August 15th

As we moved towards the border of Norway, the altitude slowly rose to ca 500 m a.s.l. and we reached the middle boreal zone of Sweden. In this region, the organisers took us to a very nice nature reserve, Flickran mire, a 300 ha mire complex, which has the particularity to include steep mire slopes and numerous flarks. Certainly, for several of us, this was the first encounter with sloping mires. Here we got acquainted with *S. angermanicum*, which is suspected to be increasing in abundance in Sweden. On the shallower parts of the fen, large cushions of *S. compactum* could be observed. We also became acquainted with the brown forms of *S. girgensohnii*. By climbing up an old twisted pine, Harri Vasander demonstrated how to take good pictures of a fen with flarks. His technique was soon followed by the fittest!

That afternoon, we visited an extreme rich fen, Movallsflon, in the Jämtland province. For a change, we focused on brown mosses, although there was good discussion about useful field characters for separating *S. russowii* from *S. warnstorfii*. Here is one that you will not find in an identification book: *S. warnstorfii* has its pendant branches closely appressed to the stem whereas the ones of S. russowii will first reach out and then further downward along the stem also be appressed. As a compensation for all this mire trampling, everybody appreciated the clean accommodation, quiet places and very nice evening meals in Sweden. That evening we could enjoy tasty deer and moose stroganoff, accompanied by *Rubus chamaemorus* and *Vaccinium vitis-idea* berries. It was just delicious!

August 16th

During the morning, we visited Klockamyren, a very nice mire complex besides the lake Ånn. It had an ombrotrophic and a minerotrophic part even with some rich-fen vegetation. Peat was being eroded near the shore of the lake and we spent a lot of time making paleoecological studies and speculating about the causes of this erosion. However, most of the time was spent in identifying the different red species of the *Acutifolia* section: *S. rubellum*, *S. capillifolium*, *S.russowii* – even some other more exotic species names were quietly mentioned!

The scenery had become mountainous by this point, and we could see even some snow on the mountain slopes. These areas were also covered by huge sloping fens.

During the afternoon we visited Visjövalen, a nice sloping fen. The main troublesome peat mosses there were of the *Subsecunda* section: *S. subsecundum, S. contortum*, and *S. platyphyllum*. Some other interesting species included *Loeskypnum badium*, *Scorpidium cossonii*, *Sphagnum subnitens* ssp. *subnitens* as well as the very rare and yellow-flowered *Pedicularis oederi*.

After a short break at the border village, we crossed the Swedish-Norwegian border; unnoticed by most of the participants as the bus did not even slow down! Soon we came to the seashore and had accommodation in Levanger, a small town on the edge of a fjord. That evening, Asbjørn Moen gave a comprehensive presentation of the vegetation zones, sections and ecological regions of Norway. He also clarified the mire terminology and mire-conservation issues in Norway.

August 17th

Today the whole day was spent at the same mire, but what a mire! Upper Forra is a 108-km2 large nature reserve with an oceanic climate and is situated 400 m a.s.l. This means that we were close to the tree limit and had unobstructed views of cascading sloping mires ending in a sea of fens. With a blue sky and a temperature of 24 °C, the view was breathtaking. Here, we worked on the *Sphagnum recurvum* complex as all members of this group were seen: *S. angustifolium, S. flexuosum, S. fallax, S. brevifolium* and *S. isoviitae*. For several of us, all the different characters got mixed up as they were dancing in our heads by the end of the afternoon, and this might not only be due to the close relationships between these species. However, the barbecued lamb chop and the amount of red wine served during the lunch might have played tricks on the mind while trying to sort out the species. In all we had another wonderful day but were very sorry to have missed the company of Asbjørn Moen. He had to leave us as his mother passed away the previous evening. One has to know that Asbjørn's direct involvement protected Upper Forra, which was threatened by flooding as a result of dam construction for a hydro-electrical power plant. We all are really proud and grateful for your efforts to protect this magnificent area, Asbjørn, and mourn together with you.

August 18th

Again the morning was warm and sunny, and our Norwegian hosts were afraid that the mires would be too dry to see the rarest species of our trip: *S. troendelagicum*. This was going to be the day for that species!

During our way to Stortrønningen we saw nice examples of boreal rain forests with many epiphytic lichens hanging from spruce twigs. At the mire site we did succeed in finding quite good examples of *S. troendelagicum*. Only 15 localities in a radius of 50 km are known from the whole world! The species is allopolyploid with *S. tenellum* and *S. balticum* as progenitors. As the parental species exist together in many parts of the world, it seems that this species has yet to be found elsewhere or - the other explanation - that there is something special in Stortrønningen!

The afternoon was not just warm. It was hot! Apparently central Norway was experiencing its driest summer on record and today central Norway was the warmest place in Europe. This had never happened before! As we had lunch by a lake, many of us did not need to be convinced to take a dive and one did not mind the belt of aquatic plants to reach the