercus* in planted woodland, 105 m alt., Shipley Country Park, SK43134497, 2014, T.L. Blockeel. The second British and Derbyshire record. This was a fortuitous record, not identified until it was examined microscopically. It follows that *O. scanicum* could be widely overlooked in other parts of Britain.

***Bartramia halleriana*. 69:** Sheltered cliff face,

▽Fig. 4. Angle Tarn, the location for Fiona Cameron's record of *Bartramia halleriana*. F. Cameron





△Fig. 5. West Mine, Alderley Edge, in 1997 (left) and 2014 (right). The red arrow marks the location of the, now locally extinct, population of *Cephaloziella nicholsonii*. D.A. Callaghan

with *Hookeria lucens*, *Batrachia pomiformis* and *Asplenium viride*, 500 m alt., Cat Crag, Angle Tarn, Patterdale, NY416143, 2014, F. Cameron. Recorded previously in 1938 at this site (Fig. 4).

***Hamatocaulis vernicosus*. 70:** Neutral to basic flush, Eycott Hill, NY3874329865, 2014, D.J.T. Dobson. A new population near to a location first recorded by R.W.M. Corner and D.A. Ratcliffe in 2003.

***Plasteurbhynchium striatulum*. 6:** Rocky limestone woodland, Fore Cliffs, Cheddar, ST45615511, 2014, S.L. Pilkington. A huge population, one of the commonest pleurocarps across much of the woodland. Also recorded in numerous other new locations in the Mendip Hills in 2014.

***Myurella julacea*. 64:** Crevices in east-facing limestone rocks, 640 m alt., Ingleborough Hill, SD743740, 2014, T.L. Blockeel. Long known on Ingleborough, although last reported in 1981. This is one of only three known English localities.

Regionally notable

***Riccia subbifurca*. 6:** Limestone grassland, Westbury Beacon, Westbury sub Mendip, ST4887351073, 2014, A.J.P. Branson & S.L. Pilkington. New locality – plants in several locations. First record in VC6 since 1991.

***Fossombronina incurva*. 27:** On a sandy track, with *Radiola linoides*, Winterton Dunes NNR, TG48772105, 2014, M. Ghullam & R.W. Ellis. Actually the first record for VC27, but capsule not grown on to maturity before species found elsewhere.

***Radula aquilegia*. 49:** Boulder in small stream in steep ash/alder woodland, near Llyn Gwynant, SH6576852529, 2014, D.A. Callaghan. A new site for a rare, Red Listed species in Wales.

***Colura calyptrifolia*. 6:** Small patch on twig of *Larix* sp. in dense conifer plantation, Stockhill Plantation, Priddy, ST5517150880, 2014, S.L. Pilkington. Second VC record.

***Prilidium ciliare*. 27:** On dunes, The Valley, Winterton SSSI, TG41Z, 2014, M. Ghullam & R.W. Ellis. Known previously from

Winterton Dunes; this is a new 10 km-square record, and although scattered it is locally frequent.

***Tritomaria quinquedentata*. 6:** With *Porella arboris-vitae* in rocky limestone grassland, Totty Pot, above Cheddar Gorge, ST4828553578, 2014, A.J.P. Branson & S.L. Pilkington A new site. Large patch with perianths on west-facing rock exposure.

***Racomitrium aciculare*. 27:** On concrete road, 65 m alt., Hockering Wood, TG0714, 2013, R.J. Fisk. This was the second locality for this species in VC27.

***Seligeria donniana*. 6:** Woodland rock exposure, Fuller's Hay, Blagdon, ST4921458841, 2014, S.L. Pilkington. Second VC record. Several small patches on deeply shaded cliff.

***Orthotrichum rupestre*. 36:** Trunk of semi-mature *Fraxinus excelsior*, 130 m alt., Joans Hill Farm Nature Reserve, SO5887537717, 2014, D.A. Callaghan. The second record for the VC. On same trunk as *Orthotrichum acuminatum*.

***Poblia bulbifera*. 27:** On muddy edge of shallow pool, with *Gymnocolea inflata*, Winterton Dunes NNR, TG490208, 2014, M. Ghullam & R.W. Ellis. Refound at its only known Norfolk site, still in the same habitat and probably in one of the same pools as its first (and only) record in 1995.

Significant losses

***Cephaloziella nicholsonii*. 58:** 140 m alt., West Mine, Alderley Edge, SJ851773, 2015, D.A. Callaghan. Found at single location here by M.E. Newton in 1997 but now gone due to gradual vegetation succession over metalliferous spoil. A 5-day search of the site, covering all former mining areas, failed to find the plant. This was the only site for this rare metallophyte in England outside Cornwall

and Devon (Fig. 5).

***Orthodontium gracile*. 58:** 169 m alt., Alderley Edge, SJ856779, 2015, D.A. Callaghan. Gone from the location found by N.G. Hodgetts and R.D. Porley in 2000 and not found elsewhere during a 5-day search of the site.

Unusual habitat or substrate

***Tortula amplexa*. 57:** Clay soil in arable field, north of Horsley Woodhouse, SK397452, 2014, T.L. Blockeel. Found for the first time in Derbyshire a few weeks previously. This second record is apparently the first report from an arable field.

***Ulota bruchii*. 2:** Granite boulders, St Austell Clay Pits, SW95, 2014, D.A. Callaghan. Locally frequent on granite boulders at several locations visited in the region of the St Austell clay pits (Fig. 1), whilst *U. crispa* appears to only grow epiphytically in this area.

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