



Brampton Biodiversity Project

Hotspot Report, St Mary Magdalene Churchyard TL215707

[Dr J Patrick Doody December 2015, email jp.doody@ntlworld.com]



Location map:

The churchyard of St Mary Magdalene in Brampton Parish provides, along with the other 20,000 or so in the UK, opportunities for wildlife. They represent some of the earliest enclosed land and many may have had only limited grazing and little or no fertiliser. As a result, they can be rich in meadow species. Add to this the presence of boundary walls and the gravestones and you have an unusual habitat providing a substratum for a wide variety of lichens and mosses in particular. St Mary Magdalene is typical of such a churchyard with a good representative variety of plants.

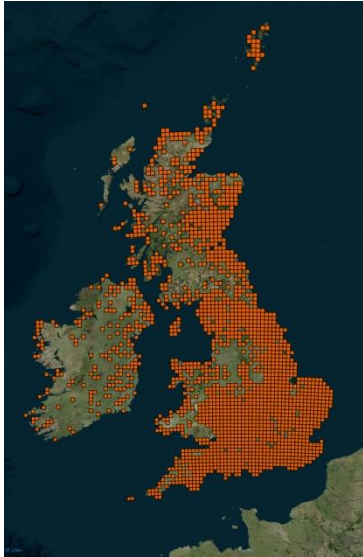


Photograph:
typical view of the
churchyard of St
Mary Magdalene
Brampton,
Cambridgeshire.

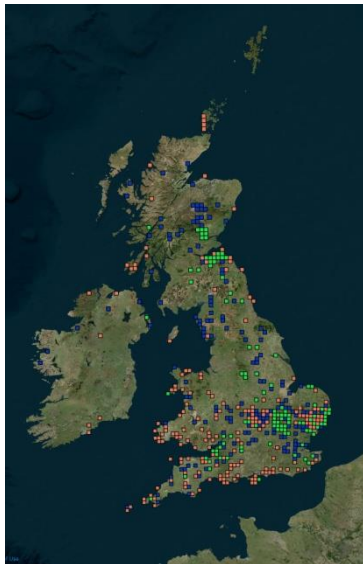
During 2013, several surveys took place in the churchyard of St Mary Magdalene Brampton as part of the Brampton Parish Biodiversity Project, recording 152 taxa*. An earlier survey of lichens recorded no less than 77 taxa in one visit. Many occurred as crustaceous species, i.e. forming a crust over the substratum of the gravestones. They are slow growing and may add as little growth as 1mm per year.

