

Rare and Interesting

Mark Hill presents the eighth instalment in his occasional column reporting recent rare and interesting records.

This batch of *Rare and Interesting* includes a greater number of nationally rare species than previous ones. Particularly notable are *Jamesoniella undulifolia* and *Buxbaumia viridis*, which are respectively critically endangered and vulnerable in Europe. Stewart Taylor has been keeping an eye on *B. viridis* in eastern Scotland and has found it to be more frequent than had been supposed. A pity that its capsules are such great mollusc food! The other nationally scarce species, the liverwort *Fossombronia caespitiformis* and the mosses *Didymodon icmadophilus*, *Grimmia elongata*, *Hygrohypnum molle*, *Paraleucobryum longifolium* and *Tayloria linguata*, are not so rare at the European scale. Indeed, *P. longifolium*, thought only a few years ago to be extinct in Britain, is a common plant in much of Scandinavia. *H. molle* is recorded in Britain from only four hectads post 1989; two of the new records are in known hectads, but the third, from Beinn a'Bhuird, brings the hectad count to five. *G. elongata* is a BAP Priority Species not seen in England since 1987; Robert Goodison found a large colony that straddled two hectads.

Male plants of *Didymodon nicholsonii* were found in Cambridgeshire, apparently a second record of this sex in Britain. Ken Adams found abundantly fruiting *Didymodon vinealis*. This species is very common in south-eastern Britain, but is rarely seen with capsules, let alone with tens of thousands of them. Three records are of bryophytes in unusual habitats, one being a



△ Fig. 1. Setae of *Buxbaumia viridis* after a major herbivore attack. Stewart Taylor.

Sphagnum from a playing field, and the other two being *Orthotrichum* species that are normally epiphytic, but were found on a tombstone.

The regionally notable records are a mixed bag. Some such as *Anthoceros agrestis* and *Bartramia pomiformis* have declined markedly in parts of their range, so that a new population, especially a thriving one, is remarkable. Others such as *Riccocarpos natans* in County Durham are at the northern limit of their British range and may perhaps be pushing northwards because of climate change. Likewise, *Lejeunea lamacerina* may be moving eastwards in Northumberland. In some counties, uneven recent recording may have resulted in species being overlooked; this may well be the case with *Didymodon acutus* in Surrey and *Sphagnum contortum* in South Northumberland. Finally the record of *Rhodobryum roseum* is a pseudo-vice-county record, because the previous one is thought by the county recorder to be unreliable.

Nationally rare or scarce

64.3. *Fossombronia caespitiformis*. 45: soil at base of tree planted by major road, with *Phaeoceros laevis*, 30 m alt., verge of A477, Brotherhill,



Cosheston, SN005028, 2008, Bosanquet. 2nd record of a Nationally Scarce species. A few rosettes, on ground disturbed 2006. N.

30.2. *Jamesoniella undulifolia*. **98**: in *Sphagnum* hummock in flushed mire, 5 m alt., coast just N of Bonnach Mor, Ardfern peninsula, NM77470385, 2006, Rothero 16002. Third Scottish locality for this species, which is critically endangered in Europe. N. **98**: flushed mire, 40 m alt., coast W of Druim an Achanarnaich, Ardfern peninsula, NM 76860275, 2006, Rothero 16001. Fourth Scottish locality for this species, which is critically endangered in Europe. N.

10.2. *Buxbaumia viridis*. **95**: on rotting heartwood of fallen *Pinus sylvestris* overhanging a small river, 260 m alt., Abernethy Forest, NJ021176, 2007, Taylor. New locality for a very rare species. 15 very fresh capsules, 6 still with intact calyptra on 16 November. N. **95**: amongst compact mosses on rotting but intact bark on the side of a fallen *Alnus glutinosa*, within a few metres of a small river, 260 m alt., Abernethy Forest, NJ021177, 2007, Taylor. New locality for a very rare species. 13 capsules and 9 setae without capsules on 3 November; another capsule had been eaten 13 days later. There had been 3 capsules during the previous growing season, January–

△ Fig. 2. *Didymodon icmadophilus* at Water of Ainack. Gordon Rothero

April 2007. N. **96**: log, 280 m alt., Abernethy Forest, NJ008160, 2008, Taylor. New locality for a very rare species. Plant much affected by herbivory, with 66 setae and 7 remaining capsules (Fig. 1) in early February. N.

