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# The Vasculum

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## Editorial

This represents the fourth issue of the electronic Vasculum. This is intended to replace the paper-based journal that was published up to December 2005 by the Northern Naturalists' Union which ceased to exist in that month. The purpose of the Vasculum remains the same i.e. recording and celebrating aspects of the natural history of Northumberland and Durham. .

### **Report on Bryophyte Recording in North-East England, March 2009**

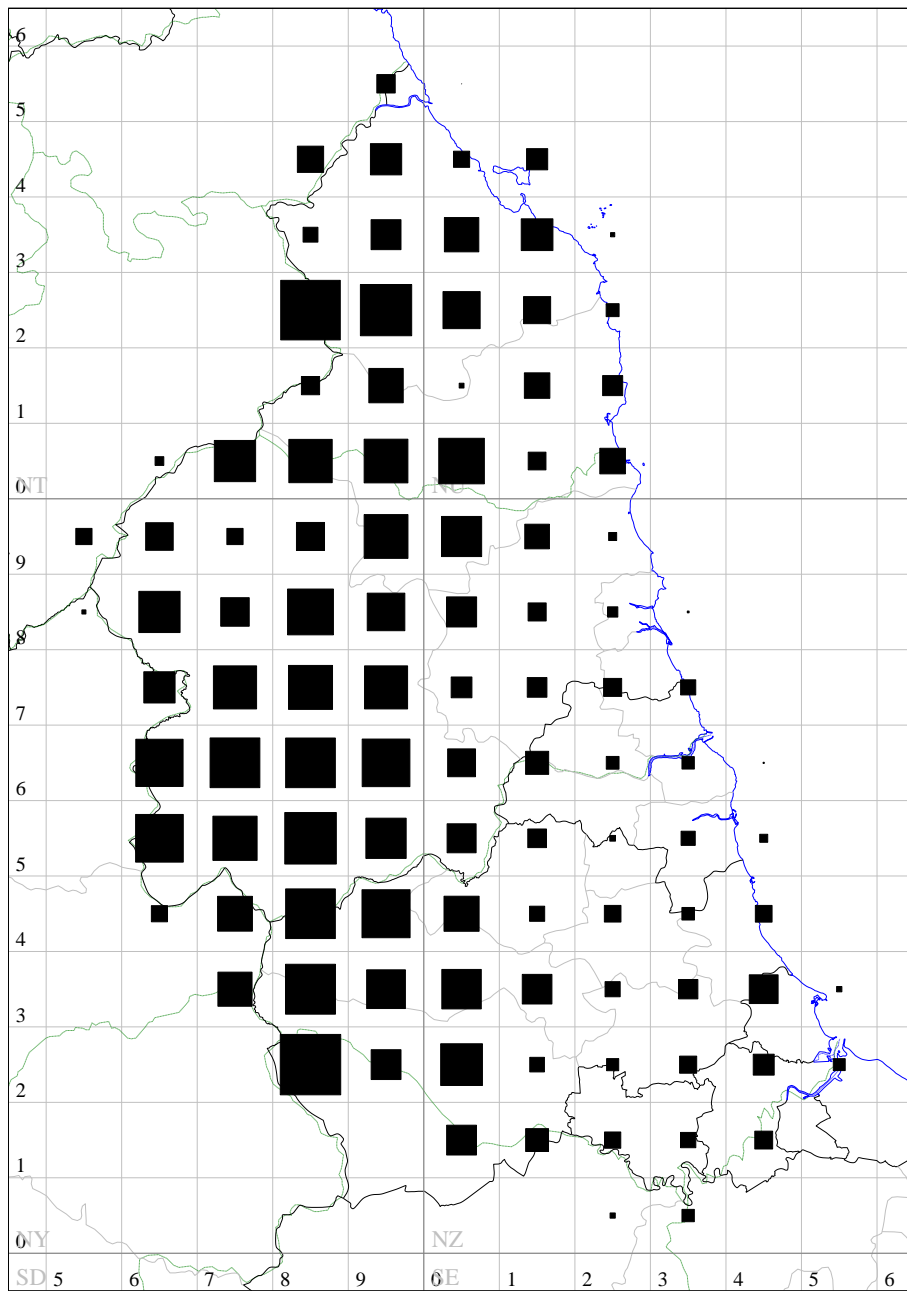
*John O'Reilly BA (Ed) MSc MIEEM CEnv, john@ptyxis.com*

#### **Historic records on 10km square scale**

Over the past 18 months or so I have been collating and validating historic bryophyte records for VCs 66, 67 & 68 into one database. This process involved updating names to reflect modern nomenclature, removing unvalidated records from the database (guided by Mark Hill) and deleting thousands of duplicated records. This is now more or less completed and I don't anticipate large volumes of extra historic records emerging, although I'm sure there are some more out there. The one exception are the tetrad records from Rev. Graham's flora, many of which are not on the database. I will gradually add these over the next year or so.

