



Figure 2. Main phases of gametangia maturation and sporophyte development in *Nardia scalaris*.

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The changing bryophyte flora of Chawley Brick Pit, Oxford

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Many bryologists have recorded the bryoflora at Chawley Brick Pit, a small quarry cut into the side of a heathy hill just outside Oxford. It is the continuity of recording that provides such an intriguing insight to the clay pit and the changes that have occurred during the 20th century. A remarkable bryoflora developed at

the pit, relating to a spontaneous geo-chemical combustion event shortly after the pit closed in 1940. This very acidic episode is thought to be associated with the presence of iron pyrites in the Kimmeridge Clay associated with the fossilisation of Jurassic fauna (dinosaurs) found at the site.

Jones (1986) presents the most comprehensive profile of the pit during the earlier years, and Porley (1996) provides a more contemporary record of bryological changes, especially in epiphytes.

We have produced a report following a survey of the bryophytes of Chawley Brick Pit in 2002 and 2003. Higher plants and soil acidity were also recorded to assist with an understanding of the site. The bryophyte survey added 16 species to the extensive historical list for the pit, including the locally rare liverwort *Pellia neesiana*. The natural succession that has occurred in the pit since 1940, from bare soil and acidic pools to woodland, is closely related to the industrial history of the site, and the results are placed in the context of these changes. The site is notable

for the regionally and nationally rare bryophytes that have been recorded, and some of these remain, including *Sphagnum* species. Factors relating to the future of bryophytes at the site are discussed.

The full report can be downloaded from www.fritillary.org.uk. For a hard copy, contact Jacqueline Wright at the address above or phone on 01865 874423.

References

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Reports of BBS meetings

Throughout the following account, new vice-county records are indicated with an asterisk (*). Nomenclature follows Paton (1999), *The liverwort*

flora of the British Isles, and Smith (2004), *The moss flora of Britain and Ireland*, 2nd edition.

Field meeting, February-March 2006, Salerno, Italy

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Introduction

The second BBS meeting in Italy within 10 years was led by Roberto Ligrone, with Jeff Duckett co-ordinating the arrangements for British participants. In addition to Jeff, the visitors were Janet Betts, John Blackburn, Tom Blockeel, Sam

Bosanquet, Jonathan Graham, Mark Hill, David Long, Howard Matcham, Ron Porley, Chris Preston, Michael Proctor, Gordon Rothero, David Rycroft, Jonathan Sleath and Silvia Pressel, who, as a bryologist working in London but born in Italy, provided a link between the two nations. We flew to Naples on 22 February,