

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

This is an unusual spring season during lockdown. Most of us would be out in the field to fill our Diaries with records and observations, but like me, I expect that most of you have been confined to home. I am lucky to have a beautiful sea view over Lyme Bay and a nice garden which is fast improving because of the amount of time I now have each day for gardening. My wild flower observations are confined to plants that I normally consider as weeds in the garden. The birds were obviously busy last year spreading the seeds of plants with red berries. I have had a plague of Lords-and-Ladies *Arum maculatum*, Black Bryony *Tamus communis* and young seedlings of Holly *Ilex aquifolium*, all plants with red berries that birds like. The Redwings were here on their annual visit to enjoy the seeds of our large Cotoneaster tree. However, I am glad that we do a lot to encourage birds as, to see so many during this time of confinement at home, has brought great pleasure to my wife and me. We have many Goldfinches and Greenfinches, Great, Blue and Coal Tits, Blackcaps and many other birds. Real treats have been the Nuthatches and the occasional Great Spotted Woodpecker.

Not all my time here has been gardening. I spend each morning writing research papers, but I miss my regular visits to Kew to study specimens in the herbarium. I have

just finished two new papers. One about the African genus *Magnistipula*, so named because of the large stipules on some of the twelve species in this genus of the Chrysobalanaceae family. I also realised that it is sixty years since I started my doctoral thesis work on this family so I have written a paper for a review journal on the developments over sixty years of studying the Chrysobalanaceae. I began with the traditional work of studying the morphology and anatomy of the species, but today it is mainly studying the DNA. The result of this is that the fourteen genera I started with have now become twenty-eight, but they are now arranged in a much better way that reflects their relationships and evolutionary history.

For me the sixty years studying plant taxonomy has been fascinating, but remember that this was preceded by at least fifteen years as a youth with a Wild Flower Society Field Botanist's Diary. I encourage you all to continue to interest young people with the fascination of plants and to recruit future botanists through this. I have tried with my grandson, but the fossils of the Jurassic Coast here have seized his interest and he is more interested in studying palaeontology!

GHILLEAN PRANCE

**Copy date for Autumn magazine  
1st August, 2020**

## EDITORIAL

Welcome to the summer issue of the magazine produced in some rather unusual times with the country being in lockdown for two months, our programme of field meetings cancelled, the AGM now on hold (see notice opposite) and many of us restricted in our activities because of the Covid-19 pandemic. I hope you have all managed to 'stay safe'. Several people have written to give a flavour of their experiences during this time so I hope you enjoy 'Botanising in Lockdown' from page 4 and even find the time to rise to the challenge of the Sudoku and wild flower quiz. One of the consequences of being restricted to our home territory seems to be that more of you are taking an interest in your local patch and have started a 1km square study. The reports from those who participated in its first year appear in this magazine but I am anticipating a rise in numbers for 2020. I hope you have found much to interest you botanically in your local area.

Mike Shaw, who recently published *Hawkweeds of South-east England* (BSBI handbook number 20), has produced a superb guide to aid the identification of this very difficult and challenging group. As before, this is included as a centre page spread with the intention that you can remove it, laminate it and then use it in the field so you know the key features you need to record when encountering a hawkweed. Once removed the rest of the text should follow seamlessly so there is no interruption to the report on Branch N2.

As is tradition, this magazine is largely devoted to the Branch reports for 2019. However, I have decided to hold over the Parnassus reports to the autumn magazine as there will be no field meeting reports for this year. Apologies to all Parnassians if you were hoping to see 'your name in lights' in this issue.

ANNE KELL

## NOTICES

### **Update on a Hawkweed seen at the 2014 Field Meeting, Malham.**

Those members who attended the meeting in Malham in June 2014 will remember that our leader, Brian Burrow, gave us an introduction to the hawkweeds of the Yorkshire Dales. Amongst the many that he showed us was a species which was similar to Lance-leaved Hawkweed *Hieracium stictum*. This had been recognised by Vincent Jones as being a separate species, but it hadn't then been named.

In the latest issue of the BSBI's on-line journal, *British and Irish Botany*, the article by D.J. McCosh, D. Barlow, B. Burrow and T.C.G. Rich, describes three new *Hieracium* species from northern England, based on Vince's herbarium specimens. Amongst them is the plant we saw at Malham which has been given the name Lacinate-leaved Hawkweed *H. lacinifolium*. Thanks to Rodney Burton for drawing my attention to this article.

SHEILA WYNN

**Covid-19: Cancellation of AGM and Members' Weekend**  
**4<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020, Margam Field Studies Centre.**

Sadly, it appears unlikely that there will be an end to social distancing in the foreseeable future. Therefore, we have made the decision to cancel this year's AGM and Members' Weekend.

The booking of the Margam Field Studies Centre has been transferred to September 2021.

Members who booked accommodation at Margam have the option of transferring their booking to 2021 or requesting a refund. If you haven't yet been contacted in relation to this, please e-mail Sheila Wynn (wfs.gensec@gmail.com).

There will be an announcement in the Autumn issue of the magazine about the arrangements we will put in place in order to conduct the AGM.

SHEILA WYNN

**Photographic Competition**

With the unfortunate cancellation of this year's AGM, it has been decided to also cancel the annual Photographic Competition. As the organiser of this competition, I feel the main attraction is in the displaying of the printed entries at the meeting, where they are viewed and admired by those present. Let's hope we can look forward to a bumper show next year!

KEN SOUTHALL

**EXOTICS REPORT 2019**

After the last appearance of this report in the Summer 2018 Wild Flower Magazine, readers might have concluded that it had disappeared for good. However, Eric Clement has asked me if I would take it over and having convinced me that it could still serve a useful function, I have agreed to do so with the blessing of Sheila Wynn. I am using my first report simply to introduce myself but it will follow the same format as before, with details of records of non-native taxa not included in Stace's New Flora. In the past this stipulation sometimes meant that when no records were forthcoming from WFS members, there was little or nothing to report. I have decided that I will try to provide some content even when that is the case, be it reports from other sources if necessary, possible future trends, problems that might be encountered with the identification of similar species, my own general observations etc. In other words there will usually be something of interest to keep it going through the lean times, should there happen to be any. Finally I am aware that in taking this on, I will be following in some illustrious footsteps. I will do my best to fill them. I hope the next report will be packed with your exciting finds! Details can be emailed to me (m.berry15100@btinternet.com) or posted (Flat 2, Lascelles Mansions, 8-10 Lascelles Terrace, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN21 4BJ).

MATTHEW BERRY

## BOTANISING IN LOCKDOWN - EXPERIENCES OF SOME OF OUR MEMBERS

### LOCKDOWN LIFT

Walking and wild flowers are something we love but with half a mile or more of residential roads to negotiate before reaching the countryside, our walks in the past have usually taken us a bit further afield. Life is usually very busy too, so walks haven't been that frequent, once or twice a month if we are lucky. This year it's been very different. We've walked from home, walked frequently, at least once a week, often more and so we've been able to watch with excitement the onward march of the seasons - the delight of finding Garlic Mustard *Alliaria petiolata* just about in flower at the end of March, when there was no sign of it in the middle of the month; Sweet Violets *Viola odorata* in profusion then but gone in April; the appearance of the first Bluebells *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* on 8<sup>th</sup> April with Red Campion *Silene dioica* and Germander Speedwell *Veronica chamaedrys*, followed by Bulbous Buttercup *Ranunculus bulbosus*, Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*,

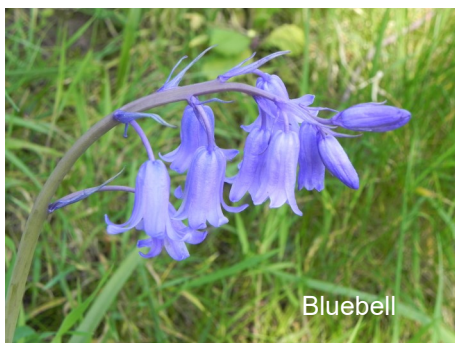
Round-leaved Crane's-bill *Geranium rotundifolium* and Ribwort Plantain *Plantago lanceolata* a week later. Now, at the beginning of May, there are so many flowers, 75 different species on one 5 mile walk, including Yellow Archangel *Lamium galeobdolon* and Goat's-beard *Tragopogon pratensis*, not quite Gone-to-Bed-by-Noon. In addition we've found something new (at least to us) Rue-leaved Saxifrage *Saxifraga tridactylites*, growing on old Pennant Sandstone walls in the residential area. All in all a real Lockdown Lift!

GILL GREEF

I am new to the Society so this is my first Spring recording. I live on the outskirts of Rushden, a former Boot and Shoe town in South Northants. Residential and industrial areas are full of interest; more so than the arable land which skirts the town. I have found several species that are new to me, including Sticky Groundsel *Senecio viscosus*. My most surprising sighting to date was a lone Common Poppy *Papaver rhoeas* flowering on 18<sup>th</sup> April beside a former factory in the Victorian part of town. I am grateful for what I can do in these circumstances, but writing this account has reminded me of my annual pilgrimage to a bluebell wood, which I do miss!

CHRISTINA WHITE

Photo: Gill Greef





## RAINBOW COLOURS

Not being able to venture far for a walk during these unusual times, Richard and I have taken our daily exercise to watch spring arrive. We are fortunate to live on the edge of a small North Wiltshire town where we frequently walk from home to look at restored parts of a disused canal and enjoy the immediate countryside or to walk around the town. Not a botanically rich area except for Wiltshire Wildlife Trust reserves that we would normally visit.

We have many local homes displaying rainbow pictures prepared by families, so we are seeing a great variety of colours and shapes attached to windows, wonderful to see. Although not botanists this has encouraged us to look for wild flowers portraying the colours of the rainbow. This is what we have chosen for April!

The outer colour of the rainbow is **red** and it is not difficult to appreciate the colours of Red Campion *Silene dioica* - maybe really pink? We see lots of colonies on land by the canal providing a splash of colour amongst the green leaves growing under the trees. Our next colour is **orange**, another difficult colour to look for at this time of year but we have found some Bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* about to flower with the outer orange petals. **Yellow** follows and we have no trouble seeing celandines, dandelions, buttercups

and assorted yellow jobs that pop up anywhere including the urban environment. We have however chosen Coltsfoot *Tussilago farfara* as it has been a splendid year for this plant. The canal towpath, having disturbed land, has been hosting many metres of yellow, now, of course, looking different having their chimney sweep brush-like seeds.

**Green** is a bit of a struggle but we are seeing the catkins of the Oak *Quercus robur* and clusters of Field Maple *Acer campestre* flowers. Oaks and Maples are prevalent in North Wiltshire; old hedgerows support many as do the woods. Our **blue** has to be Forget-me-not *Myosotis* spp., found everywhere, pavements and hedgerows and probably originating as garden throw-outs. The colour has been stunning this year whether with single flowers or great colonies. To be followed by **indigo** and we have decided on Bush Vetch *Vicia sepium* by the canal or Bugle *Ajuga reptans*, seen in the wet patches of fields, but you may disagree! Lastly for **violet** it has to be Violets *Viola* but we see few violet violets. Many that are found are under the trees and hedges by the towpath are white.

The colours of the rainbow make white light so to finish there are lots of White Dead-nettle *Lamium album* and Cow Parsley *Anthriscus sylvestris* alongside roads and Hedge Mustard *Alliaria petiolata*. Daisies *Bellis perennis* are everywhere.

JUDY GOSNELL

Photos: Creative Commons

## LOCKDOWN IN VERWOOD, DORSET

How can anyone compensate for the loss of the Isles of Scilly in May, Aviemore in July and what for many would have been the highlight of their year, the untold riches of the New Forest in August, revealed by, er ... Still, there are far worse places than Verwood to be in lockdown.

First there are the mystery arrivals to keep my eyes open for. In a derelict, shale-strewn front 'garden' just round the corner from me, I found Spotted Spurge *Euphorbia maculata* soon after I moved here and I've hoped for something more ever since. Lo and behold this spring a Crown Anemone *Anemone coronaria* pops out of an impossibly small crack by the gatepost! "Don't know where that came from", said the lady living there,

from a suitable distance. "What is it?"

Second, there is a building plot on the corner of my close, where the owner managed to pull down his bungalow, then applied for planning permission to do so, and then ran out of money. Last year Petunia *Petunia x hybrida* and Sweet Tobacco *Nicotiana alata* cropped up on the building's footprint, so each week I trespass past the makeshift barrier to see if anything else might appear. Cuckooflower *Cardamine pratensis* at the bottom of a drainage pit is on offer at the moment.

And finally, I am lucky enough to live within spitting distance of Ringwood Forest. It is very much a working coniferous area, but a whole string of houses along Ringwood Road back onto it. Not only are there plants doing a runner through and under the fences, such as Loganberry *Rubus loganobaccus* and various Bridewort species, including *Spiraea douglasii* and *S. tomentosa*; but also the residents find the forest irresistible as a dumping ground for their garden waste. It goes without saying that normally I abhor fly tipping, but in this instance I show forbearance. A Firethorn *Pyracantha coccinea* did not take last year, even though it landed mangled-roots-down, and a Corsican Hellebore *Helleborus argutifolius* struggled to establish itself before succumbing this year to a mound of privet cuttings. But last week I was rewarded with a newcomer, Kerria *Kerria japonica* in full flower! Not really a triumphant note on which to end this piece, but I'm ending it anyway.