The map on the next page shows the density of species recorded per 10km square in the region. In general, the west of the region is more species-rich and is well-recorded on a 10km square scale. Most 10km squares with grid references beginning with NY, NT, NZ0 and NU0 are well-recorded on this scale. Most squares further east are not well-recorded, but they are also likely to be less species-rich. The one exception to this is the Tees Valley area which is comprehensively recorded. The size of the black squares in the Tees Valley area on the map page gives a good indication of how species rich the other eastern squares could be expected to be. Overall, although the eastern areas a bit under-recorded, we now have a fairly good picture of bryophyte distribution in North East England on a 10km square scale.

# North east Bryophytes Species Density 10km

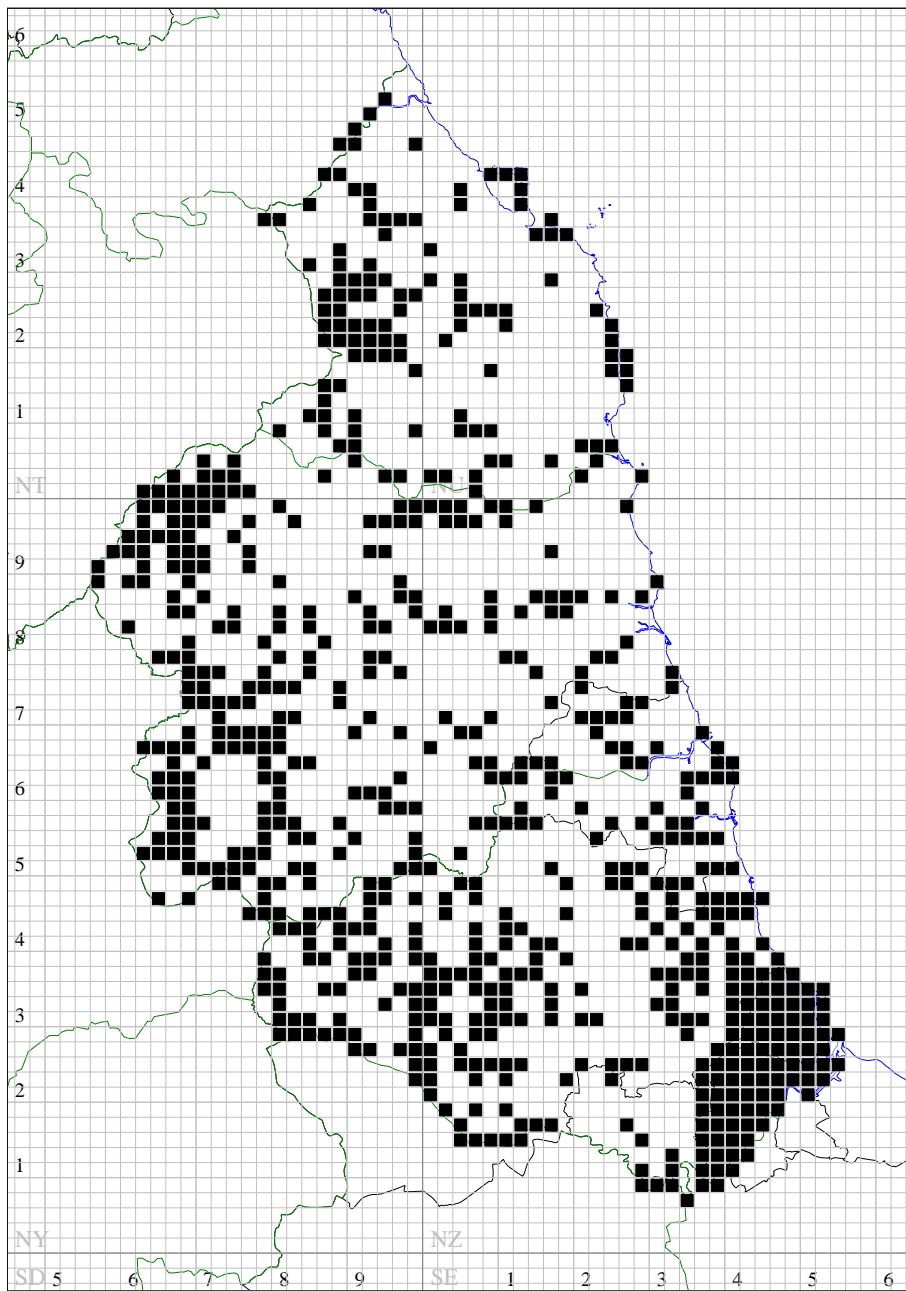


## Recording on a tetrad scale

The next logical step would be to try to work out the distributions on a finer scale,

such as tetrads. The 2<sup>nd</sup> map below shows the tetrads which have any bryophyte records. A black square can mean anything from 1 record to over a thousand records and a white dot means no records at all. As you can see it is mainly white space, so there is lots of scope for adding to our knowledge by recording in one of the white squares. I intend to record on a tetrad scale going forward and anticipate that in about 30 years time most of the map should be black!

