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TROOPERS HILL BRYOPHYTES

Bryophytes (mosses and liverworts) have been recorded at Troopers Hill Local Nature Reserve on four visits between 10th December 2021 and 23rd November 2025. 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* var. *cupressiforme*, *Hypnum jutlandicum*, *Polytrichum piluliferum*, *Polytrichum juniperinum* and *Pseudoscleropodium purum*. Thinner soils in these areas support a mixed community of acrocarps, which include *Ceratodon purpureus*, *Campylopus introflexus* (an introduced species), *Campylopus flexuosus* and *Campylopus pyriformis*.

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 *Pleuridium acuminatum*, *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 and banks by the path to the south of the gully have the *Cephaloziella* and three more liverworts: *Diplophyllum albicans*, *Cephalozia bicupsidata* and *Solenostoma gracillimum* (formerly *Jungermannia gracillima*). Banks on either side of a smaller gully at the western end of the main gully has two more small liverworts: *Gymocolea inflata* and *Isopaches bicrenatus* (formerly *Lophozia bicrenata*). These and other small, inconspicuous species are probably widespread on steep banks elsewhere in and around the gully.

Many of the species recorded are restricted to acidic soils and are therefore uncommon in the Bristol region; these are doubtless the best examples locally of moss communities dominated by species such as *Polytrichum juniperinum*. 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*, *Campylopus flexuosus*, *Pleuridium acuminatum*, *Polytrichum commune* and *Polytrichum juniperinum* and the liverworts *Cephaloziella divaricata*, *Diplophyllum albicans*, *Solenostoma gracillimum*, *Gymnocolea inflata* and *Isopaches bicrenatus*.

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

Mosses

Amblystegium serpens	Creeping feather-moss
Aulacomnium androgynum	Drumsticks
Barbula unguiculata	Bird's-claw beard-moss
Brachythecium albicans	Whitish feather-moss
Brachythecium rutabulum	Rough-stalked feather-moss
Bryum argenteum	Silver-moss
Bryum capillare	Capillary thread-moss
Bryum dichotomum	Bicoloured bryum
Campylopus flexuosus	Rusty swan-neck moss
Campylopus introflexus	Heath star-moss
Campylopus pyriformis	Dwarf swan-neck moss
Ceratodon purpureus	Redshanks
(Cryphaea heteromalla)	Lateral cryphaea
Dicranella heteromalla	Silky forklet-moss
Dicranella howei	Howe's forklet-moss
Dicranoweisia cirrata	Common pincushion
Dicranum scoparium	Broom fork-moss
Didymodon fallax	False beard-moss
Didymodon insulanus	Cylindric beard-moss
Didymodon rigidulum	Rigid beard-moss
Fissidens bryoides	Lesser pocket-moss
Fissidens taxifolius	Common pocket-moss
Grimmia pulvinata	Grey-cushioned grimmia
Homalothecium sericeum	Silky wall feather-moss
Hypnum cupressiforme var cupressiforme	Cypress-leaved plait-moss
Hypnum cupressiforme var lacunosum	Great plait-moss
Hypnum jutlandicum	Heath plait-moss
Kindbergia praelonga	Common feather-moss
(Lewinskyia affinis)	Wood bristle-moss
Mnium hornum	Swan's-neck thyme-moss
Pleuridium acuminatum	Taper-leaved earth-moss
Pohlia melanodon	Pink-fruited thread-moss
Pohlia nutans	Nodding thread-moss
Polytrichum commune	Common haircap

Polytrichum formosum	Bank haircap
Polytrichum juniperinum	Juniper haircap
Polytrichum piliferum	Bristly haircap
Pseudocrossidium hornschruchianum	Hornschruch's beardmoss
Pseudoscleropodium purum	Neat feather-moss
Rhynchostegium confertum	Clustered feather-moss
Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus	Springy turf-moss
Streblotrichum convolutum var convolutum	Lesser bird's-claw beardmoss
(Syntrichia laevipila)	Small hairy screw-moss
Syntrichia ruralis	Great hairy screw-moss
Tortula muralis	Wall screw-moss
Tortula truncata	Common pottia
Weissia controversa	Green-tufted stubble-moss

Liverworts

Cephalozia bicupsidata	Two-horned pincer-wort
Cephaloziella divaricata	Common threadwort
Diplophyllum albicans	White earwort
(Frullania dilatata)	Dilated scalewort
Gymnocolea inflata	Inflated notchwort
Isopaches bicrenatus	Lesser notchwort
Lophocolea bidenata	Bifid crestwort
Lophocolea heterophylla	Variable-leaved crestwort
Metzgeria furcata	Forked veilwort
(Radula complanata)	Even scalewort
Solenostoma gracillimum	Crenulated flapwort

Bracketed species were recorded only on trees in the upper field.

Rupert Higgins and David Hawkins



Polytrichum juniperinum



Pleuridium acuminatum