DAVID CAALS

Photo: David Caals





Photo: Elizabeth Hatchelt

## SHARED ON THE WILD FLOWER SOCIETY FACEBOOK PAGE

Lucas Hatchelt  
completes his  
botanically-themed  
jigsaw



One of The Wild Flower Society's  
aims is:

***"to promote a greater knowledge  
of field botany among the general  
public and in particular among  
young people".***

So reasoning that our local council  
would probably not mow the verges  
at peak Cow Parsley flowering time, I  
thought I would copy an idea  
from **Sarah Whild** to put labels near  
our local wild plants.

It's a country lane so chalking  
the name on the pavement  
can't be done but I made little  
laminated labels attached to  
pointed sticks and stuck them  
in the ground near the plants.

Surprisingly, to me anyway,  
they have received a very  
positive response. One lady  
has asked if I can put labels on  
another road now!

PETER LLEWELLYN

(An idea copied by your editor  
and her husband - an excellent  
way to promote botany in your  
local area.)

Photo: Peter Llewellyn



## PET WEEDS

What am I to do for flowers this Spring with no WFS meetings? I will look to the flowers in my garden. The pet weeds have taken advantage and now, before my garden becomes a SSSI, I need to hoe half the Norfolk population of Corn Buttercup *Ranunculus arvensis* and prepare my vegetable plot. As the grass has not been mown, to my great surprise, Cuckooflower *Cardamine pratensis* has taken root, which adds to the *Cardamines* in the back garden, Wavy, Hairy and New Zealand Bittercresses – *C. flexuosa*, *C. hirsuta* and *C. corymbosa*. One of the pet weeds gives colour for most of the year in a succession of self-sown seedlings – Field Marigold *Calendula arvensis*. I collected the seed in Spain but it is now available in packets for winter colour, so we may see more of it straying into the wild. By May Day more of the pet weeds are coming into flower, Borage *Borago officinalis*, Prickly Poppy *Roemeria argemone* (formerly *Papaver argemone*), Shepherd's-needle *Scandix pecten-veneris* and a few scruffy plants of Mousetail *Myosurus minimus*.

STELLA TAYLOR

One of the prettiest little flowers growing wild in our garden is Shining Crane's-bill *Geranium lucidum*. It grows in empty pots, cracks in the paving and some of the more neglected beds. It is a perennial and the leaves were there long before any flowers so earlier in the year we were practicing using a vegetative key to work out what it was. The leaves are glossy and roundish with five lobes and often have a red tinge. The flowers are dark pink and the petals

are not notched. The sepals end in a bristle .

The other flower which always delights me is Mousetail *Myosurus minimus*. Originally I acquired some seeds, probably from the North York Moors Corn Field Project (or Stella Taylor) and they appear every year in a small pot kept in a damp container. They are tiny, only a couple of inches high, and the flowers are a bit like a plantain. They are an annual but obviously the seeds drop into the pot and grow again each year but in this past winter, which was so mild, they were still flowering at Christmas. I would love to see it growing in the wild.

JUDITH COX.



Photo: Peter Cox

Mousetail



## Herb-Paris

### A MOMENT OF JOY

At the very end of April I experienced a moment of simple joy. I came across a plant in the wild which I have known from books for over 20 years, Herb-Paris *Paris quadrifolia*, and, better than that, it was in the woods close to my home. I was so happy to finally see it in the wild that I did a little dance and then took lots of photos before doing another little dance. Yep, that's my reaction to seeing plants in the wild, dancing. Don't worry though, I am very careful not to crush anything else as I have my tiny plant party. Here's a photo of the Herb-Paris, not me dancing, fortunately...

CLARE SAVAGE

### A LOCKDOWN ESCAPE TO A TINY WOOD IN HAMPSHIRE.

On my infrequent walks to the shops in town I have enjoyed seeing the plants which are flourishing unhindered in pavement cracks and at the bases of walls, but I have really longed for trips into the countryside.

A little out of town there is a small copse and I have managed two visits there this spring, the first was on a sunny mid-April morning filled with birdsong. By the entrance Wood Anemones *Anemone nemorosa*, Lesser Celandines *Ficaria verna* and Common Dog-violets *Viola riviniana* covered the banks and further into the wood the sunlight filtered through the trees onto a carpet of native bluebells *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*. Along the path I was delighted to find Solomon's-seal *Polygonatum multiflorum* with its dangling white flowers, starry Greater Stitchwort *Stellaria holostea*, Goldilocks



Photo: Clare Savage

Buttercups *Ranunculus auricomus*, with their imperfect petals, and plenty of Field Wood-rush *Luzula campestris*. As I ventured away from the path there were large patches of Herb-Paris *Paris quadrifolia* holding spindly yellow-green flowers aloft and, nearby, Woodruff *Galium odoratum* and Sanicle *Sanicula europaea* were starting to flower.

My second visit was in early May when I found that the bluebells were being overtaken by Ramsons *Allium ursinum* showing clusters of white flowers, Yellow Archangel *Lamium galeobdolon* was thriving and pale lilac-blue flowers of Wood Speedwell *Veronica montana* lined the path. Deeper into the wood I discovered Early-purple Orchids *Orchis mascula* and the delicate flowers of Pignut *Conopodium majus* with its feathery leaves.

This little gem of a copse, full of beautiful ancient woodland indicator species, has lifted my spirits during recent botanically deprived weeks and has made me anticipate many more flower filled outings when lockdown restrictions are lifted.

JILL OAKLEY

### SIMPLE SIMON'S SIMPLE SUDOKU

'Simple Simon' has spent some time in lockdown to come up with the following challenge for you. If you are not familiar with Sudoku, each of the 9 blocks must contain all 9 words but each word may only appear in a row, column or box once. Answer on page 56

	LEAF		BUD			LIP		ROOT
NODE						LEAF		
			SPUR					
				NODE			SPUR	OVARY
	LIP			PETAL				
							BUD	
SPUR		LIP	OVARY					
						STEM		

**Can you name the British wild flower?** e.g. Shabby bird = Ragged Robin

- |                             |                              |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1) Edge fastener            | 2) Hurry safely              |
| 3) A fashionable beast      | 4) Sounds restful            |
| 5) Pyrotechnic              | 6) Empty garage              |
| 7) Confusion over a rich do | 8) A feathered rogue's drink |
| 9) Regret in a field        | 10) A good dinner            |

Answers on page 37

### MY 1KM SQUARE

In late 2019 I moved to Petersfield and joined the Wild Flower Society. I would describe myself as a botanical enthusiast who is keen to learn and get to know the plants on my patch. I had already met another WFS member who kindly provided me with some expanded OS street maps of the local area and suggested that I might like to undertake one or two monad surveys. I started with SU 7524 at the beginning of April. With encouragement and support from two local botanists and the VC12 County Recorder, Tony Mundell, this has provided the perfect excuse for exploring the area on my doorstep in detail while using some of my exercise allowance!

Of course, most of the 90+ species recorded during April are common but it has been rewarding to find Soft Shield-fern *Polystichum setiferum* and Summer Snowflake *Leucojum aestivum*. The discovery of a good group of Yellow Monkswort *Nonea lutea* plants was particularly exciting. Equally important has been the discipline of looking carefully at grasses and becoming more familiar with the small white species within the Brassicaceae and Caryophyllaceae families.

DUNCAN WRIGHT

### NOTES FROM MY DIARY

12<sup>th</sup> April - Walk with Max, the dog. I was surprised to see Bird Cherry *Prunus padus* in flower – it usually flowers in May. Here they were introduced but are regenerating with lots of young saplings. A splendid Oxford Ragwort *Senecio squalidus*



Photo: Dennis Kell

and, on the bank, the first Atlas Poppy *Papaver atlanticum* in flower.

14<sup>th</sup> April - Walk with Max. On a bare looking piece of waste ground I found Cuckooflower *Cardamine pratensis* in flower. This was quite a surprise, as was the American Bittercress *Barbarea verna*. Also growing here was Toothed Medick *Medicago polymorpha*. Further on were Eastern Rocket *Sisymbrium orientale* and Slender Speedwell *Veronica filiformis* on the verge - a pleasant walk with a few interesting plants.

15<sup>th</sup> April - Walk with Max. Today I decided to start a plant hunt in a 1km square (SE1635) near my house in Bradford. On a path behind some houses I found a very small Tulip *Tulipa humilis* 'Little Beauty' new to my square. Another unusual find was Hedge Barberry *Berberis x stenophylla* self-sown on the cobbles. 110 taxa for the hunt – not a bad start!

JESSE TREGALE

By the end of May Jesse's total for SE1635 was 291 and he has started a second square SE1634 with a current total of 260. It's good to see that the lockdown has spurred many of you into investigating your own patch and starting a local 1km square study. On the next page are the results of last year's study.

## 1KM SQUARE STUDY 2019

Name	Branch	Monad	Location	Total
Jose Gibbs	A	TR4069	North Foreland, Kent	50
Graeme Kay	N3	SJ9884	Stockport, Cheshire	202
Pat Parker	T	SZ0290	Poole, Dorset	27
Jackie Ellis	U	SO9783	Halesowen, West Midlands	285
Judith Lee	U	SK2956	Cromford, Derbyshire	142
Sian Matthews	U	SK5736	West Bridgford, Nottingham	281
Richard Pykett	U	SK5742	Sherwood, Nottingham	135
Mary and Claire Smith	U	SK3548	Belper, Derbyshire	236
Anne and Dennis Kell	Y	TM1141	Copdock, Suffolk	226
Anne and Dennis Kell	Y	TM1139	Belstead, Suffolk	143
Elizabeth Day and Pat Toshach	Y	TM2648	Woodbridge, Suffolk	104

In addition to her main cumulative Diary, Jose started a 1km study of the coastal monad TR4069 at North Foreland, the most easterly part of Kent. This square is mostly sea and extends less than 200m inland; it has no public roads but enjoys a strip of good cliff-top grassland on chalk. Even with these limitations she found 50 different plants, including Pyramidal Orchid *Anacamptis pyramidalis*, Greater Knapweed *Centaurea scabiosa* and Lizard Orchid *Himantoglossum hircinum*. Several species were not previously on the county database for this monad and so have now been added.

GEOFFREY KITCHENER

Graeme's choice is an area in Higher Poynton namely Jackson's Brickworks Local N.R. This monad includes part of the Middlewood Way, a disused railway line, and the canal. The brickworks are a special place, reclaimed by nature after its industrial times, offering wetland,

grassland and woodland. It is a rich area as Graeme's total has proved. His particular favourites are Bee Orchid *Ophrys apifera*, Broad-leaved Helleborine *Epipactis helleborine* and Water-violet *Hottonia palustris*. Both Tufted Hair-grasses *Deschampsia cespitosa* ssp. *cespitosa* and *D. cespitosa* ssp. *parviflora* were spotted, the latter being a plant of woodland with the smaller spikelet. Graeme's keen eye spotted the variety of Smooth Hawk's-beard *Crepis capillaris* var. *glandulosa*, which has dense, blackish, glandular hairs on the involucre. This variety was described in the earlier Clapham, Tutin and Warburg's *Flora of the British Isles*. Two garden escapes were found on the Middlewood Way, namely Montbretia *Crocasmia x crocosmiiflora* and Fringecups *Tellima grandiflora*. This is an interesting exercise to take on so I hope to receive more 1km lists this year.

JULIE CLARKE

Pat has started a 1km Square Study, which she has found very interesting and produced a nice initial list, with Star-of-Bethlehem *Ornithogalum umbellatum* ssp. *campestre* the stand-out record. A rewilding exercise is taking place in her square this year, restricting her access, but although this may be a little frustrating, I am sure it will be very interesting to see how the flora responds over the coming years.

#### TIM PURCHES

Members of Branch U enjoyed working on a local monad and were amazed by the numbers achieved. An additional bonus was that we all found something new for our main Diary. Having time to appreciate subtle differences between look-alike plants such as Pearlworts *Sagina* spp. paid off for some, while revisiting the monad regularly picked up more species throughout the season for others. Despite everyone living in a fairly urban environment each of us had a habitat the others didn't which gave each recorder at least one unique find.

Jackie has well-established wet areas supporting a variety of sedges, including Prickly Sedge *Carex muricata* and Pale Sedge *C. pallescens*. A natural stream, overhung by vegetation, sheltered Large Bitter-cress *Cardamine amara*. Jackie has long wanted to find this and there it was, so close to home.

Judith was the only one with calcareous grassland in her monad which gave her the prettiest plants with Small Scabious *Scabiosa*

*columbaria* and Common Rock-rose *Helianthemum nummularium*.

