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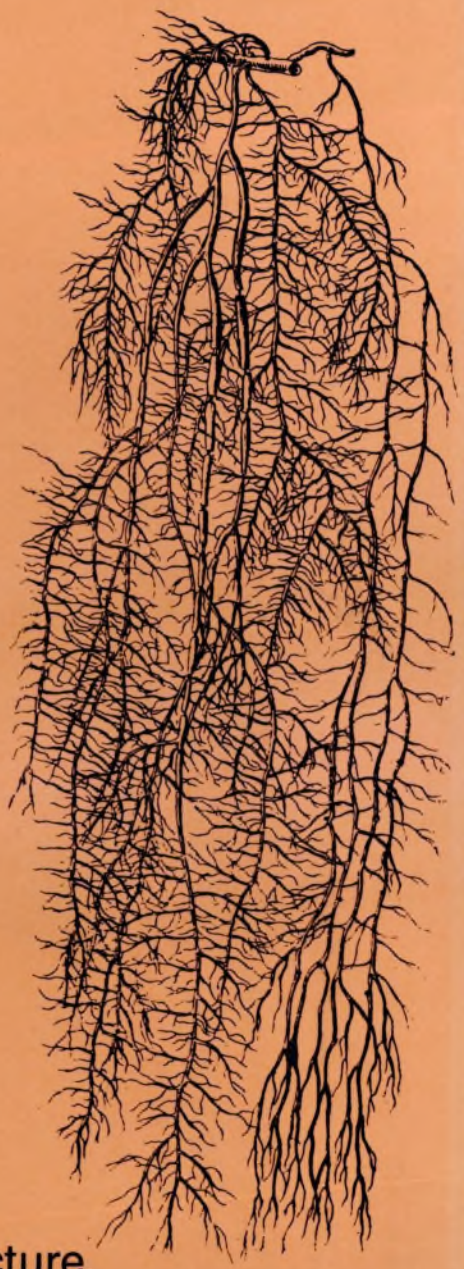

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In general, lichens are no exception to the conclusion that the storm was good for wildlife. I much regret that conservation bodies did so little to point out its positive aspects, or to make use of the opportunities which it offered.

Oliver Rackham

FURTHER RECOLONISATION OF CHESHIRE BY EPIPHYTIC LICHENS

Since Usnea subfloridana first reappeared in Cheshire, in 1977, a great deal of recolonisation has taken place. Sulphur dioxide levels across the county now coincide with zones 6-7 on the scale of Hawksworth & Rose. These zones have become almost meaningless for the time being while lichen populations readjust to the more favourable atmosphere. Indeed it seems more appropriate to talk of recolonisation gradients rather than pollution gradients, for colonists seem to be sweeping in from the south-west.

In north-eastern parts of the county, many crack willows now support some or all of Parmelia sulcata. P.glabratula, P.subaurifera, Hypogymnia physodes, H.,tubulosa, Evernia prunastri, Ramalina farinacea and Usnea subfloridana. Parmelia subrudecta and P.revoluta have appeared in several sites, well-grown sorediate thalli of the latter up to 15cm across being found in 1989 within 15km of Manchester Town Hall at Hazel Grove. Both P.subrudecta and P.revoluta may dominate individual branches of willows in the centre of Cheshire.

A second gradient is that from willows onto other tree species. Members of the community listed for willows above are increasingly appearing on the bases of field trees, especially sycamore, ash and beech. In the south-west Evernia now occurs as well-grown thalli up to three metres or more up the trunks of exposed trees; smooth-barked young ash in particular often support Lecanora chlarotera and occasionally Lecidella elaeochroma; and twigs of clipped

hawthorn hedges are well worth examining. Xanthoria polycarpa and Lecanora chlarotera are both common on a hedge near Church Minshull where a young Physcia aipolia is growing. X. candelaria, common on field trees in south-west Cheshire, is now starting to appear in the eastern hills.

P.aipolia was first recorded for Cheshire from willows by the River Bollin at Prestbury Sewage Works in 1986. I and later B.W.Fox and O.L.Gilbert had examined these trees earlier in the 1980s without finding P.aipolia, Lecanora chlarotera or Parmelia caperata, which now shares a branch with P.revoluta and a lobe or two of what looks like P.perlata. All these would seem to be new arrivals. I first encountered P.caperata in the county at Rostherne Mere N.N.R. in 1987, since when it has leapt into view on lignum by the Dee at Eaton Park; on ash at South Heath, Nantwich; on willow at Kettleshulme and Marple in the Pennine foothills and at Little Moreton Hall; and on a stump of beech in Dunham Park (Greater Manchester).

A small Parmelia photographed on willow by the River Dane near Radnor Bridge in 1984 has grown sufficiently to be determined as P.perlata. In addition to the tiny fragment at Prestbury, I know of several small plants on willows in Hazel Grove.

Oak bark seems to have been so leached or contaminated by acidic pollutants that it has shared very little to date in this resurgence. The few lowland sites where oaks support any lichens of note may all be refugia. At Huxley, a sheltered old tree by the River Gowy has Pertusaria amara and Evernia, the latter propagating itself nicely. The richest site yet found, Cholmondeley Castle gardens, also has some of the biggest old trees. Here oak supports Lecanactis abietina, Chrysothrix candelaris, Opegrapha atra, Cyphelium inquinans and other species. Only on young oaks in Tatton

Park, planted around 1970, have I encountered the Parmelia/Usnea pioneers typical of willows. Perhaps these young trees escaped the severest pollution that spoiled older trees as lichen habitats.

The remarkable spread of these lichens is not without setbacks. Small Usnea thalli have appeared in several dozen sites now, on various tree species and on fence-posts and railings, some of these in exposed windswept sites. Many seem to grow only a few millimetres before disappearing. Whether this is due to periodic episodes of higher pollution or to physical removal by birds or invertebrates, remains a mystery. Platismatia glauca seems to have declined from its prevelence on willows in the early 1980s, perhaps ousted by more vigorous Parmelia species.

Jonathan Guest

TWO ETHNOGRAPHIC LICHEN GARMENTS

Maritime Peoples of the Arctic and Northwest Coast, a permanent exhibit of ethnographic garments, which opened in 1982 at the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, included two items of particular interest to lichenologists, a lichen vest and a lichen cape (Fig. 1). Avoidance of damage to the clothing was the main concern of the seven year preparation for the exhibition. For instance, the lichen vest "showed a female bustline from previous exhibit on a mannequin" and had to be humidified for return to its original shape. Display forms used in the renovation were, consequently, handless, headless and footless, and were constructed using chemically inert materials. Clothing in the exhibition as a whole utilised goat hair, cedarbark, bird, fish, panther, seal and ermine, as well as lichen, materials which drape and handle very differently from commercial cloth. A core of ½ inch foam board was used for a lightweight mount for the lichen vest which needed