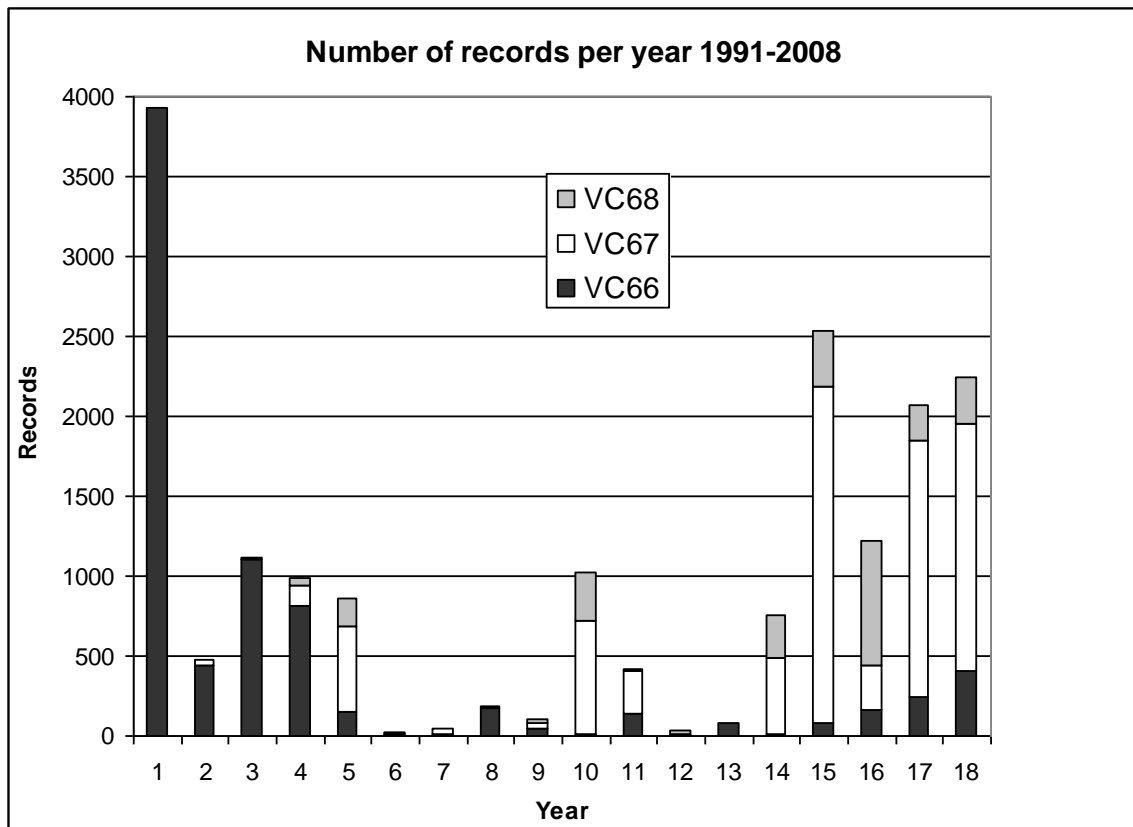
# North East Bryophytes Recorded 2km squares



### Scale of database and recent recording effort

The database now has just over 45,000 records, broken down by vice-county as follows: VC66 – 19,371, VC67 – 17,161, VC68 – 8,498. Most of these records have been collected by a relatively small number of people, some recording in part of the region and some recording more widely. The bar chart below illustrates how recording effort has fluctuated and focused on different vice counties over the past 18 years. The majority of records for VC66 from the early 1990s were from J.M. Blackburn recording in the Tees Valley area and Brian Humphries recording mainly in the west of VC66. It is possible that the big peak in records in 1991 may be partly of records compiled in that year rather than necessarily recorded in that year. The records for VCs 67 and 68 since the year 2000 are largely due to Doug McCutcheon with John O'Reilly making a smaller contribution in the last two years.

An average of 2,000 records per year seems like a reasonably achievable target and if we did this over 30 years, we could add another 60,000 records and fill in many of the gaps on the tetrad map!



Note: 1 = 1991, 2 = 1992, 3 = 1993.....18 = 2008

All of the records have been shared with the Biological Records Centre (who give me valuable feedback on validation), the EYE project, Durham Wildlife Trust (for VC66 records) and Quentin Groom's 'Flora of North-East England' website <http://botanicalkeys.co.uk/northumbria/index.asp>. Please note that the nomenclature on the Mapmate system that I use has not yet been updated to follow the most recent version, so the maps on the website still follow the older names. Hopefully this will be updated within the next year. If you spot any mistakes or 'missing' dots on these maps please let me know.

### **Notes on some of the recorders**

In all, 198 individuals and groups have contributed records, although most of these are of very small numbers of records. Where records are attributed to two or more people on the database, I have added these records to the totals of each individual in Table 1. The 50 individuals who have contributed the most records so far are listed in Table 1. The contribution of several people who were mainly active in previous decades is under-represented. Evelyn Lobley was active from the 1930s to the 1970s. Most of her records come from lists compiled for 10km squares for the BBS national Atlas scheme. Some of these records probably originate from other recorders, especially the Fitzgeralds and the Duncans. However, even Evelyn Lobley's contribution is probably under-represented. She undoubtedly did a lot of bryophyte recording, but it was not so easy keeping track of large volumes of records in those days on card indexes, as it is now with spreadsheets and databases.