The most varied habitat was Sian's whose monad contains modern housing, sports facilities and the Council offices. The council seem much given to various landscaping projects, including urban meadows. Between these and the various private sector developers the land is frequently turned over and the opportunist weeds take advantage of this. One of these is Flixweed *Descurainia sophia*, originally seen only in the city centre.

Richard recorded in a more built-up part of the city., but he was the only one to record Rue-leaved Saxifrage *Saxifraga tridactylites*, which thrives on the old drystone walls of the area.

Our own distinct habitat is a tract of dry, slightly acidic woodland from which we contributed Wavy Hair-grass *Avenella flexuosa* (formerly *Deschampsia flexuosa*).

#### MARY AND CLAIRE SMITH

Elizabeth and Pat couldn't make it to any of the local WFS meetings in 2019 with Elizabeth being kept busy elsewhere and Pat sustaining an injury to her arm. However, they did manage between themselves to start the new initiative that the WFS is instigating by looking at local monads. They both live in Woodbridge and so adopted a square there which takes in the southern half of the town, which includes suburban estates, a bit of woodland and a cemetery. They





intend to start again in January 2020 and would love to make a larger list. I hope that they add many more to this collection which so far includes the common enough encountered, so-called, weeds, but with a few garden escapes such as Garden Strawberry *Fragaria x ananassa*, Garden Grape-hyacinth *Muscari armeniacum*, Lamb's-ear *Stachys byzantina* and the more unusual, Drooping Star-of-Bethlehem *Ornithogalum nutans*.

Anne and Dennis have also adopted the monad scheme and have surveyed two areas near their home in Copdock, just south of Ipswich in Suffolk. One monad is largely rural but just takes in the edge of the village and its allotments to grab a couple of the usual suspects Shaggy-soldier *Galinsoga quadriradiata* and Gallant-soldier *G. parviflora*, told apart from one another by their receptacular scales, but even that can be fiddly! The agricultural area is mainly pasture for sheep and horses and afforded hedgerow shrubs and trees to include English Oak *Quercus robur* and Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*. Unfortunately the square doesn't possess any woodland or water bodies. They were very

pleased, as am I, to have a total of 226 species, but realise that some species have been missed including some sedges and grasses.

Their second square is nearby Brockley Wood which they are also monitoring for Plantlife with their National Plant Monitoring Scheme. About a third of the square is a wood which is beautiful in the Spring with swathes of Bluebells *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*. The wood also has a small pond but is otherwise surrounded by an agricultural desert of private land which hints that the field margins might be botanically poor. They visited between June and August and recorded 143 species. They had Soft-brome *Bromus hordeaceus* which they missed in their other square, although this is a lovely woodland grass, along with my favourite, Wood Melick *Melica uniflora*. Ferns were the typical Broad Buckler-fern *Dryopteris dilatata* and Narrow Buckler-fern *D. carthusiana*. The pond had Water-plantain *Alisma plantago-aquatica* and an undetermined Water-starwort, a *Callitriche* species. Good luck for 2020.

STEPHEN CLARKSON

## BRANCH REPORTS FOR 2019

### JUNIORS

Alice Coutts	205
Rachel Coutts	174
Carolina Dent	35
Anais Harvey	79
Reuben White	245

This year I received five junior diaries. Alice and Rachel continued to find lots of lovely plants around their Shetland home. A summer holiday trip to South-West England also produced many new finds. Some of these would be very familiar to any southern botanist, like Foxglove *Digitalis purpurea*, Teasel *Dipsacus fullonum* and Common Mallow *Malva sylvestris* and a new find of Sun Spurge *Eurphorbia peplus* for Rachel, but there were also some less common plants like Pyramidal Orchid *Anacamptis pyramidalis* and Corn Spurrey *Spergula arvensis*. New finds closer to home included three new grasses Creeping Bent *Agrostis capillaris*, Yorkshire Fog *Holcus lanatus* and Purple Moor-grass *Molinia caerulea*, as well as Grass-of-Parnassus *Parnassia palustris* (which despite the name is not a grass at all) for Alice.

Carolina's first Diary showed a very different set of plants, showing that urban botany in London can produce an interesting selection of lawn and pavement plants. There were some garden-escape species such as Yellow Corydalis *Pseudofumaria lutea* and Pink *Dianthus plumarius*. She saw Lady's Bedstraw *Galium verum* and Long-headed Poppy

*Papaver dubium* on a trip to Cambridge and Water Forget-me-not *Myosotis scorpioides* and Devil's-bit Scabious *Succisa pratensis* when visiting Winchester.

Anais's second Diary again included many woodland plants close to home, such as Wood Anemone *Anemone nemorosa*, Wood Sorrel *Oxalis acetosella* and Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* plus a new find of Bugle *Ajuga reptans*. She visited the Emer Bog nature reserve, finding Marsh Marigold *Caltha palustris* and Marsh Lousewort *Pedicularis palustris*. She also found Thrift *Armeria maritima*, Sea Campion *Silene uniflora* and Yellow Horned-poppy *Glaucium flavum* on a trip to the beach.

Reuben had visited a lot of Wildlife Trust reserves around Yorkshire. He saw Lesser Water-parsnip *Berula erecta* at Askham Bog, Clustered Bellflower *Campanula glomerata* at Wharrah Quarry, Betony *Betonica officinalis* at Brockadale and Hare's-foot Clover *Trifolium arvense* at Potteric Carr. He also visited some contrasting habitats in Wales: on one day, he saw both Mountain Pansy *Viola lutea* and Mountain Sorrel *Oxyria digyna* up in the mountains

and Alexanders *Smyrniium olusatrum* and Sand Spurrey *Spergularia rubra* down on the beach. However, he also recorded plants at home, and found Green-winged Orchid *Anacamptis morio* in a field close by.

As always, I would be very happy to receive letters, pictures or e-mails, especially this year when you may

not be able to go out finding plants to fill in a Diary. Maybe you could draw or paint your favourite plants from previous years instead or write about a place that you would like to visit and the plants you are looking forward to seeing once you can travel again.

NICHOLA HAWKINS

## BRANCH A, KENT

Annual	New	Total
Devina Ellis		174
Claire Horder		503
<b>Cumulative</b>		
Jill Albery	106	297
José Gibbs	48	383
Pam Smith	34	359
<b>Cumulative - Valhalla</b>		
Doug Grant	11	1887
Susan Pittman	2	1254
Sue Poyser	16	1924

Devina produced a first Diary with a good range of plants from Milton Creek Country Park, Sittingbourne, including Chicory *Cichorium intybus*, noted as vivid blue, and Sainfoin *Onobrychis viciifolia*, both of these being county rare plant register species. Habitats visited included neutral grassland, Marden Meadow, with its well-known display of Green-winged Orchid *Anacamptis morio*; Hucking for woodland; and Rye Harbour reserve, with coastal plants such as Yellow Horned-poppy *Glaucium flavum*. The Diary covered the period since she joined, in 2018, with the two seasons reported together.

Claire's meticulous first Diary shows much botanical expertise, as well as attendance at Kent Field Club and Kent Botanical Recording Group meetings, but her best finds were her own. What gave most pleasure was the colony of Autumn Lady's-tresses *Spiranthes spiralis* on her own lawn; but her most important discovery was probably a new site for Bedstraw Broomrape *Orobanchaceae caryophyllacea*, which, as a native plant, is restricted to a few locations in coastal East Kent. Claire found the Broomrape on Samphire Hoe, the promontory of new land created by the deposit of Channel Tunnel spoil and completed in 1994. So here is evidence of its ability to colonise, as

well as the adoption of an undercliff habitat known to Victorians, but otherwise lost, either through being washed out to sea or replaced by concrete sea defences. Other interesting plants recorded were Swiss Chard *Beta vulgaris* ssp. *cicla* var. *flavescens* as an escape at Uplees/Oare and, at the edge of a cornfield at Chestfield, Corn Parsley *Sison segetum* (formerly *Petroselinum*). Claire has been very thorough with conversion of names to Stace 4.

Jill noted 106 new sightings in 2019, mostly in Kent, Cornwall and Leicestershire and made inroads into grasses, sedges and rushes, with Hairy-brome *Bromopsis ramosa*, Sand Couch *Elymus junceiformis* (formerly *Elytrigia juncea*) and Plicate Sweet-grass *Glyceria notata* recorded respectively from these three counties. An outstanding display of Borage *Borago officinalis*, sheltering a Pyramidal Orchid *Anacamptis pyramidalis*, appeared on the road verge near her house after she persuaded neighbours to relax their strimming regime.

For her main Diary, José added plants such as Larkspur *Consolida ajacis* on the beach at Kingsgate Bay and a range of brackish habitat species from a Kent Botanical Recording Group meeting at Elmley on the Isle of Sheppey. The meeting provided some botanical highlights, despite being truncated by rain bearing down in the afternoon across the open marshes and there were three Goosefoot species, all of which have now transferred from *Chenopodium* to *Oxybasis*, viz. Oak-leaved Goosefoot *O. glauca*, Red

Goosefoot *O. rubra* and, the somewhat similar, Saltmarsh Goosefoot *O. chenopodioides*.

A listing of new records from Pam covers plants from Kent, Sussex, Hampshire, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Tresco is the best place for the escaped South African species Blue Corn-lily *Aristea ecklonii* and indeed, one could construct an A to Z of exotics there, Pam finishing her list with Altar-lily *Zantedeschia aethiopica*. Climate also presumably encouraged the appearance of Maidenhair Fern *Adiantum capillus-veneris* seen by her at Penzance, where there was also Maidenhair Spleenwort *Asplenium trichomanes*; despite the similarity of English names, these are unrelated, in the Ribbon Fern and Spleenwort families respectively.

Doug's new sightings benefited from the Society's Oxford AGM, but he also noted seedlings of Greater Honeywort *Cerinthe major* and Passionflower *Passiflora caerulea* from Rochester alleys. Cornelian-cherry *Cornus mas* was added from the banks of the River Medway, a tree whose name emphasises the fruit, although it generally seems shy-fruited and so this find of seedlings was uncommon evidence of an ability to naturalise; most records of this tree are more equivocal in status.

Susan joined a BSBI/Kent Botanical Recording Group meeting at Hothfield Common where she was able to see Three-lobed Crowfoot *Ranunculus tripartitus* in a standing pool and the hybrid between Heath Spotted-orchid and Southern Marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza x hallii*.

Sue's list bears much in common with Doug Grant's, both having attended the Oxford AGM, but she also has the cross between Maidenhair Spleenwort and Wall-rue *Asplenium x clermontiae* from its recently discovered Buckinghamshire site, only the third or fourth occurrence of this fern in the British Isles. She was delighted to come across the blue flowers of Blue Lawn-lobelia *Pratia pedunculata* which had spread through the lawns at Bourton-on-the-Water Model Village. Given that the village is at one-ninth scale, the *Pratia* must presumably be the equivalent of something like *Hibiscus* flowers coming out of the ground. A Kent Botanical Recording Group meeting gave her Elongated Sedge

*Carex elongata* near Bethersden, growing in the middle of a pond. This sedge does not feature much in diaries, partly because of its general scarcity and partly because it is often growing out of reach.

I dare say we shall look back on 2019 with its care-free and fruitful botanising as a major contrast with 2020 which, at the time of writing this report, offered a succession of cancelled meetings and limited opportunities of getting out, other than exercise within pedestrian reach of home: maybe the time for more 1km square studies. Good health to all.

GEOFFREY KITCHENER

## BRANCH M HAMPSHIRE, ISLE OF WIGHT, CHANNEL ISLANDS, SURREY, SUSSEX

Annual	New	Total
Helen Dignum		575
Sarah MacLennan		459
<b>Cumulative – Valhalla</b>		
Nick Aston	6	1511
Janet Blizzard	42	928
Janet Cullen	2	1312
Pippa Hyde	1	1676
Jill Smith	2	1132

Thank you to all who sent Diaries. I enjoyed looking through them. It is always interesting to see any unusual plants recorded.

Helen sent another good list this year making the most of WFS and Sussex

and Hampshire Flora groups' trips. Her best find was Narrow-leaved Helleborine *Cephalanthera longifolia* at Singleton. She also found London Plane *Platanus x hispanica*, Harpur-Crewe's Leopard's-bane *Doronicum x excelsum* and Greater Quaking-grass





Greater Honeywort

*Briza maxima*. Other unusual species were Orange Foxtail *Alopecurus aequalis* and the beautiful Coral-necklace *Illecebrum verticillatum*. In Eastbourne she recorded Spotted Spurge *Euphorbia maculata*, Reversed Clover *Trifolium resupinatum* and Yellow-vetch *Vicia lutea*.

Sarah's Beginner's Diary was impressive. She found most of the common plants and also less common ones, such as Wall Bedstraw *Galium parisiense* and White Mignonette *Reseda alba*, plus the very tactile Milk Thistle *Silybum marianum*. I look forward to a main Diary next year.