Lichens 77 species, recorded on the 3rd January 2103 by Mark Powell

<i>Acarospora fuscata</i>	<i>Lecania erysibe s. str.</i>	<i>Physcia caesia</i>
<i>Agonimia tristicula</i>	<i>Lecania inundata</i>	<i>Physcia tenella</i>
<i>Amandinea punctata</i>	<i>Lecania rabenhorstii</i>	<i>Physconia grisea</i>
<i>Arthonia radiata</i>	<i>Lecanora albescens</i>	<i>Placopyrenium fuscillum</i>
<i>Aspicilia contorta</i> subsp.	<i>Lecanora campestris</i> subsp.	<i>Porpidia soredizodes</i>
<i>hoffmanniana</i>	<i>campestris</i>	<i>Porpidia tuberculosa</i>
<i>Bilimbia sabuletorum</i>	<i>Lecanora chlarotera</i>	<i>Psilolechia leprosa</i>
<i>Buellia aethalea</i>	<i>Lecanora conizaeoides f.</i>	<i>Psilolechia lucida</i>
<i>Buellia badia</i>	<i>conizaeoides</i>	<i>Rhizocarpon reductum</i>
<i>Buellia ocellata</i>	<i>Lecanora crenulata</i>	<i>Rinodina oleae</i>
<i>Caloplaca aurantia</i>	<i>Lecanora dispersa</i>	<i>Sarcogyne regularis</i>
<i>Caloplaca dichroa</i>	<i>Lecanora expallens</i>	<i>Scoliciosporum umbrinum</i>
<i>Caloplaca flavescens</i>	<i>Lecanora muralis</i>	<i>Tephromela atra</i> var. <i>atra</i>
<i>Caloplaca flavocitrina</i>	<i>Lecanora orosthea</i>	<i>Toninia aromatica</i>
<i>Caloplaca oasis</i>	<i>Lecanora polytropa</i>	<i>Verrucaria calciseda</i>
<i>Caloplaca saxicola</i>	<i>Lecanora sulphurea</i>	<i>Verrucaria macrostoma f.</i>
<i>Caloplaca teicholyta</i>	<i>Lecidella carpathica</i>	<i>furfuracea</i>
<i>Candelariella aurella f. aurella</i>	<i>Lecidella scabra</i>	<i>Verrucaria macrostoma f.</i>
<i>Candelariella medians f.</i>	<i>Lecidella stigmatea</i>	<i>macrostoma</i>
<i>medians</i>	<i>Lepraria incana s. str.</i>	<i>Verrucaria nigrescens f.</i>
<i>Candelariella vitellina f.</i>	<i>Lepraria vouauxii</i>	<i>nigrescens</i>
<i>vitellina</i>	<i>Leptogium plicatile</i>	<i>Verrucaria nigrescens f.</i>
<i>Catillaria lenticularis</i>	<i>Melanelixia glabratula</i>	<i>tectorum</i>
<i>Collema crispum</i> var. <i>crispum</i>	<i>Melanelixia subaurifera</i>	<i>Verrucaria viridula</i>
<i>Diploicia canescens</i>	<i>Opegrapha vermicellifera</i>	<i>Xanthoparmelia mougeotii</i>
<i>Diplotomma alboatrum</i>	<i>Parmelia sulcata</i>	<i>Xanthoparmelia verruculifera</i>
<i>Dirina massiliensis f. sorediata</i>	<i>Phaeophyscia orbicularis</i>	<i>Xanthoria calcicola</i>
<i>Haematomma ochroleucum</i>	<i>Phlyctis argena</i>	<i>Xanthoria parietina</i>
<i>var. porphyrium</i>	<i>Physcia adscendens</i>	<i>Xanthoria polycarpa</i>



Many of the species are widespread in the UK such as *Caloplaca saxicola* (orange on the map on the left). Some are widespread but local such as *Opegrapha vermicellifera* (blue on the map on the right).



Several have concentrations in and around our area including *Lecania inundata* (green); *Lecania rabenhorstii* (brown); *Lecidella carpathica* (blue) are all widely distributed but with concentration in East Anglia (see map on the left). A few are restricted to the southeast such as *Buellia badia* purple on the map on the right.



Bryophytes Cambridge Bryophyte Group, visit 27th November 2013 and recorded 28 taxa, two of which were liverworts. Nick Hodgetts, a previous Bryophyte Recorder for Huntingdonshire, surveyed many of the churches of the vice-county. Brampton was not one of these, which is why it does not feature in the records prior to the biodiversity project.

Barbula convoluta var. *convolute* New parish record. Relatively common

Barbula unguiculata On soil beside paths

Brachythecium rutabulum Common in many habitats

Bryum argenteum Footpaths

Bryum capillare Common in many habitats

Calliergonella cuspidata In grass

Ceratodon purpureus Common in many habitats

Didymodon insulanus Often found around paths and graves

Didymodon luridus Less common moss, on stone

Didymodon rigidulus New parish record. Often in churchyards

Didymodon sinuosus New parish record. On stone, often in damp places

Didymodon vinealis Gravestones, walls and around footpaths

Grimmia pulvinata Mainly on stone

Homalothecium sericeum Walls and gravestones

Hypnum cupressiforme var. *cupressiforme* Common in many habitats

Lophocolea bidentata Liverwort found in shady areas of churchyards

Lunularia cruciata New parish record. Liverwort from shady areas

Orthotrichum anomalum New parish record. Gravestones and walls

Plagiomnium undulatum Normally a woodland species

Pseudocrossidium revolutum New parish record. Less common churchyard taxon

Rhynchostegium confertum Common epiphyte

Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus In mown grass
Schistidium crassipilum New parish record. Less common
Syntrichia latifolia New parish record. Normally from flood zone
Syntrichia Montana Reasonably common in several habitats