Rev Graham's recording is also under-represented as many of his flora records have still not found their way on to any database. Doug McCutcheon has been easily the most prolific recorder so far in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

If you are aware of anyone who does not appear on this list who you think has made bryophyte records in the region, please let me know, or better still, prompt them to send the records in if you know them. I am aware of 1 or 2 people who have made records but for whatever reason have not sent them in yet and I expect that there are quite a few records hidden away in reports done by and for Natural England which are unlikely to ever see the light of day.

**Table 1: Top 50 recorders up to March 2009**

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Recorder</b>	<b>Year of 1<sup>st</sup> record</b>	<b>Year of last record</b>	<b>Number of records</b>
1	Lobley, Miss Evelyn M.	1934	1970	12462
2	McCutcheon, Doug E.	1988	2009	6608
3	Humphreys, Brian M.	1989	1994	6159
4	Graham, Gordon G.	1966	1995	4950
5	Blackburn, J.M.	1991	2003	3155
6	O'Reilly, John	2005	2009	3145
7	British Bryological Society	1838	1995	2141
8	Fitzgerald, Mrs. J.W.	1937	1967	1152
9	Hodgetts, Nick G.	1990	2005	991
10	O'Reilly, Clare	2005	2009	974
11	Fitzgerald, R.D.	1950	1967	853
12	Long, David G.	1950	2001	748
13	Wharton, T.S.	1989	2000	736
14	Hill, Mark O.	1987	1987	663
15	Unknown			591
16	Paton, Mrs. Jean A.	1958	1968	587
17	Pickering, Ann T.	1977	2008	534
18	Graham, Mrs. P.S.	1966	1995	476
19	Hutchings, G.A.	1977	1977	340
20	Craft, Ian	2007	2009	314
21	Wigginton, M.J.	1976	1990	293
22	Bosanquet, Sam D.S.	2007	2007	284
23	Lansdown, Richard V.	2006	2006	239
24	Mitchell, Dave N.	1990	1999	202



25	Lees, Andy	2008	2008	186
26	Mclay, Andy	1999	2009	176
27	Perry, A.R.	1958	1980	142
28	Ingham, W.	1897	1905	141
29	Northumberland Bryophyte Group	2007	2008	132
30	Blockeel, Tom L.	1980	2006	129
31	Duncan, J.B.	1897	1953	129
32	Simpson, Gordon	1994	2008	120
33	Brodin, Nick	2008	2008	112
34	Chamberlain, David F.	2004	2005	111
35	Kungu, E.M.	2004	2005	110
36	White, M.	1994	1994	101
37	Mitchell, Gaynor	1990	1990	99
38	Peterken, J.H.G.	1961	1963	92
39	Dale, Miss K.	1989	1989	82
40	Corby, Fiona	2008	2008	79
41	Coles, Alec	1993	1999	77
42	Preston, Chris D.	2004	2004	74
43	Stark, G.	1994	1994	63
44	Stark, Mrs. E.	1994	1994	63
45	Haycock, Gordon	2009	2009	60
46	Holyoak, David T.	1998	2004	57
47	Central Environmental Surveys	2004	2005	49
48	Brodie, J.	1977	1977	44
49	Irvine, Chris	2008	2008	44
50	Metcalf, D.M.	1976	1976	44

## Records from 2008

Table 2 shows who contributed records for 2008. This list includes several people who contributed records for the first time and hopefully 1 or 2 of these people at least will continue to contribute records. If everyone on the list aimed to try to record a little more than last year, we could do really well!

**Table 2: Records per recorder for 2008**

1	John O'Reilly	1766
2	Doug McCutcheon	713
3	Clare O'Reilly	694
4	Ian Craft	211
5	Andy Lees	186
6	Nick Brodin	112
7	Fiona Corby	74
8	Ann Pickering	70
9	Andy Mclay	55
10	Northumberland Bryophyte Group	39
11	Julia Quinonez	38
12	Chris Irvine	34
13	Bill Burlton	18
14	Keith Cunningham	18
15	Lesley Silvera	16
16	Gordon Simpson	3

### Recent confirmed new county records & the BBS system for validating records

Since I took on being recorder for VC67 in 2007 (and subsequently VCs 66 & 68 in 2008), we have had several species confirmed by BBS as new county records. These records and their recorders are listed in Table 3 on the next page. Also included are first records for the county since 1960, which the BBS uses nationally as the cut-off date for 'recent' records. The BBS runs quite a rigorous system of checking these new county records. All 'new' or 'recent' records should be backed up by a specimen, which is checked by an expert and then sent to the BBS herbarium at the National Museum of Wales. This system also allows the specimens for each county to be examined again in future if the taxonomy changes.