Nick Aston (formerly Rumens) recorded Norfolk Everlasting-pea *Lathyrus heterophyllus* and, further south, Spiked Rampion *Phyteuma spicatum* in Sussex and Lady Orchid *Orchis purpurea* in Kent. His most unusual find was Greater Honeywort *Cerinthe major*.

Janet Blizzard's records came from a visit to Jersey where she saw Loose-flowered Orchid *Anacamptis laxiflora*, Jersey Fern *Anogramma leptophylla*, Jersey Thrift *Armeria arenaria*, Rough Star-thistle *Centaurea aspera* and, a new invader, Indian Dropseed, *Sporobolus indicus*.

Janet Cullen, unfortunately, cannot get out as much as she would like but did find Japanese Anemone *Anemone x hybrida* and Rough Hawk's-beard *Crepis biennis*.

Pippa recorded Dusky Crane's-bill *Geranium phaeum*, an attractive garden escape.

Jill Smith can't get around a lot but she enjoyed her yearly break at Eastbourne where she found Spanish Daffodil *Narcissus hispanicus* and Pale St John's-wort *Hypericum montanum*.

GARETH BURSNALL

Photo: Anne Kell

## BRANCH N1 YORKSHIRE, CLEVELAND, HUMBERSIDE

Annual	New	Total
Kerry Morrison		549
Carol Wilson		455
<b>Cumulative - Valhalla</b>		
Anthony & Rita Grainger	35	1689
Carmen Horner	58	1787
Mary Sorsby	149	747

Kerry has had an extremely busy year visiting many different areas. She is a member of Harrogate and District Naturalists who had an interesting programme of field trips, which included Askham Bog, where she saw many different sedges and ferns including Elongated Sedge *Carex elongata* and Marsh Fern *Thelypteris palustris*. A visit to the South Gare brought her many new plants which included Purple Milk-vetch *Astragalus danicus*, Sand Couch *Elymus junceaformis* (formerly *Elytrigia juncea*) and Sea Wormwood *Artemisia maritima*. She also saw the Wild Tulip *Tulipa sylvestris* at Cattal and Thistle Broomrape *Orobancha reticulata* near Ripon, both in North Yorkshire.

Carol has been to a lot of new and interesting places this year and has added many more species to her list. She attended part of the BSBI Summer Meeting in the Malham area and so was able to see some of the rarities growing there which included Baneberry *Actaea spicata*, Broad-leaved Cottongrass *Eriophorum latifolium*, Dwarf Milkwort *Polygala amarella* and several lady's-mantles, including Silky Lady's-mantle

*Alchemilla glaucescens* and Silver Lady's-mantle *A. conjuncta*. She was pleased to see Marsh Helleborine *Epipactis palustris* and Dropwort *Filipendula vulgaris* on her travels and saw Fly Orchid *Ophrys insectifera* for the first time. Carol has a good knowledge of her local area on the North Yorkshire Moors and has just had a book published on the Flora of Westerdale.

Photo: Carol Wilson



Dropwort

Anthony and Rita saw many of their new plants on the Bradford Botany field meetings. One of these also went to the Malham area but they concentrated on polypodies and were pleased to see hybrids between

Polypody and Southern Polypody *Polypodium x font-queri*, Polypody and Intermediate Polypody *P. x mantoniae* and Intermediate and Southern Polypody *P. x shivasiae*. They were fortunate to have an expert with them which made up for the very wet day. Nearer home they were pleased to find for themselves Motherwort *Leonurus cardiaca* at Rodney Nature Reserve in Leeds but the highlight of their year was the Burnt Orchids *Neotinea ustulata* (formerly *Orchis ustulata*) at Leyburn Old Glebe in North Yorkshire.

The highlight of Carmen's year was a visit to Scotland with the aim of seeing Diapensia *Diapensia lapponica* which only grows on one hill north west of Fort William and, despite the rain, she found it. She also managed to see Rock Cinquefoil *Potentilla rupestris*, another extremely rare plant. On another visit she joined the British Pteridological Society on their visit to the Cairngorms where the highlights included Nordic Moonwort *Botrychium nordicum*, which is a newly recognised species for Britain, and Pinewood Bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* ssp. *latiusculum*. Closer to home on an old railway path in Otley she found Fortune's Holly-fern *Cyrtomium fortunei*, Honeybells *Nothoscordum borbonicum* and Henry's Honeysuckle *Lonicera henryi*. An interesting year's botanising.

Mary has had an interesting year visiting lots of lovely areas with the WFS, HF Holidays and Naturetrek. The Naturetrek meeting in Upper Teesdale included the Widdybank

Farm area so she saw the alpine flora there including Alpine Bartsia *Bartsia alpina*, Alpine Bistort *Bistorta vivipara* (formerly *Persicaria vivipara*) and Scottish Asphodel *Tofieldia pusilla*, near Cow Green Reservoir. Beech Fern *Phegopteris connectilis* and Parsley Fern *Cryptogramma crispera* were both seen on Cronkley Fell. The WFS trip to Sussex brought more new finds like Greater Yellow-rattle *Rhinanthus angustifolius*, Spiked Rampion *Phyteuma spicatum* and Red Star-thistle *Centaurea calcitrapa*. An interesting find on the Ashberry Pasture field meeting on the road above the reserve were Baneberry, *Actaea spicata* and a lovely stand of Lily-of-the-valley *Convallaria majalis*. Mary's best find of the year was White Helleborine *Cephalanthera damasonium* which she found herself in woodland in the Cotswolds in May.

JUDITH COX



Photo: Peter Llewellyn

## BRANCH N2 NORTHUMBERLAND, CUMBRIA, TYNE AND WEAR, DURHAM

Annual	New	Total
Elizabeth Elliott		343
<b>Cumulative - Valhalla</b>		
Richard Friend	73	707
Kevin Storey	1	241

One of the highlights for Elizabeth was a trip with Judith Cox to Ashberry Pasture near Helmsley. This is a site which Elizabeth has known well for a long time and tries to visit each summer. 'It was a treat to go with Judith and other experts. We were shown Green Hellebore *Helleborus viridis* plants (no longer flowering) and Stone Bramble *Rubus saxatilis* in bloom before setting off into the reserve. The grasses, rushes and sedges were in abundance with Early Marsh-orchids *Dactylorhiza incarnata* flowering along with Northern Marsh-orchids *Dactylorhiza purpurella* and probably hybrids of the two species. Bird's-eye Primrose *Primula farinosa*, Marsh Lousewort *Pedicularis palustris* and Common Butterwort *Pinguicula vulgaris* were found in a particularly damp spot. Close to the woodland there was a stand of beautiful Globeflowers *Trollius europaeus* in bloom. Unfortunately heavy rain started to fall as we were about to stop for our lunch and the expedition had to be abandoned.'

In July, in the quarry at Bowlees, Elizabeth saw Twayblades *Neottia ovata* and several other species of orchid, including Greater Butterfly-orchid *Platanthera chlorantha*.

Crossing over the winch bridge and south along the bank of the River Tees, Shrubby Cinquefoil *Dasiphora fruticosa* (formerly *Potentilla fruticosa*), Devil's-bit Scabious *Succisa pratensis* and Goldenrod *Solidago virgaurea* were all in flower.

The highlights for Richard in 2019 included:-  
Roudsea Woods NNR. An annual pilgrimage to Cumbria to see sedge and rain deity Mike Porter. He recorded at least 30 sedges including Large Yellow-sedge *Carex flava* and Fingered Sedge *C. digitata* and Marsh Fern *Thelypteris palustris*, plus the usual thorough soaking.  
A long weekend with the BSBI at Malham Tarn. New for his Diary were Hairy Rock-cress *Arabis hirsuta* and Limestone Fern *Gymnocarpium robertianum*.

A great trip to the top of Mickie Fell to record some squares and see one of the few UK sites for Alpine Forget-me-not *Myosotis alpestris*, thanks to Lynda Robinson.

If you haven't been to Creag Meagaidh NNR, in Scotland you are missing out. To quote the blurb 'Creag Meagaidh feels like the Highlands compressed into one reserve'. The dramatic scenery here

includes Munro summits, an exposed whaleback ridge and ice-carved gullies. Here Richard saw Alpine Mouse-ear *Cerastium alpinum*, Dwarf Cornel *Cornus suecica*, Moss Campion *Silene acaulis* and much more. Serrated Wintergreen *Orthilia secunda* was a first for him at nearby Glen Affric NNR. Some days on the BSBI Scottish recording week included much walking and Interrupted Clubmoss *Lycopodium annotinum*, Mountain Melick *Melica nutans* and Wood Fescue *Drymochloa sylvatica* (formerly *Festuca altissima*). He was shown Coralroot Orchid *Corallorhiza trifida* at Northumbria

Natural History Society's Gosforth Park reserve. Rare in England he nearly tripped over one a couple of weeks later at Loch Tarff, near Loch Ness.

One interesting addition in 2019 for Kevin, Sweet Violet *Viola odorata*, found on a grassy bank side on a disused railway line. Actually Kevin was delighted to notice this plant as it is one he remembers from many years back in another location that went unrecorded. So Sweet Violet was something he did want to see again, just a single plant but good enough for the record.

LIZZIE MADDISON

## BRANCH N3 MERSEYSIDE, LANCASHIRE, CHESHIRE, GREATER MANCHESTER, NORTH WALES

Annual	New	Total
Owen and Carol Fawcett	687	687
<b>Cumulative - Valhalla</b>		
Barbara Allen	23	1304
Susan Bowden	29	952
Pauline Grimshaw	31	1410
Bob Hodgkinson	3	223
David Morgan	244	752
Ted Phenna	93	2011
Jean Richardson	81	596
Sue Riley	30	1124
Dorothy Ross	13	957
Carol Winder		546



The Spring Hunt started our meetings for the year. We met at the Visitors' Centre in the Sankey Valley, near St. Helens. Two days before the temperature had been in the late teens so it was a bit of a shock on the Saturday morning to find it only 8°C. Well wrapped up we set off noting Snowdrops *Galanthus nivalis*, along with the blossom of Cherry Plum *Prunus cerasifera* and Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*. Through woodland along the Sankey Brook we spotted, among other plants, Opposite-leaved Golden-saxifrage *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium* and Barren Strawberry *Potentilla sterilis*, before reaching the dam where we saw Great Crested Grebe displaying for us. Back down to the car park where we ventured by the side of the canal to find a lovely clump of Sweet Violet *Viola odorata*.

This is Owen and Carol's first recording list. They have attended many meetings held by the Fylde Naturalists' Society, Lancashire Wildlife Trust and, of course, the WFS. This is the way to get to know your plants and with a recording list near to 700 they are certainly doing that. In the Fleetwood area they found Sea Fern-grass *Catapodium marinum* and Field Eryngo *Eryngium campestre*, the latter near the Pier and an escape from the gardens. They joined the Warton Crag meeting where we saw Thyme-leaved Sandwort *Arenaria serpyllifolia* and, on the moss at Whinmarleigh, Labrador-tea *Rhododendron groenlandicum* was seen with the Lancashire Wildlife Trust.

Barbara sent me a lovely picture of Early Spider-orchid *Ophrys sphegodes* taken at Samphire Hoe



Early Spider-orchid

Photo: Barbara Allen

where she also recorded Chalk Milkwort *Polygala calcarea*. Very early in 2018 she kindly took Marion Chappell and me to see Compact Grape-hyacinth *Muscari botryoides* at Red Rocks on the Wirral and, would you believe it, never put it down in 2018, so here it is on her 2019 list. Later in the season our meeting at St. Aidan's Nature Park gave her Great Soft-rush *Juncus pallidus*. This is native in Australia – how did it get to West Yorkshire?

Susan spent a holiday in Ireland and was able to join the BSBI recording meeting at Connemara and was glad to be shown Pipewort *Eriocaulon aquaticum* and St. Dabeoc's Heath *Daboecia cantabrica*. Walking alone in Killarney she was pleased to see Wild Madder *Rubia peregrina* without other botanists' help in pointing the plants out. She also attended the WFS meeting in Devon and comments 'nice treats and good company'. She says Branton Burrows was an interesting comparison to the Sefton dunes, an area with which she is familiar;

[Continued on page 33]



















Sand Toadflax *Linaria arenaria* and Round-headed Clubrush *Scirpoides holoschoenus* being highlights.

Pauline has submitted three years' recordings so I will extract specials from each year. 2017 gave her two good grasses, namely Wood Barley *Hordelymus europaeus* and Wood Fescue *Drymochloa sylvatica* (formerly *Festuca altissima*) found in their well known site by the River Etherow, Compstall. Another nice find was Western Sword-fern *Polystichum munitum* seen on a meeting at Scutcher's Acres, Burscough, Liverpool. In 2018 on a visit to Seata Quarry in Wensleydale she recorded Round-leaved St. John's-wort *Hypericum nummularium* and Spiky Fescue *Festuca gautieri*. Finally, in 2019 her three good finds were Large-leaved Avens *Geum macrophyllum*, Mountain Currant *Ribes alpinum*, which she says took some time to work out, and Limestone Woundwort *Stachys alpina*, seen at Coed Cilygroeslwyd Ruthin.

