

A New VC37 (Worcestershire) Bryophyte Record - *Henediella macrophylla* Short Pottia

Hill_Ann

The discovery of the bryophyte *Henediella macrophylla* was made during a joint field meeting between the Worcestershire Bryophyte Group and the Border Bryologists in March 2023 at St. Wulstan's Local Nature Reserve (LNR) on the edge of Malvern Wells. The Reserve is owned and managed by Worcestershire County Council and covers over 22 hectares of mixed grassland, scrub, and woodland.

During the field meeting Mark Hill spotted a small acrocarpous moss that was thought to be a *Henediella* species. The moss *Henediella* looks like a duller, flatter version of *Barbula unguiculata* in the field and small plants need to be checked carefully for the dentate leaf tips and the border of long narrow cells along the lower leaf edge of *Henediella*. A small amount was collected to examine microscopically. After checking, the specimen was sent to the British Bryological Society's Recorder for verification and was accepted as *Henediella macrophylla* (01). The record is to be added to the new vice-county record list for 2023.

The moss *H. macrophylla* was growing on compacted soil on a narrow track by the entrance to a Badger-sett on the woodland edge. More scattered plants were found nearby: some on Badger tracks under the fence line and others on compacted tracks through the vegetation. *H. macrophylla* is a variable plant. It grows as bright green, open patches or scattered plants a few millimetres tall, with leaves 2–3 mm long. The upper leaves tend to form a rosette, are broadest in the upper half of the leaf, and have a pale border of elongated cells and a short, abrupt point (02). The leaves are toothed towards the apex (03), the teeth are usually visible with a hand lens.



01. The acrocarpous moss *Henediella macrophylla*. Ann Hill.



02. The spatulate leaf of *Henediella macrophylla* showing the percurrent costa and bordered leaf margin. Ann Hill.



03. Toothed leaf apex of *Henediella macrophylla*. Ann Hill.

There were no existing records for the moss in VC37. Existing records of *Henediella macrophylla* are from south-east England and in Northumberland and south-east Scotland and the Isle of Wight, Figure 1. *Henediella macrophylla* was first collected in Britain in 1965 and its patchy distribution across the UK suggests that the plant is probably an introduction from New Zealand although the species is thought to be increasing its range (Blockeel, Bosanquet, Hill & Preston, 2014). The closest record to VC37 is in Alvecote, Warwickshire found growing on a bank at the edge of woodland in 2014.

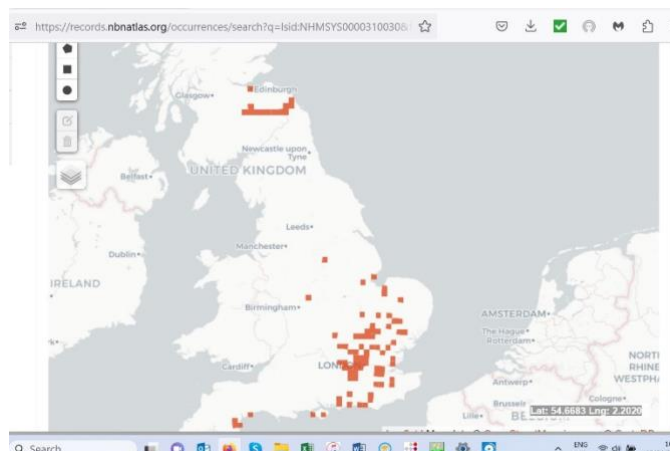


Figure 1. Distribution map of *Henediella macrophylla* (Source: <https://records.nbnatlas.org/>).

It is often difficult to find a suitable venue for our field meetings because of the need for adequate car parking and access permissions but also because many potential sites have been recorded on multiple occasions over the years. St. Wulstan's LNR was chosen because there were no bryophyte records for the tetrad. In addition to the new Vice-county record we recorded a total of seventy bryophytes (62 mosses and 8 liverworts) during the March 2023 field meeting: all new records for Tetrad SO74V. Overall, a very successful field meeting.

References

- Blockeel T.L. 1990. The genus *Henediella* Par.: a note on the affinities of *Tortula brevis* Whitehouse & Newton and *T. stanfordensis* Steere, *Journal of Bryology*, 16:2, 187-192.
- Blockeel, T.L., Bosanquet, S.D.S., Hill, M.O., & Preston, C.D., (2014) *Atlas of British and Irish Bryophytes*. Pisces Publication, Berkshire.

Whitehouse H.L.K. & Newton, M.E. 1988. *Tortula brevis* sp. nov. and *T. stanfordensis* Steere: morphology, cytology and geographical distribution, *Journal of Bryology*, 15:1, 83-99.

Images

01. The acrocarpous moss *Henediella macrophylla*. Ann Hill.
02. The spatulate leaf of *Henediella macrophylla* showing the percurrent costa and bordered leaf margin. Ann Hill.
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