

# Reports of local meetings

## South-East Group

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### Seaton Lakes (v.-c. 15), 3 February 2007

Three former gravel pits beside the Little Stour River, east of Canterbury, are now used for private fishing. Gravel extraction finished in 1992 and since then earth moving and landscaping has left a substrate of mainly neutral to calcareous nature which in places has a conspicuous bryoflora.

The land habitats are grass banks, meadows, scrub and clumps of young trees. Time prevented a complete search so we looked at areas most obviously well furnished with bryophytes. These were a car park and adjacent colonising bare soil, a gently sloping trackway with a gravel substrate and some rough grassland adjoining a young willow wood. We also looked at a weir on the river. This seemingly unpromising part of East Kent has been rather neglected bryologically, even by those of us who live here. Hence a quarter of species seen were new 10km square records (marked<sup>^</sup>), at least according to Trudy Side's 1970 atlas.

The car park is in a corner of some open ground which, having held the machinery of the gravel extraction works, had been levelled and left bare. Apart from fresh tyre-churned muddy tracks, the whole area was well colonised by mosses, mostly *Brachythecium rutabulum*, *Kindbergia praelonga*, *Calliergonella cuspidata* and *Didymodon fallax*. One corner shaded by a row of willows had an impressive sward of *Drepanocladus aduncus*<sup>^</sup>, which is locally common on some of the damper

ground in this valley, but here giving a notable display. *Cratoneuron filicinum* was patchily abundant here, as was *Aloina aloides*<sup>^</sup>, showing up as brown carpets of sporophytes. An old telegraph pole on the ground, used as a boundary marker, yielded small amounts of *Campylopus introflexus*<sup>^</sup> and *Dicranoweisia cirrata*<sup>^</sup>. Also present here was *Trichostomum crispulum*<sup>^</sup>, usually found mainly on the downs in Kent.

The gravel trackway didn't look like one; the upper part was rough grass with a selection of the common mosses, but as it levelled out to join the flat area, it became a thick turf of co-dominant *Calliergonella cuspidata* and *Cratoneuron filicinum*, with *Oxyrrhynchium hians* and *Amblystegium serpens*. *Brachythecium mildeanum*<sup>^</sup> was found here, but quantities are unknown since it was overlooked until microscopic examination of collected samples! Its presence is a good reason for attempting to preserve these habitats.

The wood was devoid of epiphytes except for one patch of *Frullania dilatata* and a few scraps of *Orthotrichum diaphanum*, but had some *Hypnum cupressiforme* and *Hypnum resupinatum* on tree bases. Despite the wetness of the site, even the soil here was dry, being made of the remains of a very soft, fine silt brought up by the dredging. The only mosses on the ground were just a few patches of *Barbula convoluta* perched round the edges of some rather fragile rabbit burrows. The grassland was not prolific, but did add to our list *Pseudo-*

*scleropodium purum*, *Dicranella varia*, and *Pottia davalliana*. Molehills under a small clump of willows gave us *Fissidens incurvus* and *Physcomitrium pyriforme*^.

The weir had *Tortula muralis* and *Bryum dichotomum* on the brickwork and banks, with *Platyhypnidium riparioides*^, *Leptodictyum riparium* and *Brachythecium rivulare*^ in the running water. The

commonest moss in the water, in running and still parts, was *Cratoneuron filicinum*. Other species found in various places were *Barbula unguiculata*, *Bryum caespiticium*, *B. capillare* and, on exposed gravel of a ditch bank, immature *Pohlia* sp.

We are most grateful to Dr. Norman McCanch, the site's wildlife consultant, for his assistance in arranging this meeting and showing us around.

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## Society business

### Future meetings of the society

**Summer field meeting 2007, first week: Mull, 14-21 July**

Local secretary: Mark Lawley, 12A Castleview Terrace, Ludlow, SY8 2NG; e-mail: m.lawley@virgin.net

The first week of the summer field meeting will be held on the island of Mull (v.-c. 103), off the west coast of Scotland. The BBS has not hitherto met on Mull, and although several bryologists recorded on the island in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, little work has been done since 1970.

We will lodge in or near Salen, on the eastern side of the island, as it lies at the hub of the island's tortuous network of roads, and also offers a range of accommodation and services.

Please inform the local secretary as soon as convenient if you wish to attend this meeting, as numbers will affect our programme of excursions.

**Summer field meeting 2007, second week: Lewis, Outer Hebrides, 21-28 July**

Local secretary: Liz Kungu, Royal Botanic Garden

Edinburgh, 20A Inverleith Row, Edinburgh EH3 5LR; e-mail: e.kungu@rbge.ork.uk

The second week of the summer field meeting is planned as a recording session to tackle under-recorded 10-km squares on Lewis as a contribution to the update of the *Atlas*. There are 14 squares with less than 50 species recorded, four unrecorded squares, and another five with 50-100 records.

There has not previously been a BBS meeting on Lewis/Harris and much of this area seems to have been very poorly recorded. A few of the squares are remote and will provide a real challenge but there are a number of squares that can be accessed relatively easily, so there will be a range for all. We will be based in Stornoway, as this is the main centre of population and closest to most of the under-recorded squares.

Please inform the local secretary as soon as convenient if you wish to attend this meeting, so we can gauge if there is enough support to allow this part of the meeting to take place.