

97.42. *Bryum sauteri*. 1: on clayey loam soil, pH 7.2, in barley stubble field, N of entrance drive to Bosence Farm, E of Relubbus, SW575323, 2005, D.A. Pearman & Preston. Plants with synoicous inflorescences. All the sexual specimens from the British Isles seen by Crundwell & Nyholm (1964) were female, as were those cultivated by Whitehouse that produced sex organs. Synoicous plants occur in central Europe, and synoicous and autoicous plants in Norway (Nyholm, 1993). Crundwell & Nyholm therefore took the view that there are two races of *B. sauteri*, one oceanic and dioicous and the other montane and monoicous. The occurrence of synoicous plants in Cornwall suggests that the situation is less straightforward. **G.**

116.5. *Zygodon forsteri*. 18: 142 colonies, six of them on rain tracks, the remainder as knot hole associates, associated with a total of 65 beech trees growing on Claygate Beds or older head over Bagshot Sands, 75-115 m alt., on interfluvies between tributary streams on either side of Loughton Brook in Great and Little Monk Wood, TQ49, 2003-2004, Adams. Values in brackets refer to the numbers of occupied trees in each hectare: TQ418981 (1), 419981 (9), 419983 (1), 419989 (2), 424979 (1), 420980 (3), 420982 (1), 420989 (1), 421980 (2), 421982 (2), 422981 (1), 422985 (4), 423980 (8), 423981 (2), 423983 (3), 423984 (1), 423985 (1), 423986 (2), 424980 (4), 424981 (2), 424983 (1), 424984 (1), 424986 (4), 425983 (1), 425984 (4), 427985 (2). Colonies on a further 12 trees found between 1978 and 1999 are no longer present. A single outlier

colony has been located 1.75 km to the north-east in St Thomas' Quarters, TL433002, new to v.-c.19. **S.**

119.2. *Hedwigia stellata*. 28: epiphytic on 70-year-old Bramley apple in commercial orchard subject to regular spraying, 2 m alt., Leaherd's Field, Walsoken, TF48131107, 2005, Stevenson. Second record for v.-c. 28. **R, H.**

Contributors of records and people who have checked them

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Reports of local meetings

South-East Group

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Burham Down (v.-c. 15), 12 February 2005

This is a Kent Wildlife Trust reserve on the North Downs at the eastern side of the River

Medway gap north of Maidstone. The area is chalk grassland, scrub and woodland, with two large disused chalk quarries below the escarpment. Six members met at Bluebell Hill

picnic site, overlooking the reserve, and were joined by the Trust's Medway Valley warden, Steve Weeks. We are very grateful for Steve's help and guidance during the morning.

After a kilometre's downhill walk attempting to avoid the distractions of *Pseudocrossidium hornschurchianum* and other chalk field species, we reached the lower quarry, Lower Culand Pit. This is entered from the bottom through a substantial tunnel beneath the road that runs along the foot of the hills. A flight of steps from the scrub next to the road leads down the side of the tunnel archway to where a rail track once took the chalk down to the river. The brickwork of this structure is fairly mossy with a limited range of the commoner species. The main floor of the pit is rectangular, about 500 m long, and has a thin covering of scrub. The substantial areas dominated by *Homalothecium lutescens* had been seen from the top of the downs as a golden-green carpet amongst the leafless bushes. As we made our way along the meandering open track into the pit, it was noticeable how the bryoflora gradually took on the characteristics of the chalk substrate. *Brachythecium rutabulum* and *Kindbergia praelonga* (*Eurhynchium praelongum*), which were dominant on the wooded slopes at the tunnel, were soon replaced by the *Homalothecium*, joined first by *Ctenidium molluscum*, a little *Abietinella abietina* var. *histricosa* (*Thuidium abietinum* subsp. *hystricosum*) and some nice patches of *Bryum pseudotriquetrum*. Here too was plenty of *Fissidens adianthoides*. Towards the centre of the pit *Campyliadelphus chrysophyllus* and *Hypnum lacunosum* were much in evidence. Lunch was taken making use of the slope of the western side of the pit as seating and a windbreak. Here we found many of the more interesting finds of the day, including *Leiocolea badensis* (confirming the view that it has previously been overlooked), *L. turbinata*, *Seligeria calcarea* and *S. calycina*. In many areas *Trichostomum crispulum* was abundant.