Bob tells me mobility is getting to be a problem now but he is still able to litter pick on the flat, a very worthwhile job. A surprise plant for him was Square-stalked Willowherb *Epilobium tetragonum* which had appeared in his planter and Black Medick *Medicago lupulina*, with its black fruits, was easy to recognise.

I received David's list early as he was off on a 3-month trip to Australia. He has increased his score considerably as a result of attending meetings and helping with the Cheshire Atlas 2020. His personal favourites are Green-winged Orchid *Anacamptis morio* and

Adder's-tongue *Ophioglossum vulgatum* from Bernwood Meadows, a BBOWT Nature Reserve; Heath Spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza maculata* and Round-leaved Sundew *Drosera rotundifolia* from Crowden, Derbyshire and the huge Great Lettuce *Lactuca virosa* from St Aidan's in West Yorkshire.

Ted will be leaving the Branch during 2020 for Parnassus as his score is now over 2000. He has been going through his old notebooks and to his surprise has found some plants he had not added to his Valhalla list. A couple of these are Pillwort *Pilularia globulifera*, seen on Skipwith Common, N. Yorks and verified by Mrs E. Bray and Slender Cottongrass *Eriophorum gracile* seen at Tudweiliog, Llyn and verified by Miss A. Connolly. More recent finds are the eastern subspecies of Spiked Speedwell *Veronica spicata* ssp. *spicata* seen at Weeting Heath, Norfolk and Fodder Vetch *Vicia villosa* on a roadside at Aberffraw verified by Wendy McCarthy.

Photo: Peter Llewellyn





Jean has enjoyed discovering the plants with the disparaging name of 'arable weeds', so on trips to the Manchester Mosses she was successful in finding Large-flowered Hemp-nettle *Galeopsis speciosa* and Common Fumitory *Fumaria officinalis* on the Ormskirk arables. Labrador Bay in South Devon gave her Weasel's-snout *Misopates orontium* and Henbit Dead-nettle *Lamium amplexicaule*.

Sue attended the AGM at Oxford and has recorded some gems including Downy Woundwort *Stachys germanica* and both Chiltern and Autumn Gentians *Gentianella germanica* and *G. amarella* respectively. Further south in Sussex on a cliff edge at Seaford – not too near I hope - she spotted Henbane *Hyoscyamus niger* and, at High and Over, White Horehound *Marrubium vulgare*. Nearer home on the Ainsdale dunes was Rose Campion *Silene coronaria*.

Dorothy, during a visit to Dorset, spotted Eastern Gladiolus *Gladiolus communis* on the roadside at Lulworth Cove. Joining us on the Autumn Hunt she recorded Hungarian Brome *Bromopsis inermis* (formerly *Bromus inermis* and Jersey Thrift *Armeria arenaria*. She also joined the Silverdale meeting where we all saw a magnificent display of Autumn Lady's-tresses *Spiranthes spiralis* at Jack Scout.

The year ended with our Autumn Hunt. This took place at Ainsdale. After parking by Shoreside School we took time to look on the short grass where we found Lesser Hawkbit *Leontodon saxatilis*, identified by the

forked hairs on the leaves, and Black Nightshade *Solanum nigrum*. A short walk took us to the pathway leading to Falkland's Way, part of the dune system, then to Shore Road but before reaching there we recorded Field Pansy *Viola arvensis*. Later we reached Pontin's Holiday Camp where there was an array of *Erigeron* (formerly *Conyza*). We certainly identified Canadian Fleabane *E. canadensis* but I have just recently had Bilbao's Fleabane *E. floribundus* from there confirmed. Well satisfied with our finds we made our way back to the cars.

The Snowdrops are out so spring is on the way. I wish you all a happy hunting season and look forward to learning of your finds.

JULIE CLARKE



Jersey Thrift

Photo: Peter Llewellyn

## BRANCH O BEDFORDSHIRE, BERKSHIRE, BUCKINGHAM- SHIRE, HERTFORDSHIRE, OXFORDSHIRE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Cumulative - Valhalla	New	Total
Roger Cope	15	1251
Jean Goodrum	3	1195
Susan Grimshaw	3	1185
Roger Heath-Brown	17	1909
Margaret Holmes	2	1029
Sue Kightley	29	1938
Barbara Spence	52	859
Diana Stroud	29	1956

Roger has recorded mainly from Bedfordshire, his home county. He was particularly pleased to see Sweet-flag *Acorus calamus* and Giant Hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum* locally, both of which he has long wanted to find. He also has some nice records from trips out with his county recorder. I particularly liked his Fan-leaved Water-crowfoot *Ranunculus circinatus*. The Suffolk records are all from the coast and came from a U3A botany group trip. Plants added here included Yellow-vetch *Vicia lutea* and Bird's-foot Clover *Trifolium ornithopodioides*.

The past few years have been very difficult for Jean, with the loss of several close relatives. However things seem to be looking up at last. She particularly enjoyed a trip to the Breckland in July, a fascinating area. She saw Breckland Thyme *Thymus serpyllum* at Grimes Graves and Round-leaved Crane's-bill *Geranium rotundifolium* near Knettishall Heath.

Later in the season she spotted the delightful Pale Flax *Linum bienne*, growing as a casual in her own village.

Susan particularly enjoyed Janet & Gwydai John's Fingest meeting, which provided her with two new grasses, Great Brome *Anisantha diandra* and Six-rowed Barley *Hordeum vulgare*, although her favourite sighting was the Bird's-nest Orchid *Neottia nidus-avis*, lit by sunshine filtering through the beech leaves. Closer to home she found Apple-of-Peru *Nicandra physalodes* in a weedy arable margin. However, in her e-mail to me she also commented on the enjoyment she had from more mundane plants – the incredible profusion of Daisies *Bellis perennis* in the spring and a solitary spike of Bee Orchid *Ophrys apifera* on a busy industrial roadside verge.

Next in alphabetical order is yours truly, and under the new arrangements for members of

Valhalla I get to report on my own year. My list has been vetted by John Swindells again. As last year, much of my time has been devoted to recording for the Atlas 2020 project, which provided four of my new finds. The one I was most pleased with was Various-leaved Water-starwort *Callitriche platycarpa*, which I found with both flowers and fruits. All too often the Water-starworts that I find have no mature fruits, making them impossible to identify with certainty, and this was a species I had had on my hit-list for over 30 years. One other highlight was Ian Denholm's BSBI meeting at Rothamstead, where the impressive display of rare arable weeds in the Broadbalk plots included Corn Cleavers *Galium tricornutum*, in its last regular British site.

Margaret finally saw a Lizard Orchid *Himantoglossum hircinum*! It was a fine caged specimen on a busy road-side verge. Her other addition was Mexican Fleabane *Erigeron karvinskianus*, spotted on the embankment of a fast-flowing brook. She writes that although she hasn't been able to do much plant hunting, she never stops looking, and that her enthusiasm for natural history is as strong as ever.

Sue and Diana have botanised together. Quite a few of their additions are old records that have only now become allowable following the change to the fourth edition of Stace. Several more came from the Sussex coast, where they were particularly pleased to find Cut-leaved Selfheal *Prunella laciniata* and the hybrid *P. x intermedia* growing together in a field at Ovingdon.

Another favourite was Caucasian Mullein *Verbascum pyramidatum*, seen at Pevensy Bay. In general they were impressed by the beach flora, which Diana describes as "rather like a Chelsea Flower Show-by-the-sea"! By way of contrast, they describe their visit to see the hybrid fern *Asplenium x clermontiae* in a remote corner of Bucks, where a single track lane crosses a disused railway – so different from the busy motorway that had brought them there.



Lizard Orchid

Photo: Peter Llewellyn

Barbara's records are mainly from Buckinghamshire, particularly from her BSBI Atlas recording area. They include quite a few species of garden origin and she writes about her difficulties deciding which plants are truly wild and which are not. This is of course something that we all agonize over, but I for one am happy with the criteria she has used. Plants she

highlights include Field Mouse-ear *Cerastium arvense* - "I wasn't expecting it to have such large and beautiful flowers", Frog Orchid *Coeloglossum viride*, difficult to find despite having directions, and Dodder *Cuscuta epithymum*, which she had wanted to see for quite a while. She concludes by saying that she will miss Atlas recording, but hopes now to have time to search for plants more widely.

In addition to diaries and lists of additions, I received e-mails from Ian Denholm, Stephen Plummer, Rosemary Scott and Christina White. Ian is working on the BSBI atlas and is busy digitalising all the Herts records - an enormous task, I'm sure. Stephen has had a difficult year, losing both his father and his father-in-law. However, he writes that he managed to attend meetings at both Hillingdon canal and Braunton Burrows and found them most enjoyable. Rosemary writes that she has been looking for accessible wild-flower sites where she can take her elderly mother and she seems to have been remarkably successful! Together they travelled to Cambridgeshire and saw both the true Oxlip *Primula elatior* and the False Oxlip *P. x polyantha* (*P. veris* x *P. vulgaris*). Near Milton Keynes they found both Bee Orchid *Ophrys apifera* and Pyramidal Orchid



Pyramidal Orchid

Photo: Anne Kell

*Anacamptis pyramidalis* growing together. Christina only joined the society last October, so one might think that she had little to report. But she has already sent me an identification query – one of those dreadful amaranths! (*Amaranthus retroflexus*?) Her end-of-year e-mail comments on just how interesting she has found the flora of her local built up areas, a feeling many of us will share, I'm sure.

ROGER HEATH-BROWN

#### Answers to 'Name the British Wild Flower'.

- |               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1) Hemlock    | 2) Speedwell   |
| 3) Dandelion  | 4) Sea Aster   |
| 5) Rocket     | 6) Caraway     |
| 7) Orchid     | 8) Cuckoo-pint |
| 9) Meadow-rue | 10) Fat-hen    |

## BRANCH P GLOUCESTERSHIRE, HEREFORDSHIRE, WILTSHIRE, WORCESTERSHIRE, SHROPSHIRE, SOUTH WALES, IRELAND

At the end of February, when I would normally be writing the branch reports, I was lucky enough to be botanising in the High Atlas in Morocco, returning just as the world went mad with the pandemic. So my normal jolly remarks about having a wonderful botany year have been rather knocked off course. However ALL records achieved during 2020 will be extra precious and the 1km Square Study may prove to be a lifeline for any of us who are used to a wider search area while we are restricted. It's been a great pleasure looking again at Diaries and correspondence from 2019 and I look forward to hearing from many of you again with your survival tales from lockdown.

Victoria Amphlett had very little botany time in 2019, but is looking forward to starting a Beginner's Diary in 2020. Her letter to me included a delightful memory of Mornee Button (the loyal Branch P member remembered in the Winter 2020 magazine) who had once taken the whole Amphlett family, small children and all, on a botanical walk near Stow-on-the-Wold.

Joyce Barrus has kept a Beginner's Diary for 2 years, during her studies for taking a MMU Certificate in Biological Recording. This good grounding in common plants has supported the 'steep learning curve' and she hopes to consolidate the

experience by taking an Identiplant course as soon as possible. Her intended 1km Square may be Painswick Beacon, which should give her some wonderful finds!

Monica Davis sent a list of special plants seen in Gloucestershire and on holiday in Wales. She had taken a close look to identify Tall Ramping-fumitory *Fumaria bastardii*, which always seems to me to be the most anonymous of this tricky group with its washed-out colour, and she enjoyed a naturalised population of the beautiful Pyrenean Lily *Lilium pyrenaicum* on a coast path in Ceredigion.

Ruth Dawes concentrated on Atlas recording in Montgomeryshire, and sent me her own account: 'I am always pleased to see how many different species turn up on forestry tracks in Wales. These linear strips are home to tiny hay meadows, wetland puddles, relict moorland, streams, rocky outcrops, gravel and more. All full of little treasures including eyebrights *Euphrasia* spp., Yellow-rattle *Rhinanthus minor*, Sheep's-bit *Jasione montana*, sedges... even Sea Spurrey *Spergularia* sp. and Common Stork's-bill *Erodium cicutarium* which persist in stone introduced for paths'. She does sadly note degrading habitats though, as traditional land management continues to decline.





Great Burnet and Devil's-bit Scabious

Judy Gosnell (with husband Richard always part of the botany team) continued to have close involvement with and monitoring of their local Morningside Nature reserve. Here they saw wonderful displays, a rare sight now, of gorgeous meadow flowers, including Dyer's Greenweed *Genista tinctoria* and Betony *Betonica officinalis* (formerly *Stachys officinalis*). They report that local weather suited this Wiltshire chalk site and that one of the specialities of the reserve, Great Burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis*, was at 'its majestic best', flowering till late August. This meant that it shared its peak season with Devil's-bit Scabious *Succisa pratensis* – a stunning sight which I was thrilled to see in the photographs they sent me.

