

Lichens of ancient trees

**BACK
FROM THE
BRINK**

Dave Lamacraft
Lower Plants Champion, Plantlife



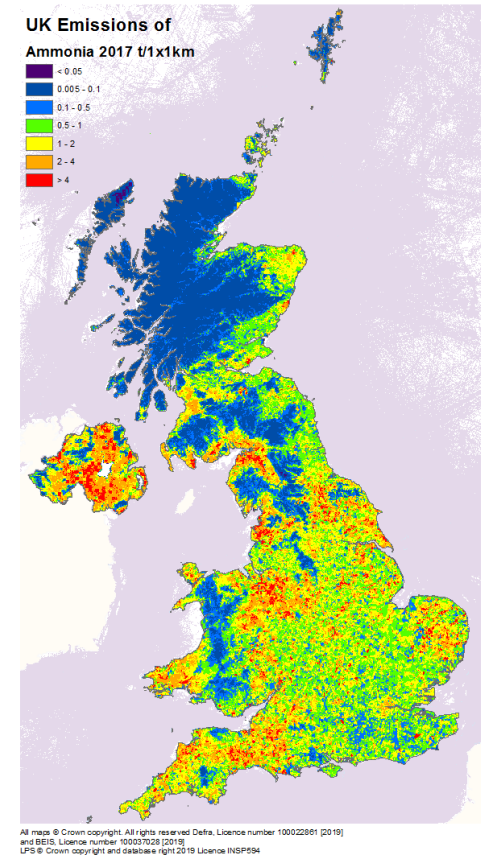
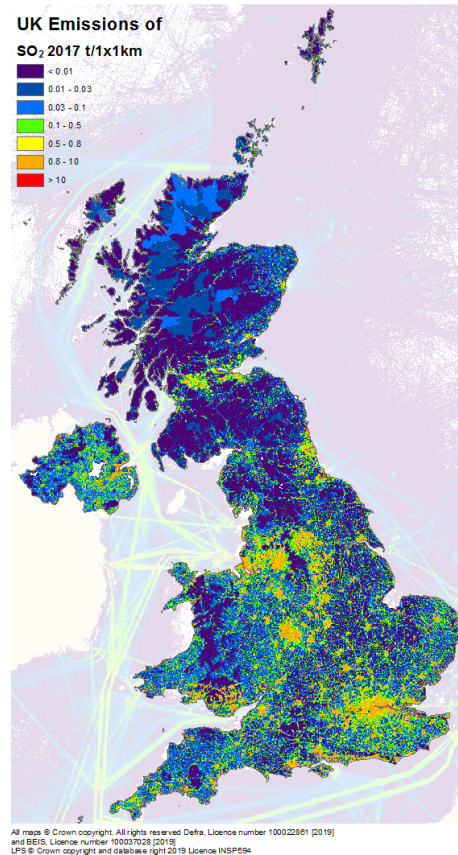
Lichens don't grow randomly but have specific requirements and are found in communities; the UK is the most important country in the world for a specialist community of lichens of ancient trees



What influences what lichens grow where?

At a big scale....

- Habitat availability
- Climate - many of these species are 'sub-oceanic'
- Air quality – SO₂ (left-hand map) and NH₃ (right hand map) are two pollutants that have had and are having major impacts



What influences what grows where?

At a smaller scale....

- Bark chemistry
- Light
- Moisture
- Nutrient availability (wound tracks etc)
- Tree architecture