After lunch we returned up the hill on a route that included a lane with, at one point, a

hedgebank of mown *Eurhynchium striatum*. This was quite impressive, although the plants were somewhat stunted compared to the usual form seen in woodland habitats. On the path was *Weissia longifolia* var. *angustifolia*. At the top we reached one of the patches of woodland included in the reserve, containing familiar species of the dry chalk woods of East Kent: *Fissidens incurvus*, *F. taxifolius*, *K. praelonga*, *Oxyrrhynchium* (*Eurhynchium*) *bians*, *Rhynchostegiella pumila* (*Eurhynchium pumilum*) and *Rhynchostegium confertum*. Also here was *Rhynchostegiella tenella*, generally not so common locally. Turning our attention to look at the chalk grassland, we entered one field that had been very recently cleared of scrub. The results were disappointing: mostly *Scleropodium purum*, with some *Fissidens dubius* and one small area of scattered *Plagiomnium affine*. Approaching heavy showers thwarted our attempts to look further, and the day finished with mixed cloud, rain and sunshine rapidly changing the spectacular views of the valley below.

Orlestone Forest (v.-c. 15), 26 March 2005

This was a return to the location of last year's meeting, as described in *Field Bryology* 84: 25-26. The intention was to concentrate on some of the 180 or so small ponds in the Forest, hoping that investigation of the surrounding trees and banks would be fruitful. Very useful details had been obtained from a survey of 53 of the ponds in 2000 by D.A. Saunders (English Nature, Wye, Ashford, Kent). Time allowed for the study of six ponds in the middle of Longrope Wood in the northern half of the Forest.

The ponds are mainly in the deciduous areas of the Forest, amongst oak, birch and coppiced hornbeam, where tree bases have *Hypnum andoi*, *H. cupressiforme* and *Isoetecium myosuroides*, and the main floor flora is a rather patchy covering of *Mnium hornum*, *Polytrichastrum* (*Polytrichum*) *formosum* and *Thuidium tamariscinum*. The ponds vary in their permanence, degree of vegetation density and bank structure; those with the best array of bryophytes were fairly overgrown, and

contained fallen trees and small islands. Despite the greater moss density caused by the moister habitat, epiphytes were as scarce on and around the ponds as in the rest of the woods, with just one find each for *Frullania dilatata* and *Ulotia crispa*. *Sphagnum cuspidatum*, *S. fimbriatum* and *S. palustre* were dominant on some of the islands and semi-submerged tree masses in the ponds. Locally scarce species found were *Calliergon cordifolium* at a pond edge, *Plagiothecium undulatum*

on an island, and *Rhytidiadelphus loreus* close to a pond. The species total for the day was 31.

This small study gives a good bryological view of Orlestone Forest: not impressive by national standards but always worth exploring for the occasional interesting find. It has to be pointed out that this is in contrast to many other areas of natural history, for which the Forest is of great value and importance.

Web news

The BBS website

The resources available via the BBS website (www.britishbryologicalsociety.org.uk) continue to grow and are frequently updated. Mark Hill has been particularly diligent, and has provided an interim *Census Catalogue*¹ which includes the amendments that have been published annually in the *Bulletin* and *Field Bryology* up to and including 2004. Also available to download is a new checklist of the bryophytes of Britain and Ireland, incorporating the taxa listed in the current *Census Catalogue*, modified to take account of the nomenclatural and taxonomic changes described in the second edition of *The moss flora of Britain and Ireland*. The checklist cross-references the names in these two publications, and provides the names, abbreviations and BRC numbers that are used on the new recording cards (see p 48 of this issue of *Field Bryology*). There is also a MS Word spell check dictionary file that includes both the *Census Catalogue* and the new names. On the BBS home page there is a link to Phil Stanley's Cumulative Index of BBS Publications which

has been brought up to date to include 2004, and is fully searchable.

Material from *Field Bryology* often appears on the website after it has been published, and provisional meeting reports sometimes appear beforehand, if they are sent to me. For example, advice given in the last issue of *Field Bryology* about how to submit new vice-county records has now been incorporated into the site, and I am hoping that further resources for recorders will become available soon.

The Bryophyte of the Month page features a new image each month, and members are encouraged to submit these. We have just started a Bryophyte Portraits section where several images of particularly rare or interesting plants can be displayed together. The first species to be awarded this treatment is *Rhytidiadelphus subpinnatus*.

Another innovation is the BBS Bulletin Board, which can be accessed via the BBS home page. This is intended as an on-line discussion forum where contributors can exchange comments and ideas, and was started in response to some

¹ Blackstock TH, Rothero GP, Hill MO. 2005. *Census catalogue of British and Irish bryophytes updated 2005*. British Bryological Society: web publication
<http://www.britishbryologicalsociety.org.uk>, 41 pp.