Caroline Giddens, like many members with long cumulative lists, says she is naturally running out of new native plants to add, but this is a good time to enjoy recording garden escapes and aliens. Stage 4 includes ever more 'countable' species and whatever is happening to the climate

seems to be allowing many half-hardy plants to flourish. A tiny white bedding Begonia has been flowering in pavement crevices outside her local Co-op throughout the winter of 2019/20! So Caroline's additions include both Guernsey Lilies, the reasonably hardy *Nerine bowdenii*, and *N.sarniensis* which is much rarer as an escape. The 'out of Africa' theme was kept up by a large flowering plant of Altar Lily *Zantedeschia aethiopica* in a trickle of water by a country hedge, while a pleasingly pretty find was a garden Tobacco hybrid *Nicotiana x sanderae*, which had both white and pink flowers.

Anne Griffiths is looking forward to starting a 1km Square Study on the Offa's Dyke Path near her home, hopefully in 2020. The site, including ancient woodland, sounds most promising.

Ruth Harding had a year which prevented much botany, but she continued monitoring the species found in her local NNR, which she

Photo: Judy Gosnell

has done for nine years now, managing to add Hairy Rock-cress *Arabis hirsuta* and find a second population of the nationally threatened Green-winged Orchid *Anacamptis morio* (formerly *Orchis morio*). She also saw two of my favourite plants, Climbing Corydalis *Ceratocarpus claviculata* and the graceful little Long-stalked Crane's-bill *Geranium columbinum* which is so hard to see unless in flower.

Anne Hercock continued to be very active in the Wye Valley near home, also joining meetings of the Gwent Wildlife Trust and a Gloucestershire study day led by Clare and Mark Kitchen. She found the GWT meeting at Henllys Bog near Cwmbran exciting as it yielded lovely plants like Marsh Helleborine *Epipactis palustris*. She also made a notable find herself near Tintern. This was the less glamorous but rare and interesting Narrow-leaved Bitter-cress *Cardamine impatiens*. This inconspicuous little plant lurks in several of the Wye Valley woodlands, appearing when disturbance clears ground beside paths. It used to be a specialist of tracks in worked woodland, which became rutted by machinery, though it has become rarer now regular timber extraction and management is less common. Anne worked hard to make an identification, which was happily confirmed by BSBI experts.

Viki Hess was moving house, which of course wipes out almost all other activities, but she still managed to send me a Diary with more than 250 entries, including some of the specialities round Bradford-on-Avon where she is now settled. These

included the famous but sometimes elusive Spiked Star-of-Bethlehem (or Bath Asparagus) *Ornithogalum pyrenaicum*. She also had a notable 'at last' moment, seeing one of the now 'split' Autumn Gentians *Gentianella amarella* ssp. *anglica* at one of its Wiltshire sites where it had always managed to evade repeated searches!

Peter Hilton sent me a great 'Plant Hunter of the World' report of botanical travels in Bulgaria, Canada and Ethiopia, but I must limit his account to UK plants! He too joined a day out with the Kitchens, this in the Forest of Dean, where he enjoyed seeing fine clumps of the lovely grass Wood Fescue *Drymochloa sylvatica* (formerly *Festuca altissima*) and he was intrigued by a newly identified Birch *Betula pubescens* ssp. *celtiberica*. During the summer he was also able to see two Cotswold treasures which he had long hoped for. The dramatic *Ophrys x pietzschii* (*O. apifera* x *O. insectifera*) shows characters of both its Bee and Fly Orchid parents and is quite an astonishing example of plant form.

He was also alerted to a 'prolific flowering' of the rare little Cut-leaved Germander *Teucrium botrys*, which can appear only very erratically if it lacks regular disturbance.

Photo: Peter Hilton



Steve Little, as well as being very active leading and attending WFS meetings, always manages to send me news of interesting and surprising finds among the pavements of Cheltenham. He reported that 2019 'was not nearly so good for interesting aliens...no aubergines unfortunately!' Council weedkiller had been lavishly applied. However one oddity survived, Least Pepperwort *Lepidium virginicum*, which is one of the more uncommon strays from bird seed mixes.

Clive Lovatt's great interest in botanical history leads him on searches for many old records and lost plants. In 2019 he led a meeting to look for Common Cotton-grass *Eriophorum angustifolium* in the Cotswolds. Familiar from boggy, acid moorland areas this plant had not been recorded in much drier limestone areas of Gloucestershire for many years. He was thrilled when a population was found and in a previously unrecorded site. He has also been researching some plant records with specific connections to the WFS. In the early part of the last century, before 1920, Bristol botanists Mrs Sandwith and her son Noel were members of the society, as well as being active in the Bristol Naturalists. Clive is trying to relocate some of the plants they knew which may have been mentioned in both WFS and BNS reports. Some of these were among the rarities of the Avon Gorge, which has of course suffered huge changes, specially when the Portway was built in 1922, and again in the 1980s when massive 'consolidation' works were carried out, and the 'lid' was built over part of the road under the Suspension

Bridge. Finding the precise locations given by the Sandwiths can be difficult, but Clive is enjoying the challenges of these searches. It's nice to imagine that hidden in some of our Diaries there might be clues for botanists of the future.

A busy year didn't leave Ian Ralphs much botany time, but the highlights he sent me were really memorable. In Hampshire to take part in a Nightjar Survey, he was bending to put his boots on and realised he was looking at a rare and delightful little plant.



Photo: Ian Ralphs

Small-flowered Catchfly *Silene gallica* seems to have lost mention of distinct varieties in recent Stace editions, but the 2017 *New Flora of the Isles of Scilly* still lists pale pink var. *gallica*, off-white var. *anglica*, and the

treasure spotted by Ian var. *quinquevulnera* with a crimson blotch on each petal. Ian writes 'As the young folks would say #Stunner!', a hashtag I intend to use whenever possible! He also enjoyed walking Pembrokeshire tracks to find Yellow Centaury *Cicendia filiformis* putting on a great show by its miniature standards after the warm summer; and a trip to the Isles of Scilly in October meant he could see Cornish Moneywort *Sibthorpia europaea* in a site which had previously eluded him, and the St Agnes speciality Least Adder's-tongue *Ophioglossum lusitanicum* actually 'in flower'. This is much the rarest of these strange little fern allies and can be hard to spot, so this made a grand final treat for the year.

Eliza Sackett, only a member since 2018, has progressed with great energy and dedication, repeating her Beginners Diary to consolidate her familiarity with common plants and attending both WFS and Somerset flora group meetings. We are quite close neighbours so botanise together whenever we can. A star occasion in 2019 involved walking along the Bridgwater canal to check out a 'different' snowdrop which Eliza had found. It was indeed *Galanthus woronowii* well established in a previously unknown site! She also came to see the historic Somerset population of Spring Snowflake *Leucojum vernal*. The kind owner of this private site had invited us, together with WFS members David Albon, Steve Little and Graham Lavender, and even made us a picnic cup of tea as we stood in the mud at the end of the afternoon!

In spite of feeling that she had 'very few' additions, Beryl Savigar sent a most interesting list from her home area round Cardiff. This included Lesser Sunflower *Helianthus petiolaris* which is an alien rarely seen outside London. Beryl reported this as 'outstanding', and she matched this with a record of a special native plant Whorled Caraway *Trochdaris verticillata* (formerly *Carum verticillatum*), commenting on its unique leaflet structure. I much appreciated her up-to-date use of the latest Stace 4 names!

Janet Vernon always sends me an account of her best finds, on holidays and in Shropshire. 2019 brought her two firsts near home – Nettle-leaved Bellflower *Campanula trachelium*, and a most unusual Lousewort *Pedicularis sylvatica* in the most delicious shade of palest pink. Driving the M6 on holiday she saw one of my favourite northern plants Melancholy Thistle *Cirsium heterophyllum* at Tebay. I'm not sure what I'd wish for most, another sight of this plant, or a stop at this wonderful Westmorland Family services! A favourite location, Lindisfarne, only yielded rare helleborines still firmly in bud (after an exhausting trapse up and down dunes) but I'm sure Janet will keep searching Holy Island for its treasures.

Pauline Wilson made an interesting point to me – keeping a long-term cumulative Diary naturally means that new species are difficult to come across – one has to scuffle among subspecies and hybrids and probably



### Subterranean Clover

rather too many garden escapes. So she was thrilled to find the uncommon native Subterranean Clover *Trifolium subterraneum*, with its fascinating burrowing seed pods, and then really disappointed to find she had put it on her list in 1979! However she is very active in Gloucestershire recording and notes that this (re)find 'caused a lot of interest in the site', which is good, and she was pleased to be able to revisit another special plant, Pasqueflower *Pulsatilla vulgaris* in order to show this beauty to friends. One of her own new additions was a star plant of the WFS AGM weekend, Downy Woundwort *Stachys germanica*, a very rare and erratic species of the Oxfordshire/Gloucestershire borders, which is disturbance-dependant, so now extremely threatened by changes in land management. Members of my family fondly call it the 'Woolly Woundwort' since it was once found on a scrap of a cousin's land!

If this branch was still listed by numbers of plants recorded, Aaron Woods would be a real front runner. This was the first Diary he had done for many years and he sent in a stunning list of 990 plants! These included an impressive number of hybrids and subspecies, showing serious botanical care for detail and identification skills. He also sent me an interesting list of non-Stace cultivars and aliens, meticulously segregated from his 'countable' species. It seems we share an interest in naturalised daffodil cultivars, though his crocuses (9 varieties recorded) way outstrip my Parnassus list! One of these was Autumn Crocus *Crocus nudiflorus*



which he saw in wonderful abundance in a naturalised population in Shrewsbury. Most of his recording was done round his new home on the Worcestershire/Shropshire borders, but he botanised widely in both counties and in Gloucestershire. His native plant finds included distinguished aquatics such as Soft Hornwort *Ceratophyllum submersum* and Pedunculate Water-starwort *Callitriche brutia* ssp. *brutia* (this obscure plant confirmed by BSBI Referee Richard Lansdown). Local specialities were included – Fritillaries *Fritillaria meleagris* and Narrow-leaved Water-dropwort *Oenanthe silaifolia*, from the wonderful Lugg meadows near Hereford, and my liking for old historic records made me delighted to see that Aaron saw Maidenhair Fern *Adiantum capillus-veneris* still under a railway bridge in Ledbury where it has been known since 1938!

I hope by the time this is in print, botanical roaming may be freer, and that somehow love of wild plants will continue to support us all.

ROSEMARY FITZGERALD

## BRANCH T CORNWALL, DEVON, SOMERSET, DORSET, WILTSHIRE

Annual	New	Total
Margaret Evelyn		103
Chrissy Marshall		175
Pat Parker		103

Three members have provided me with diaries for 2019, all using the full Record Book.

Margaret sent me an electronic form of the Diary, which handily totals up the plants recorded. Although not able to travel far, living on the edge of a wonderful area of Dorset urban heathland with SSSI status she found some great plants. As last year, she has covered a good variety of groups, and is confident enough not to shy away from sometimes tricky look-a-like species, including some of yellow crucifers, Bird's-foot Trefoils *Lotus* spp., Mouse-ears *Cerastium* spp., Willowherbs *Epilobium* spp. and Pearlworts *Sagina* spp. There are some other nice plants in her Diary too - Bugloss *Lycopsis arvensis* (formerly *Anchusa arvensis*) for instance, not something I see very often, and Climbing Corydalis *Ceratocarpus claviculata*. She also recorded widespread aliens such as Mexican Fleabane *Erigeron karvinskianus*, which does seem to get everywhere, and Prickly Lettuce *Lactuca serriola*, which, although quite common, I suspect many people skip over. Other species that stand out and that I'm sure other members would be pleased to have found, are: Bog Asphodel *Narthecium ossifragum*, Lesser

Meadow-rue *Thalictrum minus*, Subterranean Clover *Trifolium subterraneum* and Corky-fruited Water-dropwort *Oenanthe pimpinelloides*, which I like for its common name as much as anything!

Chrissy completed a full Diary for the first time in 2019. Her species count increased by around 50% on the previous year. Her highlights included seeing Chicory *Cichorium intybus*, Pale Flax *Linum bienne*, Marsh Ragwort *Jacobaea aquatica* (formerly *Senecio aquaticus*) and, on Dartmoor, the delightful Marsh Violet *Viola palustris*. Some of my personal favourites were in her list too - Long-stalked Crane's-bill *Geranium columbinum* and Common Whitlowgrass *Erophila verna*. The latter may not be unusual, but I love to see little patches of it blooming in urban areas, signalling that spring is coming. She noted a white form of Herb Robert *Geranium robertianum*, something I also have growing not far from me. It seems like it's not an uncommon occurrence. Most of her records are from her local area around Buckfastleigh in Devon and on the nearby moors, including some lovely parts of Dartmoor, such as Emsworthy. She's also taking part in the National Plant Monitoring Scheme and her plots have



contributed some records to her list. It's great to see our members taking part in this scheme and helping monitor how our flora changes over the years. Her ambitions for next year include dipping her toes into docks, grasses and sedges. I've given her a few straightforward species to identify and hope that will get her started. She knows she missed a lot of trees and shrubs, something it's all too easy to do, so there's more scope there for a greater total next year. I'm very much looking forward to hearing how she has got on.