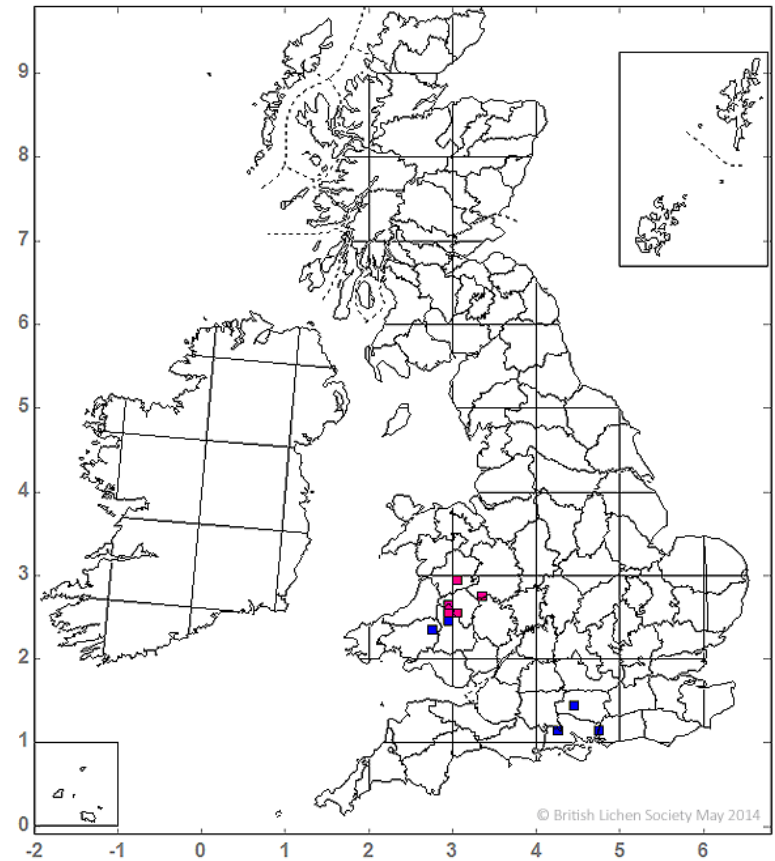


Caloplaca herbidella - the geranium firedot - a species of well-lit and less-acidic oak trunks (the 'mature mesic bark' community), especially veteran oak



© Dave Lamacraft

Caloplaca herbidella s. str.

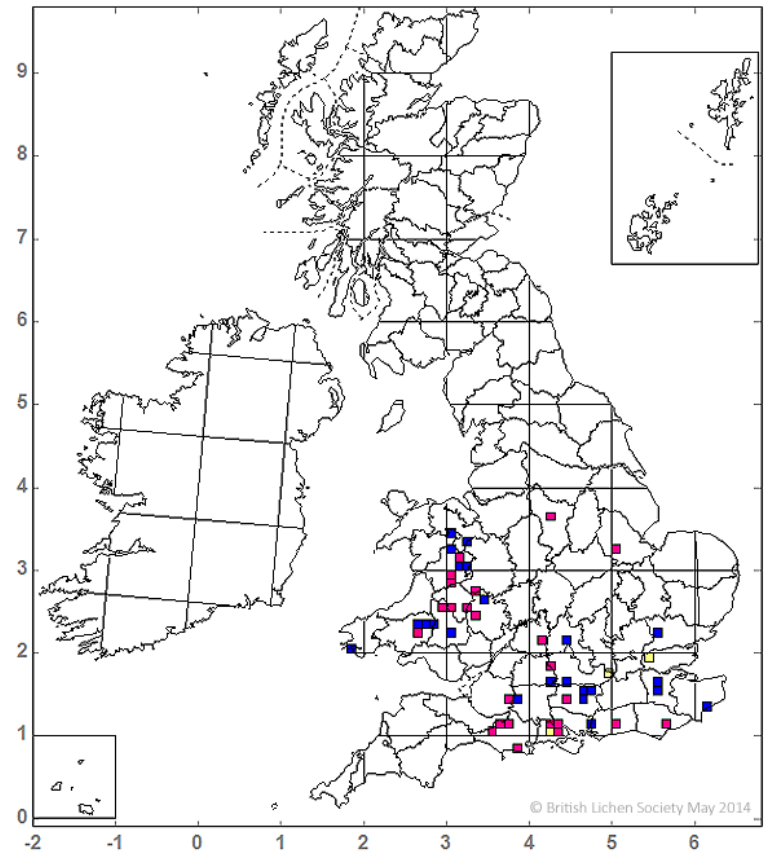


Lecanora sublivescens – the lemon tart lichen – another species of well-lit and less-acidic oak trunks (the ‘mature mesic bark’ community), especially veteran oak



