

Beginners Guide To Recording Lichens

Lichens are all around us – on trees, rocks, walls and even under our feet on tarmac paths. Whilst many are tricky to identify, there are a number of common species that everyone can learn to recognise. Here are our Top 10 to get you started.



Lecanora chlorotela (smooth bark)
Pale grey with brown fruits



Lecidella elaeochroma (smooth bark)
Pale green with jet black fruits



Arthonia radiata (smooth bark)
Grey with black, squiggly fruits



Parmelia sulcata (trunks + branches)
Grey-green with white tracery



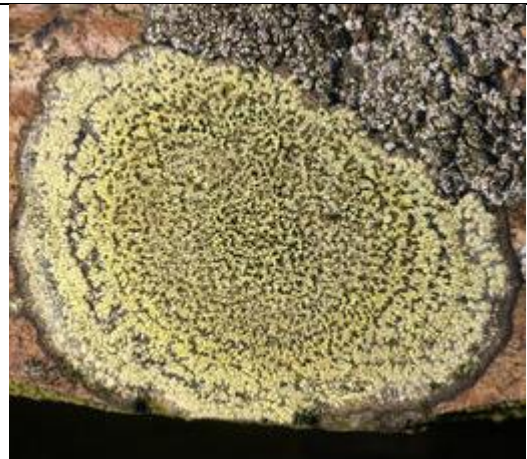
Flavoparmelia caperata (trunks + branches)
Pale green – looks like melted wax



Punctelia subrudecta (trunks + branches)
Similar to *P. sulcata* but with white spots



Parmelia saxatilis (acid rocks)
Grey, rosette-like



Rhizocarpon geographicum (acid rocks)
Yellow with joined-up black fruits



Xanthoria parietina (anywhere birds roost!)
Yellow (green if shaded) with orange fruits



Lecanora muralis (walls, paths)
Green/grey thallus with orange fruits (green when fresh and wet). On paths the lichen is often worn

To record these on NatureSpot, attach a photo. As with all lichen recording you are asked to state where it was growing, such as the type of rock, as many are specific to certain substrates.

Taking it further

There are other lichens that are reasonably easy to identify so look for the green and amber rated species in the NatureSpot gallery.

There isn't a popular field guide to this group but there are some good resources around. The range of FSC fold-out guides to lichens (urban/churchyards/heathland/twigs) are inexpensive and useful, though do include species that we are unlikely to see in Leicestershire and Rutland.

The best comprehensive guide is **Lichens – an illustrated guide**, by Frank Dobson, published by RP.