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Meeting Of The Scottish Alpine Botanical Club, 1905, At Killin

Alexander Cowan

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MEETING OF THE SOCIETY,

February 8, 1906.

Professor BAYLEY BALFOUR, President, in the Chair.

Dr. R. STEWART MACDOUGALL gave an account of the attack by *Megastigma spermatrophus* on the seeds of *Pseudotsuga Douglasii*. This is the first time this insect has been recorded for Britain. It was pointed out that the genus was usually parasitic on other insects, but here almost certainly injurious to the seeds.

Dr. MACDOUGALL also showed two West Australian plants, *Lachnostachys verbascoifolia* and *Trichinium Manglesi*—both marked xerophytes.

The PRESIDENT exhibited *Rhododendron parvifolium*, Adams, —rare in cultivation—which lends itself to layering and flowers early.

On behalf of W. ELDER, M.A., Dr. MACDOUGALL communicated a note on the Variation of the Leaf in the genus *Rubus*, with exhibition of specimens.

H. F. TAGG, F.L.S., gave an account of the water pores in *Lafoensia*.

The following communications were read :—

MEETING OF THE SCOTTISH ALPINE BOTANICAL CLUB, 1905,
AT KILLIN. By ALEXANDER COWAN.

The members of the Club travelled to Killin by the afternoon train on Monday, 31st July, and, as usual, made the Bridge of Lochay Hotel their headquarters during their stay. There is a new landlord there since the last visit of the Club took place, who, like his predecessor, did all in his power to make the members and visitors comfortable.

On Tuesday, 1st August, the party drove to Loch na Lairige, in order to explore Meall nan Tarmachan. The day was fine to start with, but before long it became very

wet, and continued so all the day—so much so, that most of the party left the hill and proceeded to walk home. The principal find of the day was *Cystopteris montana*, which had never been previously recorded on this hill; at all events, by any of the members of the Club.

The following rare Alpines were found:—*Carex atrata*, *Carex pulla*, *Draba incana*, *Juncus castaneus*, *Poa alpina*, *Salix reticulata*, *Saxifraga nivalis*, *Tofieldia palustris*, *Trollius europæus*. A plant of *Polystichum lonchitis* was found with twisted, crispy fronds; also plants of *Blechnum Spicant*, one very dwarfed and congested, the other caudate.

After the long and tiring day spent on Meall nan Tarmachan, it was decided to spend Wednesday, the 2nd August, in the neighbourhood of Killin, and to take things easily, in view of the proposal to climb Ben Lawers on the following day. Some of the younger members, however, decided to climb and botanize on Creag na Caillach and Fionn Lairige. The day proved an excellent one, as the air was cool; but late in the afternoon some showers fell.

The following plants were found:—*Athyrium alpestre*, *Dryas octopetala*, *Juncus castaneus*, *Juncus biglumis*, *Polystichum aculeatum* (at over 2000 feet), *Salix reticulata*, *Saxifraga nivalis*, *Vaccinium uliginosum*, *Viola amœna*. In addition to these, the President, who spent the day in visiting the Kinnel vine at Auchmore and fern-hunting in the neighbourhood of Killin, found a very tall and narrow form of *Lastrea montana*.

An early start was made from the hotel on the morning of Thursday, the 3rd August, by conveyance, in order to climb Ben Lawers, but unfortunately for the prospects of the party it was soon seen that heavy mist enveloped by far the larger half of the mountain. When the burn was reached, where the ascent by way of the corrie is usually commenced, the party divided into two, one half proposing to climb the mountain from this point, the other half continuing the drive as far as Lawers Inn, with the intention of making the ascent by the pathway and burn leading to Lochan à Chait.

Unfortunately, the first party had no compass with them, and by the time they reached and entered the mist they found it quite impossible to strike the proper direction.

The wind was blowing half a gale, and the mist was exceedingly thick, and something like two hours were spent in a fruitless attempt to gain the corrie; and it was well past mid-day when a sudden break in the mist showed the party that they were about two miles out of their proper course. As it was felt useless to make further attempts to reach the corrie, far less ascend to the summit of the mountain, there was nothing left for the party to do but reluctantly retrace their steps and make for Lawers Inn. Heavy rain had by this time come on, so that the shelter of the inn and its excellent scones and tea were most welcome. The second party ascending by means of the path did not attempt to go beyond the rocks near Lochan à Chait, and returned to the inn somewhat later than the first party, thoroughly drenched. As far as pleasure went, the day was quite spoilt by the wretched weather, and the list of plants found—viz., *Athyrium alpestre*, *Drosera anglica*, *Myosotis alpestris*, *Tofieldia palustris*, *Viola amœna*—is a very short one, though the members may be considered lucky to have found *Myosotis alpestris*. On the road to the hotel one of the members was lucky enough to find two or three distinct forms of *Lastrea montana*.

Friday, the 4th August, was spent in the neighbourhood of Killin, where again some varietal forms of *Lastrea montana* were found by two of the members. This day was also very wet, and altogether the week was one of the most unpleasant, as far as the weather is concerned, that has ever been spent by the Club, three days out of the four being very wet indeed; luckily, however, none of the members of the party are reported to have been any the worse of their experience.

The meeting broke up and the members returned home on the morning of Saturday, the 5th August.

NOTES ON THE FLORA OF THE COAST AND ISLANDS OF PORTUGUESE EAST AFRICA, WITH PHOTOGRAPHS OF INTERESTING TREES, PLANTS, AND FOREST SCENERY. By J. A. ALEXANDER, Director of Agriculture and Arboriculture, Beira.

I feel as if I were due my old Society a few notes upon this little-known territory, wherein my duties rest at present. Much that I have written is in the form of pamphlets and