© Leif Stridvall

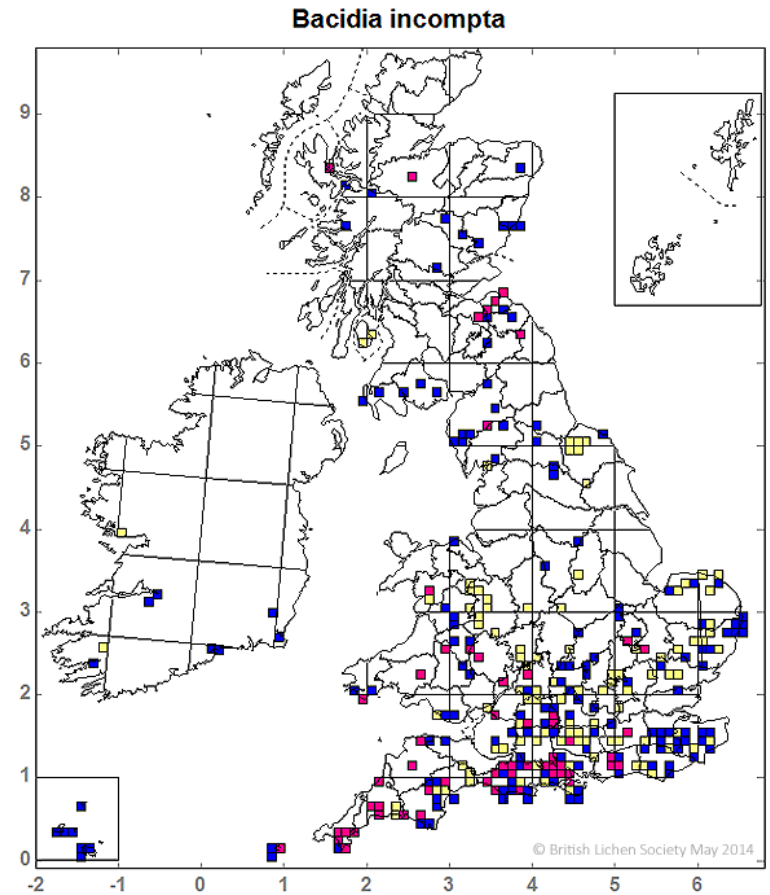
Lecanora sublivescens



Bacidia incompta – the sap-groove lichen – another wound track species, and a former elm specialist for which ash is now important



