

In April, Tessa Carrick invited the BBS to join us for our week-long meeting in Worcestershire, and after the annual summer recess we reconvened in October at **The Brickyard** (SO6082) near Wheathill in south Shropshire. Now in the Countryside Stewardship scheme, two of the pastures on this smallholding were once dug for making clay pipes, creating an uneven surface to the ground and an array of microhabitats good for bryodiversity. Ann Hill came upon *Campyliadelphus chrysophyllus* flourishing where drainage, aeration, and erosion of the soil slopes increased, and *Acaulon muticum*, *Ctenidium molluscum* and *Fissidens dubius* also enjoyed nutritious soil. Lorna Fraser found *Dicranum tauricum* on the trunk of a willow tree, and disturbed soil in the back garden gave us *Bryum klinggraeffii* and *B. rubens*.

After lunching in comfort in the farmhouse, we crossed the road and dropped down to a stream in a wooded dingle known as **The Gore** (SO5982), where *Hygrohypnum luridum* grew on a boulder in the stream. On the bank nearby, an odd-looking *Plagiochila* with irregularly incised leaves drew comment, and Jean Paton subsequently very kindly determined it to be a form of *P. britannica*. Further along the track,

*Bryum pallescens* grew at the base of an outbuilding.

For our last meeting of the year, Sam Bosanquet met us at **Llanellen** (SO3010 and SO3110) near Abergavenny in Monmouthshire, where twelve of us explored the banks of the River Usk. Over 50 species went on the card, including *Anomodon viticulosus* from calcareous sandstone, *Henmediella stanfordensis*, *Orthotrichum rivulare*, *O. sprucei*, *Oxyrrhynchium* (*Eurhynchium*) *schleicheri*, *Plagiomnium cuspidatum*, *Rhynchostegiella pumila* (*Eurhynchium pumilum*) and *Scleropodium cespitans*. *Reboulia hemisphaerica* growing on a soil-covered ledge was also a pleasant surprise. Nearby, a rather odd *Mnium* with decurrent leaf bases was probably a form of *M. hornum* rather than *M. marginatum*.

After lunch we changed habitat, and drove up to the south-eastern flank of **The Blorange** (SO2711), where a cooling wind proved as invigorating as the range of calcicoles on shallow soil over outcrops and boulders of Carboniferous Limestone – *Acaulon muticum* (yet again), *Brachythecium glareosum*, *Racomitrium ericoides*, *Schistidium apocarpum* s.str., *Scleropodium tourettii*, *Thuidium assimile* (*T. philibertii*) and *Tortula lanceola*, along with a little *Lophozia excisa*.

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## Southern Group

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### **Strodgemoor Bottom and Vales Moor, New Forest (v.-c. 11), 24 September 2004**

A visit to the New Forest is always eagerly anticipated by our local members for the bryological delights that await us. Today was not an exception, and we were astounded by the amount of *Splachnum ampullaceum* that we found over the limited area of the New Forest that we walked over. Those of us who know the Forest

well were of the same opinion: this was a magnificent display of an uncommon moss, not seen in such quantity previously.

The weedy and invasive *Campylopus introflexus* was present in vast amounts, as it is on all southern commons, but on this occasion much of it seemed to be of a different form and it wasn't until later in the day when looked at under the microscope that the penny finally dropped and I

realised that we had, in the field, overlooked *C. brevipilus*, a much more welcome member of the genus. Also present in very small tufts in the more boggy areas was *Racomitrium lanuginosum*, exceedingly uncommon on lowland heaths in southern England. Eleven species of *Sphagnum* were recorded, including the local *S. molle*, and in the wetter pools, entwined in *Sphagnum*, was the liverwort *Cephalozia macrostachya*.

Two exceedingly uncommon lichens were found on pine lignum: *Agyrium rufum*, the first localised record from the New Forest, and *Lecidea hypopta*, a northern species only recently recorded from southern England from pines in the south-west of the Forest. My thanks go to Neil Sanderson who led this excellent meeting and identified the lichens.

### **Chithurst monastery, near Midhurst (v.-c. 13), 24 October 2004**

We were kindly allowed to visit woodland and a hammer-pond owned by the monks residing at nearby Chithurst monastery. This is an area of ancient woodland, and we recorded 91 species, including five new records from a previously well-recorded 10-km square: *Bryum bornholmense*, *B. radiculosum*, *B. rubens*, *Dicranella schreberiana* and *Orthotrichum pulchellum*. Other notable finds were *Riccia fluitans* in a small pond, *Hookeria lucens* from a ditch, and *Leucobryum juniperoideum* on a sweet chestnut stump. However, the highlight of the day had to be the unexpected appearance of a Red Kite flying in tandem with a Common Buzzard.

