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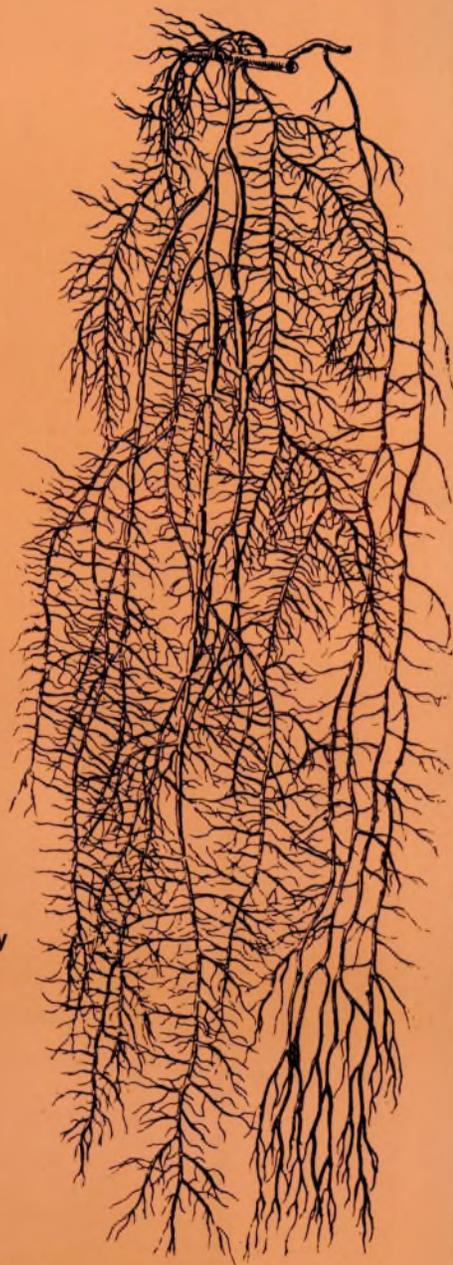
**BRITISH
LICHEN
SOCIETY
BULLETIN**



Nephroma

Peltigera

chemistry



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A NEW LICHEN FLORA OF SOMERSET

In 1930, the late Dr. W. Watson's The Lichens of Somerset, a lichen Flora of the county, was published by the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society. This was a remarkable achievement at that bleak period of British lichenology, and according to the concepts of his time, he recorded 493 lichen species; many of these "species" are no longer recognised while others have been split. Fortunately, he built up an extensive herbarium of Somerset lichens; much of this is at Taunton Museum, while more of it is in the British Museum (Natural History).

Since 1969, I have been interested in the Somerset lichen flora, and much exploratory field work has taken place, both by other people and myself. The Bristol "Workshop" meetings have recorded many new species and locations, and in September 1985, the B.L.S. met at Dulverton and Taunton. A great many species not known to Watson in Somerset have been found, and a fuller picture of the distribution of the species has been obtained than was possible for Watson to achieve; much of his fieldwork was done on a bicycle. A total of 532 specific and sub-specific taxa is now recorded as currently present in Somerset, which is a large number for a southern county, that at present only appears to be exceeded in Devon.

Much, however, remains to be done before the New Somerset Lichen Flora can appear. The true identities and modern names for Watson's specimens are being sorted out by Peter James and this will take a little more time yet. The map shows the number of lichen taxa currently recorded for each 10 km. square in Somerset. The richly wooded areas on sandstones in the west can be seen to be now well recorded, and also much of the N.E. Mendip region. But a number of squares in the central, highly-farmed lowlands still have low totals. Any help that B.L.S. members can give, by way of records, particularly for the more deficient squares, would be welcomed by me, or by Mr. Jeff Carrington at Taunton Museum. The Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society will probably publish the Flora in a year or so's time when, it is hoped, the manuscript will be ready.

F. ROSE