32.1. *Paraleucobryum longifolium*. **92**: rocks on margin of lochan, 945 m alt., Dubh Lochan, Beinn a' Bhuid, NO095990, 2007, Flagmeier & Rothero. Third record for v.-c. 92. N.

54.6. *Didymodon icmadophilus*. **94**: on S-facing limestone crags in ravine, 430 m alt., Water of Ailnack, NJ145150, 2007, Rothero (Fig. 2). Second locality in Banffshire and in some abundance, often growing through cushions of *Schistidium atrofussum*. N.

69.9. *Grimmia elongata*. **70**: soil-filled crevices in large blocks of Skiddaw Slate (Kirkstile Formation), 710 m alt., Grasmoor, Lad Hows Ridge, NY178199, 2008, Goodison, conf. Porley (Fig. 3). 2nd record since 1970, several cushions. R.

85.1. *Tayloria lingulata*. **92**: in large flush with *Meesia uliginosa* and *Cinclidium stygium*, 850 m alt., Glas Choire, N of Glas Maol, on E side of burn, NO1677, 2005, Rothero 15177. A second locality for S Aberdeenshire, fruiting



△ Fig. 3. *Grimmia elongata* cushions at Lad Hows.
Robert Goodison

as usual, and present in at least one other flush in the area. N.

- 161.7. *Hygrohypnum molle*. 92: on stones in flush, 950 m alt., Coire an Dubh-lochain, Beinn a'Bhuird, NO092992, 2007, Flagmeier & Rothero. Second site for v.-c. 92 and with sporophytes. N. 97: in stony flush/burn at base of coire, 920 m alt., Coire a'Mhadaidh, Stob Coire Easain, Grey Coires, NN2372, 2005, Rothero 15229. Second site in v.-c. 97. N. 97: on granite rocks in spring and burn, 1,100 m alt., below the main gully at the head of Coire an Lochain, Aonach Mor, NN1973, 2005, Rothero 15202. Third site in v.-c. 97, fruiting abundantly. N.

Fruiting and gametangia

- 54.4. *Didymodon nicholsonii*. 29: on compacted gravelly track, Anglesey Abbey, TL52936231, 2008, Preston. Plants with frequent male inflorescences. There is only one previous report of male plants of this species in the British Isles, from a tarmac lane at Pucketty Farm, Faringdon, Oxfordshire. G.
- 54.8. *Didymodon vinealis*. 18: on sloping concrete by reservoir, 5 m alt., Walthamstow reservoirs,

TQ3589, 2008, Adams. Tens of thousands of capsules in a plant that seldom fruits in Britain, all with helical setae, some even coiling round each other. F.

Unusual habitat

- 1.19. *Sphagnum compactum*. 59: in wet acidic grassland in unmown part of playing fields, 170 m alt., adjacent to the A6119 at Pleckgate High School, Blackburn, SD676304, 2007, Crook, conf. Hodgetts. Second record for the county since 1960; several clumps present. This artificial habitat is highly unusual for a species that is normally found in heathland. H, R.
- 117.1. *Orthotrichum lyellii*. 27: on tombstone; see under *O. pulchellum* below. H.
- 117.17. *Orthotrichum pulchellum*. 27: epilithic on fine-grained sandstone tomb slab, overhung by *Castanea sativa*, 27 m alt., Earlham Cemetery, Norwich, TG21290887, 2008, Ellis & Stevenson. Three supposedly obligate epiphytes – *O. pulchellum*, *O. lyellii* and *O. affine* – were all growing on the same piece of rock. H.

Regionally notable records

- 60.2. *Lejeunea lamacerina*. 67: wet sandstone river cliff, 165 m alt., Towsbank Wood, River South Tyne, NY682568, 2007, O'Reilly & O'Reilly, conf. Hodgetts. 2nd record for the county and first since 1956. R.
- 69.1. *Blasia pusilla*. 69: on moist, clayey bank above stream, with *Palustriella commutata*, 130 m alt., Torver Low Common, nr Sunny Bank, Coniston, SD286925, 2007, Cameron. Second record for the county since 1960. R.
- 83.1. *Ricciocarpos natans*. 66: pond, 60 m alt., Brasside Pond, NZ2945, 1989, T.C. Dunn, comm. O'Reilly. Second record for the county since 1950; most northerly locality in Britain. R.

