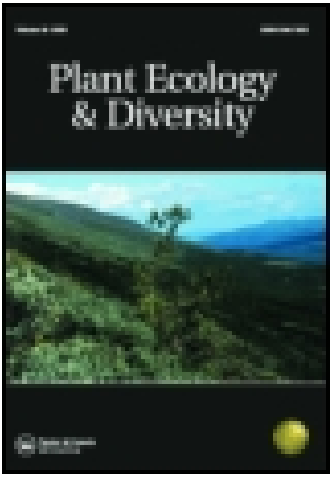
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Note On Rhacomitrium Ramulosum

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MEETING OF THE SOCIETY,

April 12, 1906.

Mr. J. RUTHERFORD HILL, Vice-President, in the Chair.

Mr. JAMES WHYTOCK showed an exceptionally fine collection of flowers, etc., from Dalkeith Palace Garden.

Mr. JAMES FRASER exhibited a series of casuals (*Gramineæ*) recently found in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh, including some not previously recorded from Britain.

Dr. A. W. BORTHWICK showed branches of various trees with fasciations.

Mr. R. L. HARROW showed a series of plants in flower from the Royal Botanic Garden.

The following communications were also read:—

NOTE ON RHACOMITRIUM RAMULOSUM. By WILLIAM YOUNG.

The specimen of the moss *Rhacomitrium ramulosum* which I now put before you was gathered on Craig Mohr, in the vice-county of Mid-Perth, in July 1898. It has taken a few years to come to its own. It has been variously named as the species *sudeticum* and the variety *gracilescens* of *heterostichum*. Under the latter cognomen two pieces were sent this year to the Moss Exchange Club. It has been examined by Professor Barker and Mr. H. N. Dixon, who agree in pronouncing it to be *ramulosum* of Lindberg.

Dr. Braithwaite says: "This moss still (1888) remains a doubtful native, its claims as such resting solely on the unlocalised specimens in the Hookerian herbarium, where the habitat is simply described as 'dry mountain rocks in the Highlands.'" Since then, as recorded by Mr. Dixon in his "Handbook," it has been found in two localities widely

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apart: by Dr. Stirton in Lewis in 1901, and by Mr. Lillie in Caithness.

According to the authors it is very closely allied to *heterostichum*, which is a very variable moss. Slender, and more slender, elongated stems with a gradually vanishing hair-point bring the varieties *alopecurum* and *gracilescens* of *heterostichum*, and the sub-species *sudeticum* and *ramulosum*, very close together. Extreme forms can be distinguished, but when they approach each other, as they frequently do, it is difficult to separate them. The chief characteristic of the present plant lies, as its name indicates, in the branching, for the stems are slender with very numerous, short, obtuse lateral branchlets; the short hair-point; and the long and very narrow leaf-cells.

Mr. Dixon says: "Some authors unite it with *heterostichum* as a variety, but this seems scarcely justified, so long especially as *sudeticum* is maintained as a separate species: I cannot but think that the elongated upper areolation in *ramulosum* is a character of greater importance than any which separates the former from *heterostichum*. It must, however, be admitted that this character is less constant and uniform than one could wish, and it is perhaps better to treat both *sudeticum* and *ramulosum* as sub-species of *heterostichum*. In habit *ramulosum* resembles *fasciculare* to some extent, and in the densely nodose branching it even approaches *canescens*, while the hair-point is occasionally so developed as to render the plant quite hoary: the areolation and the presence of a hyaline point combined make it easy of recognition: in the fruiting characters it is near *sudeticum*, but the capsule is longer and darker, while the habit is quite different. So much doubt exists as to the plant intended by Bridel to be described by his name *microcarpon*, that it seems safer, and is far less confusing, to use Lindberg's name for the present species and *sudeticum* for the second of the two plants to which Bridel's name has equally been applied."

A sheet with all the British species and varieties of the genus *Rhacomitrium* was exhibited.

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