

The Threatened Bryophyte Database

OK, I admit this is yet another plug for the Threatened Bryophyte Database (TBDB). I do have a reason for banging on about it, in that I received almost no response to my last appeal for data, so I thought I'd just describe a little of the rationale behind it, how it can be – *is being* – useful, and therefore why bryologists might consider contributing to it.

First of all, everything that comes into the TBDB eventually finds its way into the BRC database, so there is no need to duplicate effort. Of course, it is much better if as much data as possible on threatened species come to the TBDB first, rather than me playing catch-up by adding records afterwards, because the aim of the TBDB is to contain as much information that is useful for conservation as possible. Other databases tend to contain only the bare essentials required for biological records. If, for example, a new locality is found for a rare species, then all the available data, which might include a location map, detailed text on its ecology and abundance, as well as photographs, can go into the TBDB, then the record can be sent on to BRC. On the other hand, if none of this goes to the TBDB, and the only submission of the record is, say, as a new v.-c. record voucher specimen, then the details are lost, or at any rate not easily available. It may be that all the detailed information has gone to the local NE/CCW/SNH office, which is great, but it is even better if it goes to the TBDB as well, because then as full a picture as possible can be

built up of the species in all its localities, and this kind of overview can contribute to Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs), Red Data Books, and many other conservation initiatives. It can also act as an invaluable resource for anyone doing autecological studies.

There has just been a meeting at Natural England which aimed to draw together some one-off survey and research actions for species on the UKBAP priority list. There are now quite a few more bryophytes on this list than there were, since it was decided to 'read across' the most threatened species from the Red List into the BAP list, a more logical way of doing it than before. However, there are still many species not included which many people think ought to be. For example, *Anomodon attenuatus* is not on the BAP list because, although it is very rare, it is not thought to be declining, or at least there are no specific reasons listed for any decline: the same applies to *Brachytheciastrum* (= *Brachythecium*) *trachypodium* and *Pseudoleskeella nervosa*. Anyway, whatever one might think about that, many worthy species are listed as priority species in the UKBAP, and hopefully the conservation agencies will soon be putting resources into the actions recommended at the meeting.

If you are interested in keeping track of UKBAP bryophytes, have a look at the Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS) at www.ukbap-reporting.org.uk

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