**Table 3: New and first post-1960 VC records confirmed in 2007 & 2008**

Taxon	Recorder	Year	66	67	68
<i>Aloina rigida</i>	John O'Reilly, Steve Lowe & Geoff Dobbins	2008		New	
<i>Anastrophyllum minutum</i>	John O'Reilly	2008	Recent		
<i>Chiloscyphus pallescens</i>	G.G. Graham & D.M. Metcalfe	1976	New		
<i>Conocephalum conicum</i> sensu stricto	John & Clare O'Reilly	2006	*New*		
<i>Conocephalum salebrosum</i>	Sam Bosanquet	2007		New	
<i>Diplophyllum obtusifolium</i>	John O'Reilly & Doug McCutcheon	2008			New
<i>Fissidens exilis</i>	Doug McCutcheon	2005			*Recent*
<i>Fissidens viridulus</i>	Doug McCutcheon	2005		New	
<i>Fissidens viridulus</i>	Doug McCutcheon	2006			*Recent*
<i>Fossombronia pusilla</i>	Doug McCutcheon	2006			*Recent*
<i>Hedwigia stellata</i>	Doug McCutcheon	2004			Recent
<i>Leiocolea heterocolpos</i>	Sam Bosanquet	2007		New	
<i>Marchantia polymorpha</i> var. <i>polymorpha</i>	John O'Reilly & Fiona Corby	2008	*Recent*		

<i>Marchantia polymorpha</i> var. <i>polymorpha</i>	John O'Reilly & Doug McCutcheon	2008			*Recent*
<i>Marsupella emarginata</i> var. <i>aquatica</i>	Doug McCutcheon	2007			*Recent*
<i>Marsupella emarginata</i> var. <i>pearsonii</i>	Doug McCutcheon	2007			*Recent*
<i>Metzgeria consanguinea</i>	Sam Bosanquet	2007		New	
<i>Plagiomnium affine</i>	Clare O'Reilly	2007	New		
<i>Racomitrium elongatum</i>	Doug McCutcheon	2000			*Recent*
<i>Racomitrium ericoides</i>	Doug McCutcheon	2000			*New*
<i>Riccardia palmata</i>	Doug McCutcheon	2005			*Recent*
<i>Schistidium apocarpum</i> sensu stricto	Sam Bosanquet	2007		New	
<i>Schistidium crassipilum</i>	John & Clare O'Reilly	2008			*New*
<i>Schistidium robustum</i>	Doug McCutcheon	2007		New	
<i>Sphagnum angustifolium</i>	John O'Reilly	2008	New		
<i>Ulota hutchinsiae</i>	Doug McCutcheon	2006		New	

'New' = first confirmed record for the vice-county.

'Recent' = first confirmed record for the vice-county since 1960.

Records marked with '\*\*' have been accepted, but voucher specimens are still needed.

As you can see from the table above they have accepted some of the 'new' and 'recent' records without specimens (marked with \*), especially of fairly common species that would more than likely be expected to occur in the county. Ideally we still need to send in specimens of all of these to keep things straight, so if anyone finds any of these, please send in a specimen. Collecting specimens should always be done sparingly of course and not done at all if the species is rare and has only a very small population. There were several other records submitted without specimens that were not accepted and unfortunately we will never be sure if these were right unless they are refound.

The list above includes genuinely uncommon species which were surprise finds like *Aloina rigida*, *Leiocolea heterocolpos* and *Ulota hutchinsiae*. Also included are relatively common species which have recently undergone taxonomic changes, resulting in the recent record

being the first 'official' record for the county. Included in this category are both *Conocephalum* species, *Plagiomnium affine*, *Racomitrium ericoides* and *Schistidium crassipilum*.

### North-East England bryophyte recording sheet

I have prepared a recording sheet specific to our region which is attached as a separate file (or paper version) to this report. Please feel free to photocopy this and use it or pass it on to others. The two sheets can be printed out back to back and it is designed to be folded in four for ease of use in the field. It includes the 300 or so, most frequently recorded species in the region. The species in bold have mostly been recorded in half or more of the region's 106 10km squares. The other species have been recorded in at least 17 10km squares in the region. If you find anything not on this list, it would be a good idea to collect a specimen if there is a large enough population of it.

Where a species has more than one subspecies or variety in Britain I have marked down the most likely subspecies or variety in our region on the form. It is good practice to record to subspecies or variety level if you can, especially as 'today's variety' often becomes 'tomorrow's species' following taxonomic revisions. Please only mark it down as the subspecies or variety if you are sure.

Some species are marked as 's.s.' or 's.l.' Those marked 's.s.' refer to the species in a strict sense (*sensu stricto*). This usually applies to species that have undergone a recent taxonomic review and the name of the species now means something more narrowly defined than it did before (e.g. in older identification books). Please again only mark something down as 's.s.' if you are sure of it.

Two are marked 's.l.' (*sensu lato* – in a broad sense), *Bryum caespitium* and *Bryum pseudotriquetrum*. Older identification books give the impression that *Bryum caespitium* is identifiable without mature capsules. As a result it is over-recorded for a number of equally common but under-recorded species including *Bryum algovicum* and *Bryum imbricatum*. So if you find something that looks like it vegetatively, good practice is to record it as '*Bryum caespitium* s.l.'. The two varieties of *Bryum pseudotriquetrum* are not identifiable without checking where the male organs are positioned, so best to record it as *Bryum pseudotriquetrum* s.l. if you can't find them (which is most of the time).

