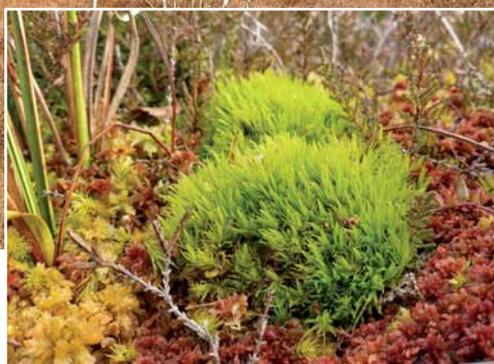




### Trial reintroduction of *Dicranum undulatum*

Owing to former widespread peatland destruction and degradation, *Dicranum undulatum* has been lost from eight of its nine known sites in the southern half of Britain. When surveying the only surviving population at Whixall Moss in 2019, I was pleased to document a large and healthy population on the ‘Cranberry Beds’ comprising 238 occupied 1 m grid cells (Callaghan, 2020), far more than had previously been thought. Given its very limited dispersal ability, with no sporophyte production at Whixall, I wondered about its possible reintroduction to nearby suitable sites using material transplanted from Whixall. Possible sites were reviewed and in November 2020 I carefully removed 15 hand-sized plugs of the moss from the Cranberry Beds, transplanting five of them to North East Fenn’s (part of the Whixall complex) and ten of them to Wybunbury Moss, located 26 km north-east.

There are frequent records and herbarium vouchers of *D. undulatum* from Wybunbury, made between 1850 and 1907, and subsequent records from 1959 and 1965. Recent searches, including a detailed survey by myself in 2015, have confirmed its extinction. Reasons for the loss at Wybunbury are uncertain, but could be related to former sewage-water pollution



△ Part of Wybunbury Moss that has received transplants of *Dicranum undulatum* from Whixall Moss.

**Inset** Transplanted material of *Dicranum undulatum* at Wybunbury Moss in February 2021, three months after its translocation. *Des Callaghan*

events, which on occasion have flooded large parts of the site but are now remedied. Return visits have so far indicated that the transplants are doing well and it is hoped they will continue to survive and expand, thus reducing the possible extinction of this species in southern Britain.

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