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TROOPERS HILL BRYOPHYTES

Bryophytes (mosses and liverworts) were recorded at Troopers Hill Local Nature Reserve on 10th December 2021, with some additions made in the following winter. Only species growing on the ground and small rocks were recorded; there are doubtless other species growing on trees but no attempt was made to record these.

Most of the species listed below belong to one of two ecological communities on the hill.

The first is the extensive and, in winter at least, conspicuous community of pleurocarp mosses growing under heath, often accompanied by *Cladonia* lichens. The most important members of this community are *Hypnum cupressiforme*, *Polytrichum piluliferum*, *Polytrichum juniperum* and *Pseudoscleropodium purum*.

The second community grows on sparsely vegetated soil, most frequently on steep banks. Where soils are deep and nutrient-rich this community is dominated by widespread species such as *Bryum capillare*, *Fissidens bryoides* and *Fissidens taxifolius*. Where soils are thinner and more acidic small acrocarps such as *Tortula truncata*, *Weissia controversa*, *Pohlia melanodon* and *Ceratodon purpureus* are dominant. On north-west facing banks around the gully the tiny liverwort *Cephaloziella divaricata* is locally frequent.

Many of the species recorded are restricted to acidic soils and are therefore uncommon in the Bristol region and these are doubtless the best examples locally of both community types. The closest areas where these communities are well developed are the Mendips and the Forest of Dean, although there are fragmented examples around Pensford and Midsomer Norton, in Leigh Woods and on the fringes of the Gordano Valley.

Several of the species recorded appear to be very rare locally: these include the mosses *Weissia controversa*, *Campylopus pyriformis*, *Pleuroidium acuminatum*, *Polytrichum commune* and the liverwort *Cephaloziella divaricata*.

It is highly likely that further survey could add significantly to this species list.

Rupert Higgins

Mosses

Amblystegium serpens
Brachythecium albicans
Brachythecium rutabulum
Bryum argenteum
Bryum capillare
Bryum dichotomum
Campylopus flexuosus
Campylopus introflexus
Campylopus pyriformis
Ceratodon purpureus
Dicranella heteromalla
Dicranum scoparium
Didymodon fallax
Didymodon insulanus
Fissidens bryoides
Fissidens taxifolius
Grimmia pulvinata
Hypnum cupressiforme
Kindbergia praelonga
Pleuridium acuminatum
Pohlia melanodon
Polytrichum commune
Polytrichum juniperum
Polytrichum piliferum
Pseudoscleropodium purum
Tortula truncata
Weissia controversa

Liverworts

Cephaloziella divaricate

Added winter 2022/22