### Recent nomenclature changes

Following a comprehensive taxonomic review based largely on recent DNA work, the BBS has recently published a revised 'official list – *A checklist and census catalogue of British and Irish Bryophytes*' by Hill, Blackstock, Long & Rothero, 2008. You can order the census catalogue from the BBS website <http://rbg-web2.rbge.org.uk/bbs/Activities/Librarysales.htm#ccat> for £8.50.

These names should be fairly stable now for several years to come. They mainly follow the same nomenclature as the most recently published identification guides (Paton's liverwort flora, 1999 and the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of Smith's moss flora, 2004). The forthcoming field guide, which should be published later this year, will also follow these new names. I have used the new names for the recording card and hopefully there will be few if any changes needed to this now for some time.

I am sorry that all of this makes recording more complicated than it really should be, but it is a necessary evil. If anything about this is unclear, please just ask me and I will try to clarify it.

## Recent records of noteworthy aquatic invertebrates from the Tees Valley

Martin Hammond ([m.hammond300@googlemail.com](mailto:m.hammond300@googlemail.com))

Previous reports in the *Record of Proceedings* **9** (1) and **9** (3) have summarised records of noteworthy water beetles and water bugs from the former County of Cleveland. In this report I have added a few interesting records pertaining to other groups of aquatic invertebrates, and have included also records from Darlington. A significant theme is the continuing northwards spread of 'southern' species, which confirms previous predictions. Whether this trend will be affected by the severe winter of 2009/2010 remains to be seen.

Robert Merritt has kindly made available records from Portrack Marsh and elsewhere. I am grateful to Professor G.N. Foster for determining *Phytobius leucogaster* from Darlington. Survey work at Portrack Marsh and Broken Scar Water Works was funded by Northumbrian Water.

### **Tricladida** (flatworms)

#### Tricladidae

*Planaria torva* (Mueller)

GB status: Naturalised<sup>1</sup>

Portrack Marsh NR, 15/vi/2009 (R. Merritt). A Scandinavian flatworm which has apparently colonised Britain via imported timber. Most of the small number of British records are from productive lakes close to ports (Ball et al, 1969). It is classified as an alien species of unknown ecological impact by the UK Technical Advisory Group on the Water Framework Directive (UKTAG, 2007). Data available on NBN Gateway

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<sup>1</sup> GB status is based on Joint Nature Conservation Committee listings except for water bugs and water beetles, for which the designations used are badly outdated. For these taxa, GB status is based on Merritt (2006).

(which may be very incomplete) suggest that this is the only record on the eastern side of Britain between the Humber and the Firth of Forth.

## **Araneae** (spiders)

### Cybaeidae

*Argyroneta aquatica* (Clerck), Water Spider

GB status: Local

The fully-aquatic Water Spider is widespread but local in the southern half of England and in Wales, but very rare north of a line between Flamborough Head and Morecombe Bay. The updated distribution map on the British Arachnological Society website indicates only two recent (post-1992) records north of this line in England plus three in Scotland. It was abundant at Hell Kettles near Darlington in 2004. This appears to be the only modern record for Watsonian Durham (Vc66).

### Tetragnathidae (long-jawed spiders)

*Tetragnatha striata* (L. Koch)

GB status: Nationally Scarce

First modern Vc66 record. This spider inhabits emergent vegetation such as *Phragmites* or *Phalaris* near water. It was formerly regarded as rare but there have been an increasing number of records from the Midlands and southern Yorkshire, undoubtedly due to recording effort. Nonetheless, a record from Portrack Marsh (15/vi/2009, R. Merritt) is one of the most northerly in Britain. Further north there is a pre-1900 record from County Durham and a very isolated modern record from eastern Scotland.

## **Hemiptera** (true bugs)

### Naucoridae (saucer bugs)

*Ilyocoris cimicoides* (Linnaeus), Saucer Bug



GB status: Local B

New to Vc66. A predictable colonist of the Tees Valley following a sustained northwards expansion through the Yorkshire lowlands since 1997 (Hammond, 2007). Adults and larvae were plentiful in one pond at Portrack Marsh NR throughout summer 2009. A single adult was found in a pond at Kirkleatham Business Park on 10/ix/09. This is probably a very recent arrival since it is a large, instantly-recognisable bug which has not previously been found during extensive surveys of ponds on Teesside.

### Notonectidae (backswimmers)

*Notonecta maculata* Fabricius, Mottled Backswimmer

GB status: Local B

New to Vc66. Another predictable colonist which has been known from North Yorkshire for some years but appears to have only recently crossed the Tees. It has been reported as far north as the Solway on the west coast, but this is believed to be the most northerly record to date on the east side of Britain. *N. maculata* is a pioneer species of new, bare or sparsely vegetated ponds and lakes. Present in modest numbers in two wildlife ponds at Broken Scar water works, Darlington, on 19/viii/2009.

