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Bryophyte Notes, 1986

Steady work has been carried on this year, with the help of Joyce Pitt, in recording and tetrad mapping Kentish bryophytes. 46 lists in my notebook with some extra ones from Joyce, Jackie Langton and Keith Palmer, together with the maps, show the progress. No new vice-county records were found, but 40 new 10km. square records have been added to the bryophyte atlas. In December an exciting record came from Keith Palmer which resulted in a rush to Benenden churchyard. There several tombstones were found with Orthotrichum lyelli growing on them. This is the first time I have heard of the plant growing on rock in Britain. All of my English reference books describe its habitat as 'on bark'. On my bookshelf only Elsa Nyholm's Fennoscandia moss flora includes 'rarely on rocks' as a habitat for the plant.

The sandstone rock where Dr. Rose found Tetrodontium brownianum in 1963, its only known Kent locality, still bears the plant though not in such quantity this year, perhaps because an earlier visit was made. During the autumn, in a small wet wood, I looked my fill on Trichocolea tomentella, a plant which I have previously searched for in vain in Kent. It had been found in the past by Dr. Rose in five 10km squares in Kent, and I have seen it plentifully in Sussex and Wales. I feel that it is becoming scarcer in Kent, though I do not profess to have such a good searching eye as Dr. Rose. Joyce, always forging ahead in our woodland walks, saw it this time before I did!

Trudy Side

A field note on Nitela borealis (Hymenoptera, Sphecidae)

During a visit to Smarden in 1986, I caught more specimens of N. borealis (Bull. K.F.C. No. 30, 1985), one male on 23rd August and on the following day, one male and four females. Of these latter, two females were carrying prey when boxed. They were psocopteran (book-lice) nymphs, but were not able to be determined specifically.

Prey carriage was observed to be mandibular as the wasps were running in the glass tubes, possibly also supported by the front legs during flight (although this needs to be confirmed). Two of the females were infested with mites, yet to be determined, carried on their gasters. One female (without prey) had one mite, the other (with prey) had several. So far I have not observed any males to be infested with mites.

Geoff Allen

Moths from Perry Wood, 1986

The number of moths recorded in the Rothamsted light trap in our garden at Selling was 30 percent lower than in 1985, reflecting the generally low high summer temperatures. Surprisingly the number of species remained virtually unchanged. Perhaps the most interesting capture, as indeed in the previous year was a prettily marked micro moth Lampronia flavimitrella Hb. (Incurvariidae). First confirmed as resident in this country in the early 1980s, this moth is, so far as I can ascertain only known from one other locality, Hoad's wood, Kent. Several were caught in the light trap from 27th May to 18th June, but two others were also noticed on some plants elsewhere in the garden, suggesting that the moth is well established in the area. I am indebted to Philip Jewess for correctly identifying the specimens for me.

Another local moth which put in a repeat appearance was the Waved Black Parascotia fulginaria. The map shows that the moth is sparsely