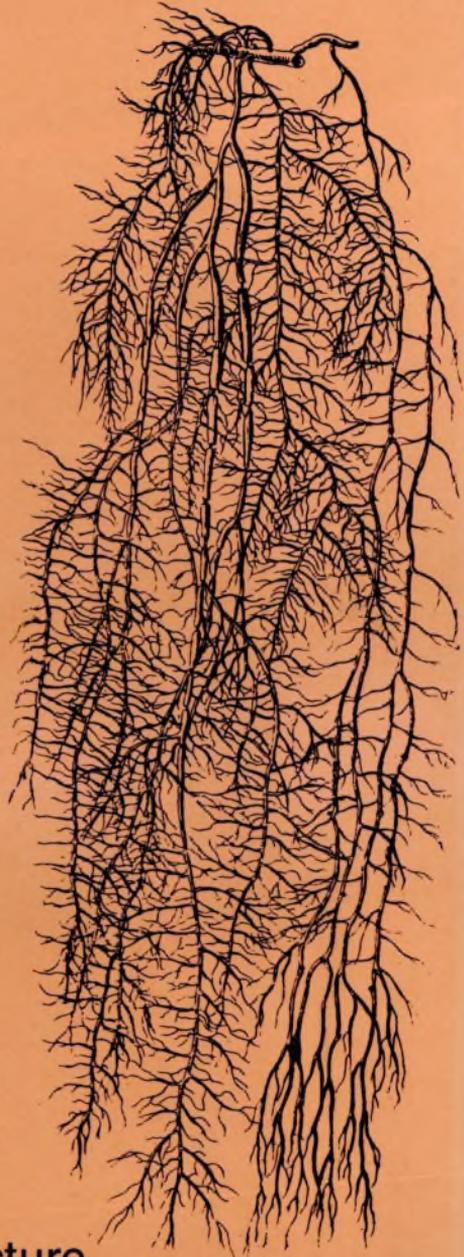


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**BRITISH  
LICHEN  
SOCIETY  
BULLETIN**



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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 prevalence 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  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch foam board was used for a lightweight mount for the lichen vest which needed

overall padded support. The lichen cape was mounted on a wooden-dowel A-frame, its well preserved leather ties holding it closed. The very considerable care taken in mounting these two lichen garments may well ensure their lasting as long as carefully preserved herbarium specimens.



Figure 1 - The Lichen vest (left) and lichen cape (right) on exhibit. Copyright McNeil, K.C. et.al.

### Acknowledgement

I am indebted to the authors of the paper listed below, and to the editor of the Curator for kind permission to summarise and to quote from the same paper. Copyright: The American Museum of Natural History.

### Reference

McNeil, K.C., Johnson, J.G., Joyce, D.J. & Blazina-Joyce, R. (1986) Mounting ethnographic garments. Curator 29: 279-294.

A. Henderson

### NCC LOWER PLANT SPECIALIST

My recent appointment as Lower Plant Specialist with NCC is, I think, indicative that lower plants (I would prefer "cryptogams") are gaining a higher profile in nature conservation. The post covers bryophytes, lichens, fungi and non-marine algae. I am principally a bryologist, but am trying hard with the lichens. I can at any rate relate to lichenologists and work for the conservation of lichens without knowing all the rarities.

One of my main tasks is to produce criteria for the selection of the best sites for cryptogams, with a view to their notification as SSSIs. At the moment the official criteria for lower plant site selection are very sketchy, but lichens have fared better than most groups, with woodlands and heathlands (including some dune, machair, grassland and mine-waste sites) having been covered very well by two BLS reports. These reports graded sites from 1 to 7 according to lichenological importance and, as a rule of thumb, grades 1 to 4 are regarded as SSSI standard, though grades 4 and 5 are rather plastic in practice. A further report on coastal sites is envisaged.

There is a feeling that lichens are best covered by a community