

Altarnun Parish Council is proud of the upland woodlands scattered throughout this beautiful Parish and is happy to support this initiative. Residents may find the following article of interest.



### Can you tell your Old Man's Beard from your Witches' Whiskers?

These oddly descriptive and rather cheeky names belong to some of our region's hidden woodland treasures, the lichens. Unsurprisingly not many of us could point them out on a woodland walk yet the south west's coastal and upland woods (known as Atlantic woodlands) are some of the richest places for lichens, mosses and liverworts in the British Isles. Plantlife, with funding from the National Lottery and the support of regional partners, wants people to know more about the woodlands on their doorstep so that we can value them more and do more for their conservation.

Over the next 12 months we will be developing the '**Building Resilience in South West Woodlands**' project and we want to hear from the people who live near these woods, work in or visit the area.

Let us know what you think about the woodlands of Dartmoor, Exmoor, North Devon, North Cornwall and the Quantock Hills. Tell us what activities you would like to get involved with. To do this go to [www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/BRCCommunities](http://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/BRCCommunities)

Now back to those beards and whiskers....

On your next woodland walk have a look into the branches of hawthorn, oak, ash and birch trees to see if you can find either of these lichens. Both are nationally fairly rare but can be abundant in some of the south west's older native woodlands as they prefer to live in the clean, light and damp conditions they provide.

#### **Witches' Whiskers (*Usnea florida*)**

With its huge hairy wart-like discs, this grey-green lichen can't be mistaken for any other. The discs are the fruits of the lichen and can grow up to 1cm across although they can be much smaller.



### **Old Man's Beard (*Usnea species*)**

Sometimes sticking up on branches and sometimes dangling from them in clumps, these 'usnea' lichens are made up of thin, round, grey-green threads and are reminiscent of a tangled beard.



To hear Plantlife's Alastair Moralee talk about the project on BBC Radio Devon go to [https://twitter.com/Love\\_plants/status/907228502394634240](https://twitter.com/Love_plants/status/907228502394634240)