

Following publication of the article in FB94 reporting the discovery of *Orthotrichum consimile* in Derbyshire, **Tom Blockeel** and **Colin Wall** describe the latest developments concerning this species

are weak), giving them a striped appearance. In the Derbyshire specimen they were close fitting, and lacked any brown colouring. The calyptrae of *O. pulchellum* are campanulate, with a wide base, and therefore sit very loosely on the capsule; they regularly have characteristic brown stripes along the plications. Those of *O. consimile*, according to the literature, have a more oblong shape, and they extend further down the capsule. However, the loose fit and brown stripes of the Yorkshire specimen obscure these differences. Further observations are needed to confirm the constancy of the characters.

This second recent record of *O. consimile* demonstrates that last year's Derbyshire record was not a one-off occurrence. It will surely be found at further British sites.

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### References

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# Alex Smith

## 1920–2007

Alex Smith died on 16 September 2007, aged 87. He was a member of the BBS for almost 25 years having joined in 1972. He served as referee for the Brachytheciaceae from 1990 and many members will remember the meticulous and detailed replies which he gave to their queries.

Alex was born in Glasgow in 1919 and after qualifying as a chartered accountant moved to London where he worked for Philips electrical, becoming chief internal auditor. He produced a text book on that subject and also wrote three detective novels (as Clark Smith) which, after appearing in hardback were published by Penguin in their distinctive green and white covers. One of them was made into a television play. His hero, an accountant of course, must be the only 'private eye' to note the flowers in hedgerows and gardens as he went about his 'business'. Alex acted as treasurer for the crime writers association for many years and was awarded their silver dagger for his services.

On retirement Alex moved to Suffolk, joined the BBS and began recording a then very underworked county. He found many new vice-county records and also added records to Argyll from specimens sent to him by his brother. His wife Mina, an accomplished botanical artist who wrote and illustrated books on flower arranging and house plants, pre-deceased him.

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