RECORDS OF 'PRIORITY' LICHENS - CAN YOU HELP?

Lichens are gaining an increasingly higher profile in conservation initiatives, and it is important that this continue. During the course of our work on behalf of Scottish Natural Heritage and for various local authorities in Scotland, we have encountered many problematical records of rare or endangered ('priority') lichens that have found their way on to the BLS database. We have unravelled many of these problems by re-examining specimens in BM and E (and through the assistance of Alan Orange, some from NMW); consulting relevant literature and unpublished reports; and by delving through the BLS mapping cards, and for this we are especially grateful to Mark Seaward for his help. Nevertheless, we are left with a substantial residue of unsubstantiated records.

Why are there so many problems? Well it's a long and potentially hazardous route from the field record to the BLS database and dot map. Below are some of the sources of confusion arising from human error.

1. Misidentification - this may be a straightforward misidentification, or one that has been overtaken by changing taxonomic concepts (which have been enormous over the past 30 years).
2. Misnaming - i.e. the recorder (or identifier) knows in his or her mind what the species is - but the wrong name is output!
3. Nomenclatural changes - sometimes complicated by refined taxonomic concepts (e.g. records of *Leptogium azureum* auct. and *L. tremelloides* auct. that are now scattered between *L. britannicum*, *L. cochleatum* and *L. cyanescens*).
4. Later redeterminations - not conveyed to the BLS mapping recorder.
5. Wrong species is crossed off on mapping card - usually the one above or below, or one in a different genus with a similar abbreviation on the card.
6. Wrong grid reference provided - either wrong 100 km square, or x and y axes transposed.

If anyone can enlighten us on any of the problems given below, we would be most grateful. Only with accurate information, can conservation agencies and local authorities be alerted to the rare or endangered lichens in their area, and any necessary action taken to protect or enhance their habitats. Note that not all the problems relate to Scottish records. The locality names following the grid references are suggestions, they may not be the actual localities.
Doubtful records - to be deleted from BLS database if confirmation not forthcoming.

Alectoria ochroleuca: 28/96 (Culbin Forest).
Anaptychia ciliaris subsp. mamillata: 17/76 (L. Sunart).
Aspicilia melanaspis: 16/79 (Knapdale/Jura); 23/65 (Snowdon).
Bacidia incompta: 17/76 (L. Sunart).
Bryonora curvescens: 38/00 (Cairngorms).
Caloplaca luteoalba: 16/34 (SW Islay); 17/78 (Arisaig).
Cladonia peziziformis: 25/05 (near Portpatrick; there is a record from 1894). Can anyone confirm any records from England (other than 51/22); the specimen in BM from Lambert’s Castle in S Devon (30/39) is not this species).
Collema ceranixcum: 37/27 (Glen Clova).
Degelia ligulata: 17/53 (S Mull; but confirmed for 17/24, Fladda).
Japewia tornoenisis: 35/11 (Lake District).
Lecanora epibrvon: 29/44 (Ben Hope).
Leptogium cochleatum: 23/46 (Caernarvon/Anglesey); 29/46 (Durness).
Leptogium hildenbrandii: 18/84 (Rassal Ashwood). Listed in field meeting report (Lichenologist 3: 169, 1965), but no specimen or later sightings have been traced.
Parmelia acetabulum: 28/82 (Cambridge); 27/65 (Kinloch Rannoch); 37/47 (Tarfside, Glen Esk); 37/75 (Montrose).
Pertusaria glomerata: 29/44 (Ben Hope; there is, however, a record on a BLS mapping card and in an unpublished report for 29/45, but curiously no specimens have been traced!); 37/17 (Caenlochan).
Poeltinula cerebrina: 17/83 (Lismore).
Sclerophora nivea: 51/21 (Henfield area).
Synalissa symphorea: 17/84 (Lismore); 25/74 (Kirkcudbrightshire, Dundrennan). NB many specimens are misidents for Lempholemma botryosum or L. cladodes.

Probably correctly reported records, but without source details. These will be retained on BLS database, but further details required for Action Plans.
Arthothelium dictyosporum: 17/74 (Ardtonish).
Bacidia incompta: 36/83 (Scotland or Northumberland?); 37/76 (St Cyrus).
Biatoridium monasteriense: 17/54 (Mull; cited in Mull Flora only for 17/64).
Caloplaca flavorubescens: 18/84 (Rassal Ashwood); 36/44 (Stowe).
Gyalideopsis scotica: 29/22 (Inchnadamph).
Lecidea antiloga: 28/91 (Abernethy).
Pachyphiale fagicola: 37/19 (Braemar; confirmed for 37/29).
Parmelia acetabulum: 27/65 (Kinloch Rannoch); 37/15 (Bridge of Cally); 37/18 (S of Braemar; confirmed for 37/19); 37/26 (Kirkton of Glenisla); 37/47 (Tarfside, Glen Esk); 37/75 (Montrose).
Peltigera venosa: 25/85 (S of Dalbeattie).
Additional information required.

*Anaptychia ciliaris* subsp. *mamillata*: we have not traced any herbarium specimens from W Scotland (apart from Barra) - does anyone know of any?

*Lecidea erythrophaea*: can anyone confirm or report any modern records from England (other than 21/92) or Wales?

*Sticta canariensis* s. str. (independently growing green morphotype - i.e. not attached to the blue-green morphotype ['*S. dufourii*']). Confirmed from only 4 squares in Scotland: one on Skye (18/51), one from Argyll (17/82) and two from Kintyre (16/71 and 16/77). Can anyone add to these?

A special thank you to all those who have already given their help.

Please address replies by post to us at Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, Inverleith Row, Edinburgh EH3 5LR, or by e-mail to <B.Coppins@rbge.org.uk>.

Brian & Sandy Coppins

**LICHENS IN LITERATURE: 2**

'**RURAL RIDES**' BY WILLIAM COBBETT

'The land just about here does seem to be really bad. The face of the country is naked. The few scrubbed trees that now and then meet the eye, and even the quick-sets are covered with a yellow moss.'

Decribing the countryside around Huntingdon in 1822.

Humphrey Bowen

**THE WOODLANDERS BY THOMAS HARDY**

'On older trees still than these huge lobes of fungi grew like lungs. Here, as everywhere, the Unfullfilled Intention, which makes life what it is, was as obvious as it could be among the depraved crowds of a city slum. The leaf was deformed, the curve was crippled, the taper was interrupted; the lichen ate the vigour of the stalk, and the ivy slowly strangled to death the promising sapling.'

Published in 1887. Chapter 7.

Peter Lambley