

might have been *Leptobarbula berica*. Alas, later microscopic examination showed it to be *Gymnostomum calcareum*. A small patch of *Fissidens viridulus** was found on bare mud just inside the wood. Lunch of beer and doorstep sandwiches at the Black Lion pub was interrupted by the passage of a steam locomotive on the Churnett Valley railway (Figure 4). It probably says a lot about the age of the group that this aroused as much interest as the bryophytes.



Figure 4. A distraction – a train on the Churnett Valley railway. Photo: Martin Godfrey.

After lunch, we explored the old limekiln and surrounding woods at **Consall Forge**, just over the river. The kiln stonework had extensive carpets of fertile *Conocephalum salebrosum* (I think even Chris Preston was surprised at the amount we were finding in Staffordshire) and fertile *Gymnostomum calcareum*, whilst *Eucladium verticillatum*, *Pseudocrossidium hornschiebianum* and *P. revolutum* were a splendid sight for those not used to limestone areas. At this point people started to leave to meet trains and begin long car journeys but a hardy few stayed to record in **Sprink Meadow** next to the River Churnet, producing a list of another three dozen species.

Concluding remarks

I would like to thank everyone who took part in the meeting for their hard work in the field and, in particular, for giving us such good baselines for the SWT reserves. We will be able to use these in future years to see what effect management actions have had on the bryophyte communities. All of the records have now been added to the on-line atlas at www.staffs-ecology.org.uk/atlas/atlas.php.

Reports of local meetings

South-East Group

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Perrywood Local Nature Reserve, near Selling (v.-c. 15), 16 September 2006

This reserve is managed by Swale Borough Council and consists of three areas of woodland. Those to the east and west are mainly Sweet

Chestnut coppice on clay soil. The area to the south of the reserve ascends the Mount, a pine- and bracken-clad outcrop of acidic sandstone, and a well-used local viewpoint. The Mount is thought to have formed part of the semaphore telegraph between the cinque port of Deal and

the Admiralty in London. There are ancient earthworks in the woods, and Mesolithic flint tools have been found at two locations.

The excursion was led by Jan Hendy, who had made a reconnaissance of the site in the spring, and three other enthusiastic members made up for the lack of numbers. We started off in rather gloomy light, examining the roadside banks close to the car park first; these proved quite productive. Jan soon found a small patch of *Bartramia pomiformis*, including a deeply furrowed mature capsule, amongst more common species on a north-facing bank. On the other side of the road nice green patches of *Scleropodium cespitans* were present, recognisable by the julaceous stems and concave, imbricate leaves. Both species had been recorded on her earlier reconnaissance.

Leaving the roadside, we worked our way south through the coppice, examining the soil banks, and looking at the coppiced tree bases and stumps for the rarer *Dicranum* species but without success. We found a number of typical species, including *Aulacomnium androgynum*, *Isothecium alopecuroides*, *I. myosuroides*, *Leucobryum glaucum*, *Orthodontium lineare*, *Plagiobryum denticulatum* var. *denticulatum*, *P. nemorale*, *P. succulentum* and *Tetraphis pellucida*. A smallish example of *Calliergonella lindbergii* was subsequently confirmed microscopically, after some debate in the field. *Bryum rubens*, *Dicranella varia* and *Didymodon vinealis* were all present on the side of the pathways, and *Lophozia ventricosa* with obvious green gemmae was on a wet bank amongst the more numerous *Diplophyllum albicans*.

On reaching a road we started to turn and make our way back to the car park for lunch, stopping to look for epiphytes on elder, where we

observed *Orthotrichum affine*, *O. diaphanum* and *Syntrichia intermedia* (which was also growing on a nearby wall). Later, in another damp area, we found more epiphytes on ash, including *Frullania dilatata*, *Radula complanata* and *Grimmia pulvinata*, the *Radula* seemingly much more common in the south-east these days.

We had our lunch in the car park, enjoying the sun which had cleared the earlier cloud. While having lunch a nice specimen of *Cephalozia bicuspidata* with numerous perianths was found in the woodland near one of the cars.

After lunch, we initially made our way north, looking for the pond which turned out to be as bryologically uninteresting as Jan had reported in her earlier reconnaissance. We then followed another path through the woodland, seeing many of the species recorded earlier, until we came to an open, wetter, more basic area towards the south of the reserve where we found *Calliergonella cuspidata* and *Cratoneuron filicinum*, together with *Tortula truncata* and a single specimen of *Microbryum rectum*. Rather surprisingly, the only specimen of *Brachythecium velutinum* was found growing between the slats of a board walk. Further on, in more acid conditions, *Poblia melanodon* was common on the clay banks at the sides of the path, as was a small liverwort which was subsequently determined as immature *Nardia scalaris*. We continued south, moving through the pine woods to the viewpoint at the Mount. Nice views but very few bryophytes! The sun was hot, and we started making our way back, seeing little of interest on our way.

We eventually arrived back at the car park, still in sunshine, having spent a very pleasant day together, recording in total 12 liverworts and 59 mosses.