# Kent Field Club visit to All Saints' Church Biddenden 8 November 2014

Several members of the Kent Field Club visited All Saints' Churchyard Biddenden to survey the lichens on the church building, the memorials and the trees. Previous surveys had been carried out in the mid 1980s and in 1990.

The medieval church stands in a large, open and well maintained churchyard in the centre of the village. The sandstone of which the church is built is in places quite calcareous and Bethersden marble is also a notable component of the church building and some memorials. There is a range of memorial type with some old limestone chests to the south, limestone, ragstone and sandstone headstones and some granite kerbs. There are trees around the periphery but these do not shade the memorials to any great extent.

In total, 115 lichen taxa were recorded on the day of our visit and this included 55 which were found on the church building itself, 92 species on stone, 17 on trees and 7 on worked timber. The south wall of the church, which is well lit and benefits from the warmth from the sun, has a good mixture of the yellow/orange *Caloplaca* species including *C. aurantia*, *C. flavescens* and *C. ruderum*. *Toninia aromatica* is frequent on the church and headstones. The north wall of the church, in contrast, is dominated by grey lichen species which prefer the lower light intensity and the damp conditions – *Dirina massiliensis*, *Haematomma ochroleucum* var. *porphyrium* and, of great interest, the lovely *Gyalecta jenensis* with its mass of tiny fruits with very crenulated edges. This occurs on the limestone champhered plinth on the north wall of the church around the middle of the nave. It is uncommon in Kent. Also present on the north wall is *Opegrapha calcarea* with its black lirellate fruits, and a rather indeterminate lichen on the windowsill under the metal run-off from the grille – *Arthonia lapidicola*.

The memorials are of varied stone which adds to the variety of lichens found as each lichen has a preference for either basic or acidic substrata. The limestone chests have large patches of the grey lichen *Aspicilia calcarea* and smaller patches of another grey lichen *Solenopsora candicans*. Unusually, at Biddenden this lichen is not fertile (it usually has quite large jam-tart like fruits covering the centre of the lobes). Two species of the blue/black 'jelly' lichens occur on the chests – *Collema auriforme* and *C. crispum*. These use a cyanobacterium, *Nostoc*, as the photosynthetic partner, giving the lichen a dark and engorged look particularly when wet. The sandstone memorials have a completely different suite of lichens including some leafy lichens which may also occur on trees: *Melanolixia subaurifera*, *Parmelia sulcata* and *Xanthoparmelia verruculifera*. However, the majority are of crustose form and include the grey lichen with black fruits, *Tephromela atra*, pale greenish lichens *Lecanora soralifera* and *L. sulphurea* and on one headstone a large patch of the grey/white lichen *Lecanora rupicola*. One sandstone headstone in the SW area of the yard (James Oliver 1865) has an, as yet, unidentified bright green lichen on its rounded top surface. We need to monitor this to see if it grows a bit bigger and produces some distinguishing features to allow its identification! It may be new to Kent!

The trees, particularly the oaks, added more lichens to the species list. These include leafy lichens such as *Hypotrachina afrorevoluta* and two *Opegrapha* (script) lichens.

Important lichens seen in 1990 but not refound in 2014 include *Aspicilia radiosa* and *Physconia distorta*. Both these lichens are rare in Kent and it is disappointing that they no longer seem to be present at Biddenden.

**Full list of lichens recorded at Biddenden Churchyard 2014 Kent Field Club**

*Acarospora fuscata*

*Agonimia tristicula*

*Arthonia lapidicola*

*Arthonia radiata*

*Aspicilia calcarea*

*Aspicilia contorta* subsp. *contorta*

*Belonia nidarosiensis*

*Bilimbia sabuletorum*

*Botryolepraria lesdainii*

*Buellia aethalea*

*Buellia ocellata*

*Caloplaca arcis*

*Caloplaca aurantia*

*Caloplaca austrocitrina*

*Caloplaca citrina s.lat.*

*Caloplaca crenulatella*

*Caloplaca decipiens*

*Caloplaca dichroa*

*Caloplaca flavescens*

*Caloplaca ruderum*

*Caloplaca saxicola*

*Caloplaca teicholyta*

*Candelariella aurella* f. *aurella*

*Candelariella medians* f. *medians*

*Candelariella reflexa*

*Candelariella vitellina* f. *vitellina*

*Catillaria lenticularis*

*Cliostomum griffithii*

*Collema auriforme*

*Collema crispum* var. *crispum*

*Cyphelium inquinans*

*Diploicia canescens*

*Diplotomma alboatrum*

*Dirina massiliensis* f. *sorediata*

*Evernia prunastri*

*Flavoparmelia caperata*

*Flavoparmelia soredians*

*Fuscidea lightfootii*

*Gyalecta jenensis* var. *jenensis*

*Haematomma ochroleucum* var. *porphyrium*

*Hypocenomyce scalaris*

*Hypogymnia physodes*

*Hypotrachyna afrorevoluta*

*Lecania erysibe* s.lat.

*Lecania inundata*

*Lecania rabenhorstii*

*Lecanora albescens*

*Lecanora campestris* subsp. *campestris*

*Lecanora chlarotera*

*Lecanora conizaeoides* f. *conizaeoides*

*Lecanora crenulata*

*Lecanora dispersa*

*Lecanora expallens*

*Lecanora horiza*

*Lecanora muralis*

*Lecanora orosthea*

*Lecanora polytropa*

*Lecanora pulicaris*

*Lecanora rupicola* var. *rupicola*

*Lecanora soralifera*

*Lecanora sulphurea*

*Lecidea fuscoatra*

*Lecidea grisella* ##

*Lecidella elaeochroma* f. *elaeochroma*

*Lecidella scabra*

*Lecidella stigmatea*

*Lepraria incana* s. str.