## **Coleoptera** (beetles)

### Gyrinidae (whirligig beetles)

*Orectochilus villosus* (Müller), Hairy Whirligig

GB status: Local A

River Tees upstream of Blackwell, 19/viii/2009. A rather secretive whirligig found at the edges of rivers and larger streams. Recorded in Environment Agency invertebrate samples from the Tees at Hurworth, Low Conniscliffe and Low Worsall in 2007.

### Paelobiidae (screech beetles)

*Hygrobia hermanni* (Fabricius), Screech Beetle

GB status: Local B

Subsequent to the previous report, this distinctive northwards-expanding beetle has also been recorded from ponds at Broken Scar water works (Darlington) and Ingleby Barwick. It can now be regarded as having become well-established in the Tees Valley since it was first recorded in 2006.

Dytiscidae (diving beetles)

*Agabus congener* (Thunberg)

GB status: Local A

A local acid water species found in bog pools and valley mires in the uplands, and on a dwindling number of lowland heaths and poor fens. Waupley Moor, 31/iii/2009.

*Rhantus suturalis* (MacLeay)

GB status: Local B

*R. suturalis* has become increasingly common and spread northwards in recent years. Additional records subsequent to the previous reports come from a pond at Ingleby Barwick and a dyke near the Durham University campus at Thornaby (both on 10/ix/2009). As predicted, this is now a well-established species in the Tees Valley, and much the same comments apply to the tiny diving beetle *Hydroglyphus geminus* (Fabricius).

*Dytiscus semisulcatus* Müller

GB status: Local B

Larvae of varying sizes collected from a ditch at Teesmouth NNR adjoining Seaton Common (7/v/2008, MH det R. Merritt). Although fairly widespread nationally, this great diving beetle is decidedly scarce in north-east England. It favours clean-water ditches and ponds, where its larva is reportedly a specialist predator on caddis larvae.

*Hydroporus ferrugineus* Stephens

GB status: Scarce

West Rigg, Moorsholm Moor, 2/x/2006: 1 collected from seepage pool (R. Merritt). This semi-subterranean beetle is found in or below springs. Elsewhere in Britain it has been found occasionally in streams running through underground caverns and in well water.

*Hydroporus longicornis* Sharp

GB status: Local A

Gerrick Spring, 31/iii/2009; Tomgate Moor, 31/iii/2009; West Rigg, Moorsholm Moor, 16/xi/2009. A local species of base-poor moorland seepages, found mainly in the north and west of Britain. *H. longicornis* is relatively frequent on the North York Moors as these records from the Cleveland portion of the National Park indicate. Elsewhere in the Tees Valley area it is known from a seepage mire on the Eston Hills.

*Oreodytes septentrionalis* (Sahlberg)

GB status: Local B

River Tees upstream of Blackwell, 19/viii/2009. Very much a species of northern and western Britain, Blackwell probably marks the downstream limit of its distribution on the Tees. Here it occurs in a particularly fine stony/gravel-bedded section of the river with other northern insects including the large stonefly *Perla bipunctata* Pictet and the riffle beetle *Esolus parallelepipedus* (Mueller).

Helophoridae

*Helophorus granularis* (L.)

GB status: Scarce

A small water beetle with a widely scattered but highly localised distribution in Britain, absent from many areas. In Watsonian Yorkshire, *H. granularis* is known from a small handful of relict fens in the lowland Vales and three sites in the north-western uplands. A single specimen was collected from a very shallow seasonal pool with moss amongst *Bolboschoenus maritimus* on clayey wasteground at Teesside Park on 9/iii/2009 (MH det R. Merritt). This record was entirely unexpected,

especially as the pool is of recent origin. There is presumably a source population nearby, though this has not been located.

*Helophorus nanus* Sturm

GB status: Scarce

Previously reported from the Billingham Beck Valley, this scarce beetle of fens and floodplain swamps had also been recorded from Portrack Marsh by M.D. Eyre in 2004. It was found again at the latter site in good numbers on 20/iv/2009, amongst waterlogged grass mats.

Hydrophilidae (scavenger water beetles)

*Laccobius atratus* (Rottenberg)

GB status: Scarce

A beetle of acidic seepages, found mainly along the Atlantic seaboard but with an isolated eastern stronghold on the NY Moors. Additional record: Moorsholm Moor (spring-fed pool), 30/iii/2009.

*Helochares lividus* (Forster)

GB status: Local B

New to Vc66. Both sexes present in good numbers in two wildlife ponds at Broken Scar water works, Darlington, on 19/viii/2009. In the southern half of Britain *H. lividus* is fairly frequent in base-rich ponds. It has previously been found as far north as York and Pickering. The Darlington site represents the most northerly British record to date (G.N. Foster, pers comm.) It was present with other northwards-expanding insects such as the Screech Beetle (*Hygrobia hermanni*), the scavenger water beetle *Enochrus melanocephalus* and the Mottled Backswimmer (*Notonecta maculata*).

*Enochrus affinis* (Thunberg)

GB status: Local A

Waupley Moor, 31/iii/2009; from an old peat cutting dominated by *Sphagnum*. This bog pool species is teeming abundant on the lowland wet heaths of Strensall and Skipwith Commons in the Vale of York but surprisingly scarce on the North York Moors, where it is known from only two further localities.