Bruce Middleton led the meeting with able help from five members of the local group.

### **Stanmer village, near Brighton (v.-c. 14), 14 November 2004**

This meeting was jointly led by Howard Matcham and Rod Stern. Parking near to the village church, Rod almost immediately found *Tortula protobryoides* on well-trampled soil by the

gate leading in to the churchyard. With only two previous records from the vice-county, this was an auspicious start to a day arranged primarily to record a poorly-worked 10-km square. Close by the church is the village pond, where inspection of introduced sandstone blocks revealed a colony of *Leptobarbula berica*, a species not often recorded from the vice-county. In a small wood composed mainly of ash, we recorded *Orthotrichum tenellum* on a horizontal branch, and *Fissidens gracilifolius* on chalk nodules. Returning to the village after lunch, *Gyroweisia tenuis* and *Tortula marginata* were found at the damp base of a wall at Stanmer House, an imposing, but disused, country mansion.

The day ended with David Streeter taking us to the nearby University of Sussex where we were able to admire specimen trees of English Elm (*Ulmus procera*) in one of the few remaining strongholds for this majestic tree left in southern England. Growing on the trunk of one of the trees was a small colony of *Syntrichia laevipila*.

### **Telegraph Hill, east of Winchester (v.-c. 11), 4 December 2004**

Parking in the car park at the top of the hill we were able to look over the magnificent scenery below, including arable fields that some years previously had been the location for some of the most spectacular examples of 'crop circles' in the south. There then followed one of the more bizarre discussions yet heard at a bryological meeting – could an alien civilisation have been responsible? Heaven knows where this may have led us but thankfully the non-alien Rod Stern found *Microbryum curvicolle* and *Pottia davalliana* (*Microbryum davallianum*), and sanity prevailed. More surprisingly, the chalky soil also yielded *Bryum bornholmense*, not usually found in such a calcareous habitat.

Wending our way down the hill towards the village of Chilcomb took us along a wood-lined footpath where amongst other shrubs grew a fine Buckthorn (*Rhamnus catharticus*) clothed with

epiphytes. Trunk and branches had fine colonies of the liverworts *Cololejeunea minutissima*, *Metzgeria fruticulosa* and *M. furcata*, and several tufts of *Orthotrichum tenellum*. The churchyard in the village had a gravestone with a good covering of *Hygrohypnum luridum*, which had been found by Rod Stern on a previous visit, and other headstones possessed tufts of *Orthotrichum anomalum*. On damp tarmac grew an extensive colony of *Didymodon nicholsonii*.

As the day drew to a close, the party split into two groups. Neil Sanderson and Andy Cross

ventured into chalk grassland where they discovered *Abietinella abietinum* var. *histicosa* (*Thuidium abietinum* subsp. *hystricosum*), *Ditrichum gracile*, and a candidate for *D. flexicaule* that is still awaiting confirmation.

We approached the cars in gathering dusk and those of us of a more nervous disposition, myself included, remembering the conversation of the morning, glanced apprehensively over our shoulders but the apparition that approached out of the gloom was only our kindly leader, Rod Stern.

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# Recording and conservation

## Submitting new vice-county records

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### Background

It has been some time since the last description of the process of submitting a new vice-county record, and there are a number of new recorders who are unsure how the system works. This article describes both the current process and the changes that we plan to make in 2005 as well as offering advice on packeting and labelling vouchers.

This may sound rather a chore but it does mean that the maximum amount of information is transferred from you to the BBS herbarium (BBSUK) and to the Biological Records Centre (BRC), and it makes the Recorders' lives a bit easier! Comments would be welcome.

### The current system

All new and post-1950 records must be supported by a voucher. Usually the voucher will be a recently collected specimen that is sent, often via the appropriate referee, to the Recorder for Mosses or Hepatics for verification. It is the usual, and the most sensible, practice for the collector to retain a duplicate of the voucher. If the voucher is accepted, the record will be added to the list for that year and published in *Field Bryology* in the following year.

The voucher then normally goes to BBSUK, which is stored alongside the main cryptogamic herbarium at the National Museum & Gallery in