Like Chrissy, Pat has moved on from the Beginners Diary to the full Record Book in 2019. Her Dorset home allows her to see some wonderful

plants, leaving me very jealous - species such as Squinancywort *Asperula cynanchica*, Dwarf Thistle *Cirsium acaule*, Dyer's Greenweed *Genista tinctoria*, Bird's-nest Orchid *Neottia nidus-avis*, Bastard Toadflax *Thesium humifusum* and Hairy-fruited Cornsalad *Valerianella eriocarpa* were all excellent finds. There were plenty of humbler, but still interesting, records too, including the small and easily overlooked Small-flowered Buttercup *Ranunculus parviflorus*. She even dipped her toes into dandelions, doubtless on one of the three guided walks she enjoyed, from each of which she learned a great deal.

TIM PURCHES

## BRANCH U STAFFORDSHIRE, WEST MIDLANDS, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE, WARWICKSHIRE, DERBYSHIRE, LEICESTERSHIRE, LINCOLNSHIRE

Annual	New	Total
Judith Lee		181
Alan Swinscoe		101
John and Monika Walton		730
<b>Cumulative - Valhalla</b>		
Patricia Cox	6	526
Jackie Ellis	70	934
Dorothy Evans	4	1750
Alison Gregory	7	1413
Jackie Hardy	190	974
Sian Matthews	83	773
Richard Pykett	36	826
Marjorie Shepherd	7	955
Mary and Claire Smith	31	1503

Judith completed her first Diary while getting back on her feet after undergoing a knee operation. Consequently nearly all of her entries are very local to her home, but she was fortunate in having access to a lovely piece of calcareous grassland which is in private ownership. Her finds here included Bee Orchid *Ophrys apifera* and Pyramidal Orchid *Anacamptis pyramidalis*, as well as the more predictable Common Rock-rose *Helianthemum nummularium*. Judith managed to join her local flora group for their last meeting in October which added Trailing Tormentil *Potentilla anglica* and Narrow-leaved Bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus tenuis*. But her greatest triumph must be Lesser Calamint *Clinopodium nepeta* (formerly *C. calamintha*) discovered in her home village. This is only the second county record for this species.

Alan's local and very productive, piece of woodland has been handed over to the Nature Conservation Trust by the former owners. This is good news as he always has interesting finds here typical of the habitat. For example, this year Bugle *Ajuga reptans*, Enchanter's-nightshade *Circaea lutetiana*, Yellow Archangel *Lamiastrum galeobdolon* and Primrose *Primula vulgaris*. Alan also notes that the Bluebells *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* were superb there in 2019. Broom *Cytisus scoparius*, has appeared on the track leading to the former working area of the quarry. Much of the surrounding area remains as farmland and Bugloss *Lycopsis arvensis* (formerly *Anchusa arvensis*) was another nice record.

Although newcomers to the WFS John and Monika are very experienced botanists and came up with some interesting finds for their first Diary. Montpellier Broom *Genista monspessulana* and Jerusalem Sage *Phlomis fruticosa* were both in their home county of Warwickshire, neither being common inland in the Midlands. Also on their home ground they were pleased with Upright Spurge *Euphorbia stricta* and Coral Spurge *E. corallioides*. After examining literally hundreds of bushes of planted Shrub Ragwort *Brachyglottis x jubar*, John and Monika eventually found some stems of Common Broomrape *Orobanche minor* growing outside the hospital in Nuneaton. A BSBI meeting added Moon Carrot *Seseli libanotis*, Wild Liquorice *Astragalus glycyphyllos* and the local Yellow-flowered Teasel *Dipsacus strigosus*, which conveniently grew opposite a pub.

Somewhat tentatively Patricia offered new records for White Poplar *Populus alba* and Turkey Oak *Quercus cerris*. As she so rightly says, 'I know the provenance can be problematic'. But she gives detail of the situation in which they were found as well as the main features of identification, enough to set our minds at rest and allow them to be counted. We particularly enjoyed her re-find of Small-flowered Crane's-bill *Geranium pusillum*, last seen in 2009 before recording cumulatively. She remembered it at the base of a road sign and when she returned the Crane's-bill was there but the sign had been uprooted, obviously from a collision. A triumph for nature over man!

Jackie Ellis was delighted to finally see Pasqueflower *Pulsatilla vulgaris* in the Cotswolds. 'At last', as she so eloquently puts it. She also travelled to Kent to pursue her love of orchids and was rewarded with Lady Orchid *Orchis purpurea*, Fly Orchid *Ophrys insectifera* and Monkey Orchid *Orchis simia*. She had a useful sighting in someone's garden of Motherwort *Leonurus cardiaca*, presumably dropped from a bird table. To find Creeping Yellow-cress *Rorippa sylvestris* at the base of a waste bin in a grassed area is somewhat unexpected so it was well spotted by Jackie.

Attending the WFS Hartslock meeting gave Dorothy her new finds. The first was Almond Willow *Salix triandra* by the river. Once in the reserve she added Monkey Orchid *Orchis simia*, the hybrid between Lady and Monkey Orchid *O. x angusticruris* and Downy-fruited Sedge *Carex filiformis*. Dorothy delighted in the actual meeting as she writes that they had lovely weather and it took place in beautiful countryside. She comments on how remote and quiet it seemed while being so close to London and the M40. Her only disappointment was not seeing the Lady Orchid *O. purpurea*.

Alison had a very enjoyable few days in Breckland where she added seven species to her records. To challenge her Branch Secretaries' wits she casually threw in Sand Lucerne *Medicago sativa* nothosp. *varia*. Not a plant we know, so it entailed some scuffling through the glossary to determine what a nothosubspecies is. We have always said that we learn as much from our branch members as



Proliferous Pink

they do from us. Other specialties of the area were Proliferous Pink *Petrorhagia prolifera*, Spanish Catchfly *Silene otites* and Breckland Thyme *Thymus serpyllum*. The 'must have' plant that sadly had to be missed was Spiked Speedwell *Veronica spicata*. Visitors were forbidden as a curlew was nesting close to the plants, so it was in a good cause and Alison is determined to try again another year.

Jackie Hardy's splendid total for the year was partially achieved by returning to Ben Lawers to search for plants she missed at the WFS meeting last year. So she was delighted to find Drooping Saxifrage *Saxifraga cernua*. She then walked up **again** the following day for a further WFS meeting! Moving on to the Glen Clova corries pleased her with Dwarf Cornel *Cornus suecica* and both Alpine Woodsia *Woodsia alpina* and Oblong Woodsia *W. ilvensis*. Jackie attends a number of recording meetings for both

Photo: Ken Southall

Worcestershire and Warwickshire and it was on one of these she had an unusual record of Blue Eryngo *Eryngium planum*. Located on a grass strip in the middle of the road from a church to the town - it would be interesting to know how far it travelled to get there.

Sian has always lacked many of the common water plants including Pondweeds *Potamogeton* spp. and Duckweeds *Lemna* spp. as her area doesn't support suitable habitats. Fortunately, in 2019 her BSBI recording hectad covered a series of lagoons so this added considerably to her numbers. Of particular interest to Sian was Red Nightshade *Solanum villosum*. This escaped from the University Pharmacy Garden many years ago and, as of 29th December, was still flowering and fruiting in great abundance. Finally we must mention Sian's hybrid Bindweed *Calystegia x howittiorum* which is named for two previous VC recorders, Brenda and Leaver Howitt. Brenda was a keen and enthusiastic Branch Secretary for the WFS and they co-wrote an article on Willow spp. *Salix* spp. which has been reproduced in 'A guide to difficult plants'.

Finding Knotted Hedge-parsley *Torilis nodosa* for the first time on the Great Orme was one of Richard's most satisfying records. Luckily each time he goes there something new seems to catch his eye. He repeated this success when a visit to the Lake District secured Milky Bellflower *Campanula lactiflora*. We were pleased that Richard had identified Unbranched Bur-reed *Sparganium emersum* and he sent a photograph to prove it! Many people find this

extremely difficult to separate from Branched Bur-reed *S. erectum*. It was interesting that Richard reported Yellow-flowered Strawberry *Potentilla indica*, as this seems to be increasing rapidly in our area.

Solomon's-seal *Polygonatum multiflorum* is not widely seen in our area so Marjorie was fortunate to be able to add it to her records on a branch meeting. It was tucked under the trees in a limestone woodland and so was a genuine native rather than a garden escape. We joined Marjorie in adding Greater Honeywort *Cerinthe major* and Spanish-dagger *Yucca gloriosa* to our lists courtesy of a stretch of garden rubbish dumped alongside a footpath opposite a cricket pavilion. A visit to Sutton Scar, on the outskirts of Kendal, added Juniper *Juniperus communis* to Marjorie's total.

Our own records benefitted from the trip to the AGM where the hybrid between Maidenhair Spleenwort and Wall-Rue *Asplenium x clermontiae* was a highlight. The inclusion of a number of new garden escapes in Stace 4 allowed us to add Blue Lawn-lobelia *Pratia pedunculata*. Our favourite find locally was Wild Tulip *Tulipa sylvestris*. There was a good-sized patch of plants on a rough verge in a remote country lane. Finally, we were delighted that our identification of one of last year's finds was correct. This was Mossy Stonecrop *Crassula tillaea* which we found growing in block paving near the Thames at Shadwell Basin. Our thanks to John Swindells for following this up for us.

MARY AND CLAIRE SMITH

## BRANCH V GREATER LONDON, MIDDLESEX

Annual	New	Total
Jane Lowe		700
Clare Million		453
<b>Cumulative</b>		
David Bevan	7	1800
Robin Blades	6	1226

Jane once again headed up my small trio of London botanists. She had amassed a most impressive total by following up on last year's resolution "to go further afield and into different habitats". One of her most productive WFS meetings was to Ben Lawers and Ben Vrackie where Lyn Jones, was able to track down many of the special plants of those two magnificent mountains. Among many other rare alpine plants that Jane enjoyed were Purple Oxytropis *Oxytropis halleri* on Ben Vrackie and Scottish Pearlwort *Sagina x normaniana* on Ben Lawers. By contrast with exploring these well known alpine "hot spots", Jane did not neglect to examine places closer to home. She told me, for example, that "while dancing at the White Cross Hotel in Richmond in May", she looked at the area nearby that is submerged at high tide and found Great Yellow-cress *Rorippa amphibia* and Blue Water-speedwell *Veronica anagallis-aquatica*. Two sedges that caught his eye were: Elongated Sedge *Carex elongata*, and Downy-fruited Sedge *C. filiformis*. The first was seen on an outing with the Surrey Botanical Society (SBS) to Glover's Wood, near Charlwood in Surrey and the latter was one notable highlight of a

WFS meeting to Hartslock NR, in Oxfordshire. At this same meeting, Jane recorded the remarkable hybrid between Monkey Orchid *Orchis simia* and Lady Orchid *O. purpurea*, discovered there in 2006. Finally, Jane noted an unusual newcomer by a roadside in Streatham, SW 16. This was Jersey Cudweed *Laphangium* (formerly *Gnaphalium*) *luteoalbum*, which appears to be spreading in several parts of London.

Clare also visited a wide range of sites and was able to call upon the expert guidance of members of the SBS and the London Natural History Society (LNHS). Visits to North Yorkshire and County Durham were a particular highlight. She enjoyed 'the wonderful meadows upstream from High Force' with their abundance of Ragged-Robin *Silene flos-cuculi*. Closer to home in Surrey, she paid a return visit to a favourite haunt, Happy Valley, near Coulsdon. One highlight was the abundance of Greater Yellow-rattle *Rhinanthus angustifolius*. Further south, in East Sussex, she visited the diverse Rye Harbour Nature Reserve in early July. Here she saw substantial colonies of Red Hemp-nettle *Galeopsis angustifolia*, now listed as





Photos: Peter Llewellyn

critically endangered. Finally, she had the good fortune to be shown a plant that is now officially extinct 'in the wild', Stinking Hawk's-beard *Crepis foetida*. This was always a scarce plant in Sussex, being last seen around 1948. It hung on at Dungeness in Kent, but finally became extinct there (and in Britain) in 1980. The plants that Clare was shown were introduced in 2000 as part of a monitored re-introduction project.

Of my own few records, I think that the striking flower of Dragon Arum *Dracunculus vulgaris* was the most noteworthy. First recorded (in a vegetative state) in 2005, in Bluebell

## White Helleborine

Wood, Haringey, I had to wait until July 2019 before it produced a flower. Its photograph was 'highly commended' in the WFS photographic competition for 2019.

Robin described his short list as 'very minimal', but it included several excellent records. Robin is a keen 'birder' and, on an LNHS ornithology meeting to Crossness in early April, he recorded a patch of Toothed Medick *Medicago polymorpha* by a path close to the Thames. Although too early to be fruiting, he was able to separate the plants from Spotted Medick *M. arabica* by vegetative characters. Stace awards the plant 'RR', but it may be increasing (Jane also reported it near Dorking). Robin also enjoyed a productive visit to Chappetts Copse Nature Reserve, in Hampshire. Here were a few plants of White Helleborine *Cephalanthera damasonium* at the edge of woodland and a few Narrow-leaved Helleborine *C. longifolia*. Nearby was a small group of Fly Orchids *Ophrys insectifera* and occasional Solomon's Seal *Polygonatum multiflorum*.