*Lepraria vouauxii*

*Marchandiomyces corallinus* #

*Melanelixia fuliginosa* subsp. *fuliginosa*

*Melanelixia subaurifera*

*Neofuscelia verruculifera*

*Ochrolechia parella*

*Opegrapha calcarea*

*Opegrapha herbarum*

*Opegrapha varia*

*Parmelia sulcata*

*Pertusaria amara* f. *amara*

*Pertusaria pertusa*

*Phaeophyscia orbicularis*

*Physcia adscendens*

*Physcia caesia*

*Physcia tenella* subsp. *tenella*

*Physconia grisea*

*Placopyrenium fuscellum*

*Polysporina simplex*

*Porpidia crustulata*

*Porpidia soredizodes*

*Porpidia tuberculosa*

*Protoblastenia rupestris*

*Psilolechia leprosa*

*Psilolechia lucida*

*Punctelia jeckeri*

*Punctelia subrudecta* s.str.

*Ramalina farinacea*

*Rhizocarpon reductum*

*Rinodina oleae*

*Sarcogyne regularis*

*Sarcopyrenia gibba* var. *geisleri* #

*Solenopsora candicans*

*Tephromela atra* var. *atra*

*Toninia aromatica*

*Trapelia placodioides*

*Verrucaria baldensis*

*Verrucaria calciseda*

*Verrucaria macrostoma* f. *furfuracea*

*Verrucaria macrostoma* f. *macrostoma*

*Verrucaria muralis*

*Verrucaria nigrescens* f. *nigrescens*

*Verrucaria nigrescens* f. *tectorum*

*Xanthoparmelia mougeotii*

*Xanthoria calcicola*

*Xanthoria parietina*

*Xanthoria polycarpa*

**The churchyard is also very good for grassland fungi and the following species were recorded on 8 November 2014 by Joyce Pitt**

*Agaricus sylvaticus*

*Bolbitius vitellinus*

*Clavaria corniculata*

*Clitocybe rivulosa*

*Entoloma papilatum*

*Entoloma porphyrophaeum*

*Hebeloma saccriolens*

*Hebeloma sp*

*Hygocybe pratense*

*Hygro0cybe psittacina*

*Hygrocybe ceracea*

*Hygrocybe chlorophana*

*Hygrocybe insipida*

*Hygrocybe virginea*

*Laccaria laccata*

*Lepiota subalba*

*Lepista glaucocana*

*Lepista saueva*

*Macrolepiota procera*

*Mycena aetites*

*Mycena flavoalba*

*Mycena leptocephala*

*Mycena mairei*

*Mycena olivaceomarginata*

*Psathyrella multipedata (2 separate clumps seen)*

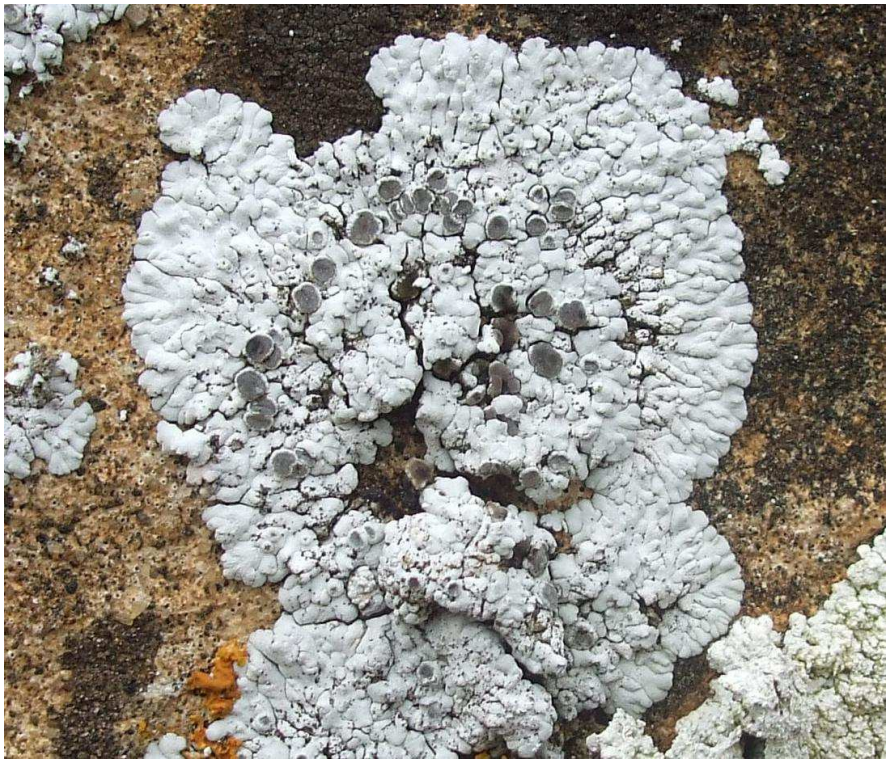
*Russula pectinata with oak*

*Stropharia inununcta*

Some lichens seen at Biddenden churchyard

Caloplaca flavescens (left) and Caloplaca aurantia (right)

Lecanora sulphurea



Solenopsora candicans

Gyalecta jenensis

Unidentified lichen from James Oliver 1865 headstone