

Cumbria Lichen and Bryophyte Group annual report 2023

We have now been in existence for 3 years, and it's 2 years since our first AGM.

We have over 100 people on our mailing list (107 at the last count, and I've recently pruned the list of those that emails bounce back from).

In the last year we've had 12 field trips, 3 indoor sessions (thank you Cumbria Wildlife Trust for the rooms) and an outdoor training session on saxicolous lichens (thank you for your expertise John Douglass).

The places have been great: Brantwood; the top end of Haweswater; Helbeck woods; Humphrey Head; Wolf Crag, Matterdale Common; Sunbiggin Tarn (the Frank Dobson commemoration event); Bowscale Tarn; Scales Wood, Buttermere; Baysbrown Wood, Langdale; Glenamara Park, Ullswater; Naddle Forest, Haweswater; Surprise View, Borrowdale.

By my reckoning- and I don't keep detailed records of who comes to what- we have had 23 folk come out for lichens, 17 for Bryophytes and 5 who came to indoor sessions (but not outdoor ones). Then there's 10 folk who came along because they were working/ volunteering at the sites we were visiting. So that's over 50 separate people who've been to our events in the last year. I've loved having the conversations full of good humour and learning and thought-provoking interest. I have learnt lots.

I've no idea how many species records we have made, but my highlights from a lichen point of view would be all the *Lobaria pulmonaria* at Helbeck, the first *Peltigera neckeri* for the Lake District at Bowscale Tarn and the putative *Mycoblastus sanguinarioides* near Surprise View.

We've had lots of enquiries to the website so from a lichen point of view we've also looked at churchyards, Talkin Tarn and a farm in the Lickle Valley near Broughton as well. The website (hosted by Chris Cant's business) looks great. The Facebook groups keep on running: both have over 260 members. We did lichen and bryo reports for the 2021 Birds and Wildlife in Cumbria. We will do new reports for 2022 edition. We did another lichen column in British Wildlife.

Some of us do other extra societal things as well- running Lichens for Absolute Beginners groups via Zoom, visiting other sites, running sessions at the University of Cumbria, running walks and talks, prepping for national society events, checking the lichen translocations at Haweswater. We've written articles for BLS bulletin, Lakeland Wildlife, Cumbria Wildlife. But that's not really under the aegis of the group. So maybe they don't count!

We don't have any money, so there can't be a financial report. We have insurance provided by the British Lichen Society for our field trips: that's minimal public liability only. In terms of kit, the Natural England funded microscopes can be borrowed from CBDC. I have an old dissecting scope we have been given. Chris and Caz hold some microscope ancillary equipment, books, UV torches, hand lenses and leaflets. Clare has the bryophyte books. Chris and Caz have lichen chemicals which can be requested: Pd, K, Iodine and Congo Red.

So to summarise, I'd say that I've had a cracking year and together we have created the impression of there being something really impressive and active. The question is: where do we go from here?

Pete Martin 26.2.23