- 83.1. *Ricciocarpos natans*. 66: ponds, 125 m alt., Pesspool Lane Ponds, near Haswell, NZ393438, 1999, Dave Green & Julie Stobbs. Third record since 1950; refound in abundance in ditches by the ponds, 2007, O'Reilly. R.
- 85.2. *Anthoceros agrestis*. 27: in barley stubble on brown earth, pH 6.7, with *Riccia glauca*, *R. sorocarpa* and *Sphaerocarpos texanus*, 20 m alt., Blickling Estate about 1 km NE of Blickling Hall, TG189295, 2007, Norfolk and Suffolk Bryological Group. Third record since 1990; exceptionally abundant along 300 m of field edge to TG188292. R.
- 1.23. *Sphagnum contortum*. 67: basic flush next to lough, 255 m alt., Broomlee Lough, NY788695, 2007, O'Reilly & O'Reilly, conf. Hill. 2nd record for the county and first since 1966. R.
- 37.1. *Eucladium verticillatum*. 22: on tufa on the bank of a stream in woodland, 110 m alt., Hinksey Heights Nature Park, Oxford, SP489043, 2007, Wright. New location of a species which is rare in the county. R.
- 54.1. *Didymodon acutus*. 17: on compacted soil at edge of chalky path, 75 m alt., Juniper Bottom, TQ177528, 2007, Duckett, conf. Wallis. Second record for the county since 1977. R.
- 54.17. *Didymodon ferrugineus*. 45: on calcareous Coal Measures shale on road cutting, among *Trichostomum crispulum*, 100 m alt., A477 Pen-y-bont Cutting, Amroth, SN152094, 2008, Bosanquet. First confirmed record since 1950, frequent patches. R.
- 98.1. *Rhodobryum roseum*. 45: limestone turf on coast, 40 m alt., Bluck's Pool southern limestone, Castlemartin, SR889969, 2007, Bosanquet. Three patches, comprising 109 rosettes, of a plant that has not hitherto been reliably reported from the county. R.
- 110.2. *Bartramia pomiformis*. 27: on steep earth bank of lane with *Reboulia hemisphaerica* and *Pogonatum* sp., 20 m alt., 1.5 km SW of Erpingham, TG182306, 2007, Ghullam. Large quantity of a plant that has declined markedly in southern Britain. R. 27: on vertical earth bank, 1 m high, facing NNW in village, with *Lophocolea bidentata*, *Lunularia cruciata*, *Reboulia hemisphaerica* and *Atrichum undulatum*, 25 m alt., Itteringham, TG1444 3091, 2007, Ghullam. Large quantity, sparsely fruiting along 12 m of bank, of a plant that has declined markedly in southern Britain. R.
- 118.7. *Ulota phyllantha*. 67: on *Salix* in valley woodland, 160 m alt., Glen Cune, Kellah, NY6661, 2007, Bosanquet. 2nd record for the county and first since 1969 of a species that has increased in southern Britain. D, R.
- 170.2. *Scleropodium cespitans*. 67: sandstone rock faces by river, 130 m alt., River South Tyne, Crow Wood, NY674617, 2007, Bosanquet. Second record for the county and first since 1961. R.
- 195.1. *Hylocomium brevirostre*. 17: on ground in a thicket at edge of calcareous grassland, 95 m alt., lower slopes of Juniper Top, TQ179528, 2007, Howarth, conf. Wallis. First record for the county since 1980 of a species that has declined in southern England. R.

Mark Hill

Biological Records Centre, CEH Maclean Building, Benson Lane, Crowmarsh Gifford, Wallingford, Oxon OX10 8BB
(e moh@ceh.ac.uk)

Contributors of records

K.J. Adams, S.D.S. Bosanquet, F. Cameron, C.S. Crook, J.G. Duckett, Bob Ellis, Maren Flagmeier, M.P. Ghullam, R. Goodison, N.G. Hodgetts, P. Howarth, J. and C. O'Reilly, C.D. Preston, G.P. Rothero, C.R. Stevenson, S. Taylor, H.W. Wallis, J.A. Wright.