*Enochrus fuscipennis* (C.G. Thomson)

GB status: Local A

Spring-fed pool on Moorsholm Moor, 30/iii/2009. This northern and western species is rare in Watsonian Yorkshire (Hammond & Merritt, 2008), where it occurs very locally in acidic seepage pools and valley bogs. There are just four other reliable records for north-east Yorkshire (Vc 62).

*Chaetarthria simillima* Vorst & Cuppen

GB status: undetermined

*Chaetarthria* are tiny, domed black beetles. Until recently it was believed that a single species occurred in Britain. It is now known that both *C. seminulum* (Herbst) and the newly-described *C. simillima* occur (Vorst & Cuppen, 2003; Levey, 2005). The latter species has been collected from seepages at Wayworth Moor on 18/iii/2009, Tomgate Moor on 31/iii/2009, and from pools on the old shale tip site at Margrove Park on 3/vi/2009 (all MH det R. Merritt). A single female specimen collected from Bella Dale Slack on 26/ix/2009 was presumably this species but only males can be distinguished reliably. The true distribution of the two species is imperfectly known but *C. simillima* appears to be found in mossy upland seepages and lowland fen pools whilst *C. seminulum* is associated with silty drain and lake margins at low elevations.

Elmidae (riffle beetles)

*Riolus subviolaceus* (Mueller)

GB status: Scarce

Two specimens from the River Tees upstream of Blackwell, 19/viii/2009. An uncommon riffle beetle associated with clean, calcareous flowing water.

Coccinellidae (ladybirds)

*Coccidula scutellata* (Herbst)

GB status: Local

Portrack Marsh NR, 15/vi/2009. An aphid-predator ladybird associated with reedy water-margins which has apparently expanded its range northwards in recent years. There are now records north to the Scottish border but this appears to be only the second for Vc 66.

Curculionidae (weevils)

*Phytobius leuogaster* (Marsham)

GB status: Nationally Scarce

An aquatic weevil living on water-milfoils. Abundant in a pond dominated by *Myriophyllum spicatum* near the River Tees at Ingleby Barwick on 10/ix/09. Also at Portrack Marsh on 15/vi/2009 (R. Merritt); and in a pond at Broken Scar water works, Darlington on 19/viii/2009 (MH det G.N. Foster). There are previous Tees Valley records from Haverton Hill, Saltholme and Cowpen Marsh. *P. leuogaster* seems to be a good colonist of ponds with plentiful growth of *M. spicatum*, in both fresh and mildly brackish conditions. It is probably more widespread than its national conservation status implies.

**Trichoptera** (caddis flies)

Hydroptilidae

*Agraylea sexmaculata* Curtis

GB status: Local

Larvae collected from the western lagoon at Portrack Marsh NR, 15/vi/2009 (R. Merritt). A tiny caddis making a purse-like case; this species is infrequently recorded but doubtless often overlooked. Records extend north to Cumbria but the NBN Gateway does not indicate any others for Vc 66.

**References**

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**Location details** (Vice-county in brackets)

Bella Dale Slack (Easington High Moor) NZ 743 112 (62); Gerrick Spring (Gerrick Moor) NZ 668 118 (62); Ingleby Barwick (pond nr River Tees) NZ 439 155 (62); Kirkleatham Business Park (pond) NZ 590 223 (62); Margrove Park (old shale tip) NZ 651 156 (62); Moorsholm Moor (spring-fed pool) NZ 668 118 (62); Moorsholm Moor (West Ridge) NZ 674 128 (62); Portrack Marsh NR NZ 46- 19- (ditch: NZ 465 195) (66); River Tees u/s Blackwell NZ 269 130 (62/66 boundary); Teesmouth NNR (ditch adj. Seaton Common), NZ 536 277 (66); Teesside Park (pool) NZ 471 185 (66); Tomgate Moor NZ 697 113 (62); Trinity Mews, Thornaby (dyke) NZ 452 187 (66); Waupley Moor NZ 721 130/NZ 720 129 (62); West Rigg (Moorsholm Moor) NZ 674 128 (62).

### **Notes and Records**

Red Kite

One seen around Foxholes Dene, Easington Colliery, 14th March 2009

Malcolm Birtle

*Platyarthrus hoffmanseggi* (Ant Woodlouse)

I have found this species on the Easington Road verge, NZ479366, on 08/06/07. It was under a piece of plywood that someone had left lying on top of a meadow ant nest.

Ian Bond



## **Recorders**

### **Moths:Durham**

Terry Coult

4 Officials Row, Malton, Lanchester, Co. Durham, DH7 0TH. B.R.C. recorder,

### **Moths:Northumberland**

Keith Regan

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### **Dragonflies**

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### **Birds:Durham Bird Club**

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### **Birds:Northumberland and Tyneside Bird Club**

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Mammals (general):Durham

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**Bats:Durham Bat Group:**

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**Badgers (Badger groups may be contacted via the relevant Wildlife Trusts).**

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