

# A fairly predictable locus for *Cephalozia pleniceps* in south Wales

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## Records of *Cephalozia pleniceps* in south Wales

A glance at the *Atlas of the bryophytes of Britain and Ireland* (Hill, Preston & Smith, 1991) suggests that *Cephalozia pleniceps* is rather rare outside Scotland, being recorded from only 58 10-km squares in Great Britain, and with post-1950 records from just 40 of these. It seems that the majority of records away from Scotland are of the lax wetland form of the plant. The *Atlas* indicates that *C. pleniceps* is absent from south Wales, but recent recording has revealed that it is actually relatively widespread, albeit local.

The first record of *C. pleniceps* from south Wales was made in 1995 by GSM in Carmarthenshire. The following year it was recorded in Radnorshire, and since then the species has been added to the Breconshire, Monmouthshire and Pembrokeshire county lists. The authors have also recorded the species at further localities within most of these counties. The current 10-km square distribution of *C. pleniceps* in south Wales is shown in Figure 1. The authors have bryologised only rarely in Glamorgan, but it seems likely the species is present there.

## The habitat of *C. pleniceps* in south Wales

The vast majority of south Wales records of *C. pleniceps* have come from hummocks of *Sphagnum*

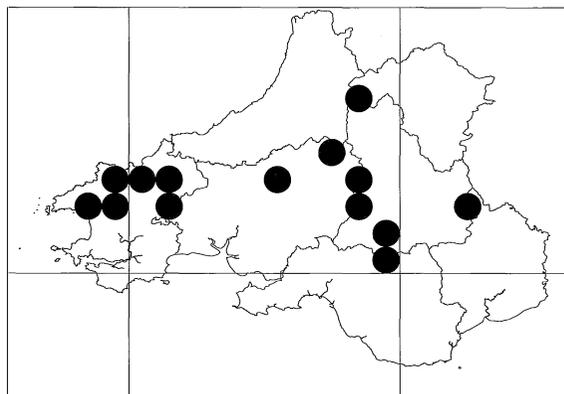


Figure 1. Distribution of *Cephalozia pleniceps* within 10-km squares in south Wales.

*subnitens* at the edges of, or associated with, neutral to base-rich flushes. Its repeated occurrence in this habitat is perhaps not a surprise as Paton (1999) suggests that *C. pleniceps* is the most base-tolerant species of the genus. More rarely, *C. pleniceps* has been recorded from other habitats: for example, mixed with other hepatics in flushed wet heath and growing through *S. subnitens* at the edge of ombrotrophic mire. It is possible that the species is more common than records suggest in these more acidic habitats but its presence is likely to be difficult to detect as other *Cephalozia* species, for example *C. connivens*, are often present. *C. pleniceps* is usually fertile, but a few non-fertile collections from the 'typical' habitat have been identified using characteristics given in Paton

(1999). Caution was exercised because there is a risk that non-fertile plants of *C. connivens* could be misidentified as *C. pleniceps*, as the former sometimes has some terminal leaf-lobe cell walls uniformly thickened.

It seems that by targeting *Sphagnum subnitens* hummocks associated with base-rich and neutral flushes and checking any *C. connivens*-like material, there is a good chance that the collection will turn out to be *C. pleniceps*. As always, searching for fertile material in the field greatly aids laboratory identification.

## Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to Tim Blackstock for identifying or confirming some of the earlier records.

## References

- Hill MO, Preston CD, Smith AJE. 1991. *Atlas of the bryophytes of Britain and Ireland. Volume 1. Liverworts (Hepaticae and Anthocerotae)*. Colchester: Harley Books.
- Paton JA. 1999. *The liverwort flora of the British Isles*. Colchester: Harley Books.

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# Reports of BBS meetings

Throughout the following accounts of BBS meetings, new vice-county records are indicated by an asterisk (\*). Nomenclature follows Paton

(1999), *The liverwort flora of the British Isles*, and Smith (2004), *The moss flora of Britain and Ireland*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.

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## Summer field meeting 2004, island of Rum

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### Introduction

This was an unusual meeting for the BBS, arising out of a suggestion from Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) staff based on Rum that more information on the distribution of bryophytes on the island National Nature Reserve would be useful (and that they would pay for accommodation!). This is in line with a general notion that the BBS should be more involved in providing information on protected sites that have bryophytes as one of their 'features of interest'. I had taken part in a similar meeting in 2003 looking at vascular plants, organised by the Botanical Society of the British Isles (BSBI), and planned as part of a project to produce a

vascular plant Flora for the island. The organisers of this meeting (David Pearman, Chris Preston and Kevin Walker) suggested to me that, with all the new information a field meeting would bring, a bryophyte section of the Flora would be a welcome addition. So the real 'meeting account' will be in the form of a Flora.

In many ways, this was an easy meeting to organise as we were all staying together in the same place, travelling there by the same mode of transport, and eating in the one restaurant. The hostel in Kinloch Castle is excellent, with basic but clean dormitories, just about enough bathrooms (!), a good, friendly restaurant, and, hidden away in the basement, a large workroom