Syntrichia ruralis var. *ruralis* New parish record. Common on paths and stone
Tortula muralis Common on stone and brickwork
Zygodon viridissimus var. *viridissimus* Less common epiphyte

* Taxon (singular) “any group or rank in a biological classification in which organisms are related” in our use of the word includes species, sub-species and varieties. Nine taxa were new to the parish. Most are common in Huntingdonshire. *Didymodon luridus*, though not new to the parish, is a less common churchyard moss as are *Schistidium crassipilum* and *Didymodon sinuosus*. *Plagiomnium undulatum* and *Syntrichia latifolia* were somewhat unexpected in this habitat. Information collated by Mick Burton.

Community recording day 1st June 2013

During this recording day, we recorded 31 species of flowering plants and grasses, including two non-native species. As with other similar sites, there are several trees and shrubs including Yew. Some of the oldest living examples of this species (more than 500 years old) occur in churchyards, although those in Brampton are not that old. There were also a further 16 species of flies recorded by John Cole.

Flowering plants compiled by Peter Walker

Arum maculatum, Cuckoo Pint
Bellis perennis, Daisy
Cerastium fontanum, Common Mouse-ear
*Eranthis hymalis****, Winter Aconite
Galium aparine, Cleavers
Glechoma hederacea, Ground Ivy
Hedera helix, Ivy
*Hyacanthoides hispanica***, Spanish Bluebell
Luzula campestre, Field Woodrush
Myosotis sp, Forget-me-not
Parietaria judaica, Pellitory of the Wall
Plantago major, Greater Plantain
Poa annua, Annual Meadow Grass
Poa nemoralis, Woodland Meadow Grass
Poa trivialis, Rough Stalked Meadow Grass
Potentilla reptans, Creeping Cinquefoil

Potentilla sterilis, Barren Strawberry
Primula vulgaris, Primrose
Ranunculus bulbosus, Bulbous Buttercup
Ranunculus ficaria, Lesser Celandine
Ranunculus repens, Creeping Buttercup
Rumex sanguinea, Red-veined Dock
Senecio jacobea, Common Ragwort
Senecio vulgaris, Groundsel
Stellaria media, Common Chickweed
Taraxacum officinale agg, Dandelion
Trifolium pratense, Red Clover
Urtica dioica, Stinging Nettle
Veronica chamaedrys, Germander Speedwell
Veronica hederifolia, Ivy-leaved Speedwell
Viola sp, Violet
 ** non-native

Diptera (Flies) compiled by Jonathan Cole

Tipula vernalis (Meigen), Tipulidae
Limonia nubeculosa (Meigen), Limoniidae
Schwenkfeldina carbonaria (Meigen), Sciaridae
Bicellaria vana (Collin), Hybotidae
Ocydromia glabricula (Fallén),
Rhamphomyia tarsata Meigen, Empididae
Lonchoptera lutea (Panzer), Lonchopteridae
Melanostoma scalare (Fabricius), Syrphidae

Copromyza equina (Fallén), Sphaeroceridae
Suillia affinis (Meigen), Heleomyzidae
Delia platura (Meigen), Anthomyiidae
Hylemya variata (Fallén),
Fannia lustrator (Harris), Fanniidae
Fannia serena (Fallén),
Coenosia tigrina (Meigen), Muscidae
Helina impuncta (Fallén),

Bats

A visit to the churchyard at dusk will result in the detection of several species of bats. At least three species of bat have been identified; Pipistrelle, Long-eared (probably the Brown Long-eared) and an unconfirmed species thought to be one of Noctule, Leisler or Serotine.

Glossary

What is a lichen? *A lichen is not a single organism; it is a stable symbiotic association between a fungus and algae and/or cyanobacteria.*

For more information, see The British Lichen Society <http://www.thebls.org.uk/>
(Promoting the Study, Enjoyment and Conservation of Lichens).