© Geof Howe

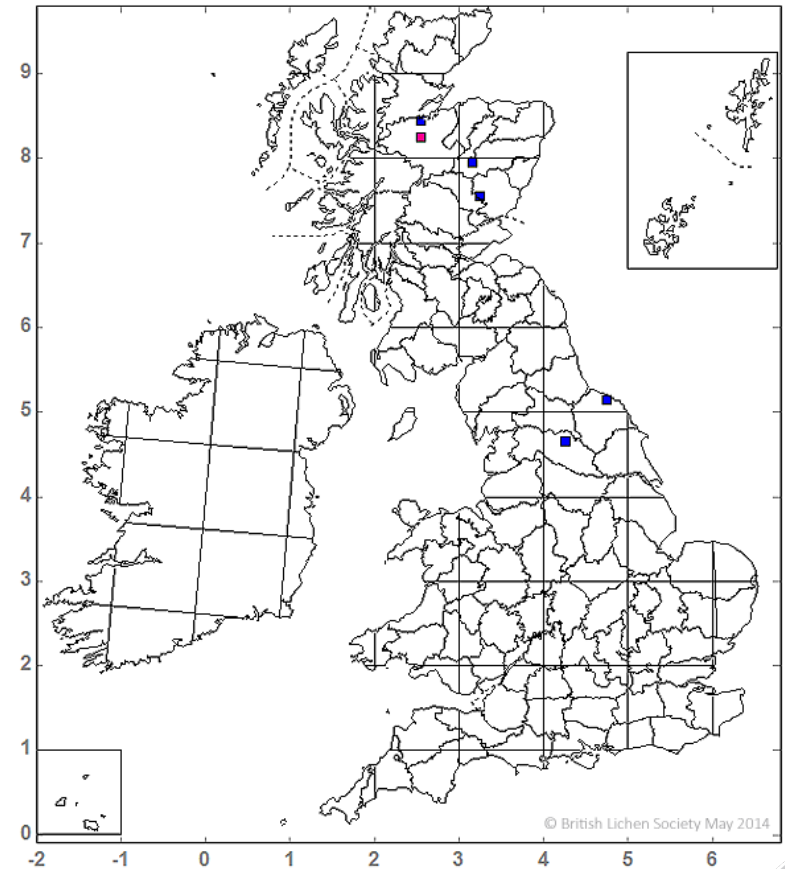


Chaenotheca gracilentia – a pinhead lichen – a rare member of the dry bark community and a real elm specialist which now seems to be lost from it's last known English sites



© David Genney

Chaenotheca gracilentia

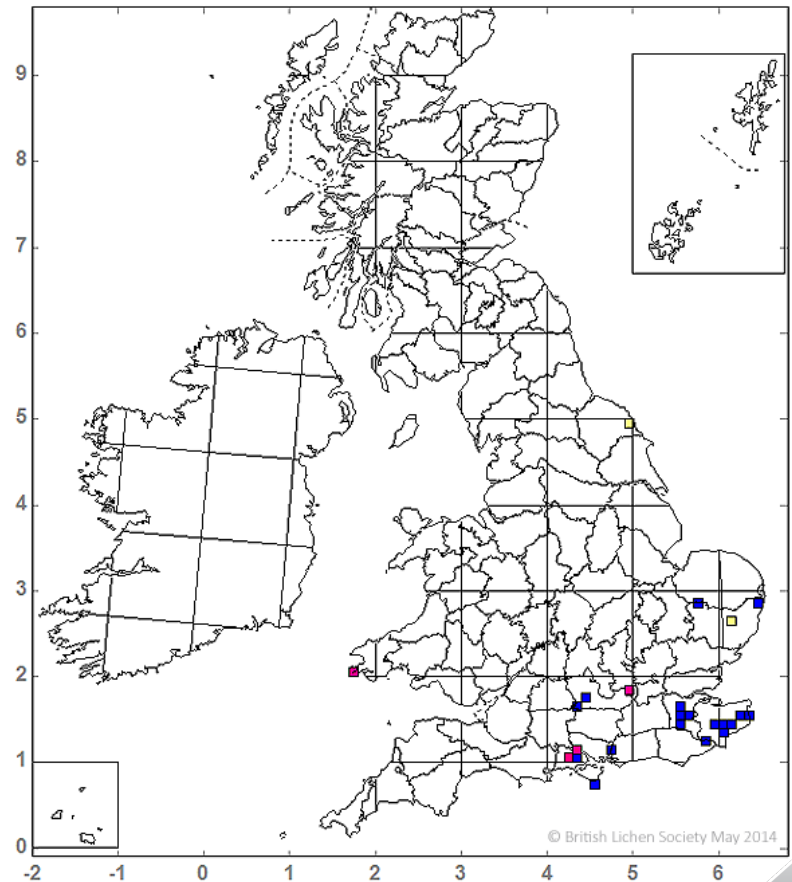


Pyrenula nitida – a pox lichen – a southern beech specialist occupying rain tracks on veteran beech



© Dave Lamacraft

Pyrenula nitida



Key requirements? Continuity of conditions



© Dave Lamacraft



Much of this is about managing light/shade – these species are light-demanding - especially regeneration and grazing/browsing is the best way to manage this long-term



© Paul Rutter



© Paul Rutter



Ivy is a particular problem, but needs careful consideration of value to other taxa. Control young ivy invading good lichen habitat. Grazing/browsing important here



© Neil Sanderson



© Dave Lamacraft



Replacement trees – selected through natural regeneration or by planting (but needs careful consideration of provenance and disease implications)



© Paul Rutter



© Paul Rutter



Veteranisation, and translocation...



© Paul Rutter



© Dave Lamacraft



Large diameter deadwood is a very important lichen habitat, best left where it falls or in large sections, but not piled against trunks



© Dave Lamacraft



© Dave Lamacraft



Thank you



© Leif Stridvall