The careful attention to detail of all three members was greatly appreciated and the almost universal use of six-figure map references was particularly welcomed.

DAVID BEVAN

Fly Orchid





## BRANCH W, SCOTLAND

Scotland is big, members are very scattered and news always comes from a wide variety of activities and habitats. As usual I'm picking out highlights for this report – even though some diaries do come in and are very much enjoyed by me, most members send me accounts of special days and finds. I write this in the midst of the Covid-19 lockdown and have so many hopes that WFS members will all still be able to find pleasure in botany, however restricted. I'm lucky enough to have access to a 1km square, starting on my doorstep, so can take my exercise ration in that. It's not a great square, being mostly intensive arable, but it really makes me think about the details of common plants, and hopefully everyone will be able to walk in a similar area or at least find a few pavement weeds near them. My thoughts and good wishes are with all members, and who knows, by the time you read this life may be freer again.

Victoria Atkinson has moved to Haddington (after many years in Yorkshire) so looks forward to exploring the rather different flora of East Lothian, possibly including the special plants of the volcanic 'laws' there and near North Berwick. She sounds like a keen walker and has loved wild flowers since childhood walks with her uncle, though she also has horticultural experience. I look forward to hearing how she finds 2020 in this new area.

Hilary Blyth is a loyal correspondent when I ask for news each year. She

botanises in various places, near home in Stirlingshire, on holidays, and while caring for a family property in Argyll where in 2019 she admirably learned to use a scythe. She reports that this skill means that cutting a wild flower patch is 'slow enough to see the orchid stems with their seed pods well in advance and cut neatly round them to leave them to ripen'. Hilary found a lovely Northern Marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza purpurella* and reported enjoying wonderful spreads of Melancholy Thistle *Cirsium heterophyllum* and Yellow Rattle *Rhinanthus* sp. when on holiday at Ettrick in the Borders.

Roger Connard is new member who sent such interesting notes about his reasons for joining the WFS. A Cumbrian farmer who moved to Scotland for family reasons, he is also an active BSBI and Wildlife Trust member and these contacts have made him aware of a widespread current concern popularly known as 'Mind the Gap', after a comment piece written for *BSBI NEWS* by Carol Wilson in 2019 i.e. there is the gap between expert botanists and people who would love to know a bit more about wild flowers but are too intimidated to ask, and the even more worrying gap between people who love plants, at whatever level of involvement, and the millions who are completely unaware of their essential importance. 'Plant blindness' is extremely, frighteningly common. Roger hopes to find in the WFS a society which bridges some of those gaps, reaching out to both professionals and amateurs. He has

already done something excellent himself, producing a delightful website [www.isleofbutewildflowerwalks.co.uk](http://www.isleofbutewildflowerwalks.co.uk) which leads one round places near his home, showing and explaining the significant flowers. He credits Angus Hannah, known to several of you for leading fascinating meetings and author of the recent, highly praised *Isle of Bute Flora*, with help and inspiration, but I look forward so much to hearing what Roger himself will do next!

Helen Jackson says 'I don't mind how few flowers I add to my list as long as I add something', and in spite of being loaded with masses of paperwork while her Atlas 2020 records were being digitised, she certainly managed to achieve that with two exciting finds. These were both aliens, which turned up close to

Photo: Peter Llewellyn



Mediterranean Spurge  
ssp. *characias*

home in Musselburgh, one new to Midlothian and one a 10km square record, so both delightful surprises. The most handsome was a Mediterranean Spurge (vigorous self-seeders which escape from gardens) which could be identified by the dark glands in the flowers. There are two subspecies so this character is important. *Euphorbia characias* ssp. *characias* has these distinctive dark 'eyes', while *E. characias* ssp. *veneta* (formerly *wulfenii*) has yellowish-green glands matching the rest of the floret. Her other significant record was for one of the rather pesky Fleabanes which are now known to be three distinct species. This one was Guernsey Fleabane *Erigeron sumatrensis* (formerly *Conyza sumatrensis*), which is now becoming the commonest in some areas, so may be moving into Edinburgh!

Lyn Jones went through 2019 with his usual energy, which always benefits the WFS enormously! He took various groups of members to experience botany on Ben Lawers and Ben-y-Vrackie (lucky them, having such a keen and experienced guide). He also joined a meeting led by former BSBI President Chris Metherell in Glen Clova, where somehow, in such a relatively well-botanised spot, they managed to locate a new population of the very rare Close-headed Alpine-sedge *Carex norvegica*. He is also actively involved in developing online and mobile phone apps for identifying plants – his [visual-flora.org.uk](http://visual-flora.org.uk) now has over 1700 species illustrated – have a look!

Joy Lyon, another new member, will

be settled in Edinburgh when life returns to normal. Her parents lived in Scotland for many years so she is keen to explore and botanise in the country. Formerly living in the Chilterns, in 2019 she recorded in Oxfordshire for the BSBI Atlas 2020 scheme. Joy has worked hard for botanical knowledge and experience, completing several ID courses. I'm delighted to welcome her to Branch W and after going through her 2019 Diary, which had a total of over 500, I'm looking forward immensely to her further contributions - we have already had a most interesting exchange of e-mails about her records, from her find of an early Celandine *Ficaria verna* on 1<sup>st</sup> January, to some top rarities seen on a visit to the Isles of Scilly. She also

managed to botanise in Jersey, seeing such treasures as the Jersey Thrift *Armeria arenaria*.

Alison Wilson had a very busy year, but much enjoyed a week on an Angus Hannah party near Oban (his trips and meetings always sound enormous fun as well as being packed with information), and she went down to Malham for a BSBI meeting in the heart of the wonderful Yorkshire limestones and their wonderful plants.

With many hopes for everyone to have a safe summer with chances to see at least some plants

ROSEMARY FITZGERALD

## BRANCH Y ESSEX, CAMBRIDGESHIRE, NORFOLK, SUFFOLK

**Cumulative - Valhalla**  
Graham Pack

**New**  
3

**Total**  
1806

Graham has added three new species to his cumulative list partly in combination with the Lowestoft Plant Group. One species that surprised me that he hasn't recorded before is English Elm *Ulmus procera*. The second is a garden escape of Autumn Stonecrop *Hylotelephium 'Herbstfreude'* and his third, showing its increasing distribution, Panicked Willowherb *Epilobium brachycarpum*, which he found at the Woodbridge airbase at Sutton in Suffolk. I first came across this plant about ten years ago when it was first

discovered on the southern edge of Colchester in Essex, where it is now abundant.

Barbara Mathews had a bad year in 2019 and did not add any new plants to her list due to an injury sustained after a fall followed by a long period of looking after a close relative. However, she hopes to improve on that score in 2020.

STEPHEN CLARKSON

## OBITUARIES

### JOHN HARRIS 1930 - 2019

My father-in-law John Harris, who died in October last year, was brought up in Norfolk and as a child took an interest in wild flowers learning the names of all the flowers growing locally and seeking them out. After university, John got a job as an Agricultural Consultant working in Lincolnshire, Tanzania, Yorkshire, and finally the Isle of Man, arriving there in 1969 with his wife and family. Here his interest in wild flowers was rekindled when he was introduced to the Wild Flower Society by a friend of his wife. He remained a member until his death, often filling in a WFS Record Book as a family or with his wife. He got to know the local botanists and discovered many new sites for plants. Some of his records appeared in David Allen's 1983 *Flora of the Isle of Man* including, probably, the only site on the Island for Musk Thistle *Carduus nutans* found by John on Jurby Airfield in 1973. In 2009 John and I started recording for the new Isle of Man Flora, eventually recording thirteen tetrads (2km squares) with over 3000 records submitted for the flora, many of these due to his local knowledge and of course his friendship, through his job, with many of the farmers. This enabled us to record plants on private land, with the finding of the Blunt-flowered Rush *Juncus subnodulosus*, a new native for the Island, growing in their hundreds at the Bee Hive Dub, being the highlight.

In later years I would visit with my family at the end of October school half-term and we would do the last hunt together – heading off to the west coast of the Island, having lunch, often a pub meal and ending up on the Ramsey Mooragh on the west coast to look for the Isle of Man Cabbage *Coincya monensis* ssp. *monensis*. Of course, with John's local knowledge, we always found over 100, our best year being 2012 when we found 138 plants in flower.

There's a lot more I could say about John and his wild flowers. He showed me my first Greater Butterfly-orchid *Platanthera chlorantha* in a meadow at Sulby, my first Black Bog-rush *Schoenus nigricans* on the coast at Niarbyl and it was John who introduced me to the Wild Flower Society when, soon after I married his daughter Rachel, a Wild Flower Record Book arrived in the post. I had not even heard of the Wild Flower Society before then.

John was always willing to share his knowledge with others and his love of flowers was inspiring.

B.A. 'JESSE' TREGALE

## IAN LAWRENCE 1922-2019

Ian Lawrence was a well-known botanist in the North East. He was a member of the Cleveland Naturalists' Field Club, which he joined in 1949 and served as President several times. He was also the President of the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union and was its Divisional Secretary for VC 62 for 25 years.

Ian joined The Wild Flower Society in 1959 and was in Branch N (Yorkshire). In that year a new Record Book was introduced and Ian came top of the group with 766 flowers seen, 73 from abroad and 118 not found by anyone else in the branch. The report was written by Evelyn Hyde who comments in her report that it was 'a Diary to be proud of' and she was sad to see him progress to the Prize Winners Branch H1.

In 1960 Ian was second in Branch H1 with a score of 864 plants collected from all parts of the country, including a BSBI meeting at Stamford, a WFS one in the New Forest and a visit to France. In 1961 he was again second in the group with a total of 942 flowers and again went abroad to Europe, as well as visiting lots of British sites.

In Violet Schwerdt's editor's letter in the Spring 1961 WFS Magazine she suggests that numbers might have to be raised to qualify for entrance to Valhalla from at least 600 to 700 plants recorded twice in a Winners' Branch. The newcomer to Valhalla must then start the collection from scratch. Another recommendation

was that an asterisk was placed beside the name of any member who had included plants collected abroad. Foreign plants could be included if they were mentioned in Dandy's *List of British vascular plants*.

In 1962 Ian is now in Branch Z: Valhalla (Division 4) with 820 plants and Anne Berens comments that 'with Miss Robb to guide him he should soon be at the top of Valhalla'. So in 1963, 1964 and 1965 his total continues to rise from 994 to 1,195 and 1,315.

In 1966 Violet Schwerdt had again to write in the magazine that there were so many entries into Valhalla that it was going to have to be split into more groups and J.R. Pankhurst became secretary of the new division, Valhalla: Division 2 that Ian found himself in with 1349 records (and an asterisk) in 1966 and 1374 in 1967. By 1969 he was in Valhalla Division 1 (over 1400) with 1511 and in 1970 with 1530 with Kit Rob as his divisional secretary. Ian re-joined in 1993 and over the years has led many field trips for the society.

Ian was born in Middlesbrough. At the outbreak of the Second World War he joined the RAF and after initial training as a radio/wireless mechanic he was selected for special duties and sent to Bletchley Park, the location of so much secret intelligence work. He had studied three languages at school and was competent in German and so was sent to the block where the translation and decoding of German

messages was carried out. Here he was introduced to the mysterious world of the legendary Enigma machine. The broadcasts were liberally interspersed with stirring music such as that of Wagner and this led to a love of German music which lasted all his life.

At the end of the war Ian was accepted for teacher training and then spent his teaching career from 1949 to 1982 at Marton Grove Junior School in Middlesbrough where he formed a Nature Club and spent much time teaching his young charges about the natural world, particularly plants and flowers. He took early retirement in 1982 which gave him the time and opportunity to work on his "magnus opus" as he called it, his book '*A guide to the wild flowers of Cleveland*' which was

published in 1994.

Since his retirement Ian tutored a long running series of wild flower classes and field trips. I joined the WFS in 2001 and the first field trip I went on was led by Ian to the South Gare. I met several local botanists and was encouraged to join one of Ian's two weekly botany classes. In the winter we met indoors but from Easter on we were out in the field both locally and further afield. Each year we undertook a longer field trip and visited places as far apart as Guernsey and the Moray Firth.

Ian inspired a love of botany in many people and gave of his knowledge freely and willingly. His classes and sense of humour are much missed.

JUDITH COX.

OVARY	LEAF	SPUR	BUD	STEM	NODE	LIP	PETAL	ROOT
NODE	BUD	ROOT	PETAL	LIP	OVARY	LEAF	STEM	SPUR
LIP	PETAL	STEM	SPUR	ROOT	LEAF	OVARY	NODE	BUD
STEM	ROOT	LEAF	LIP	NODE	BUD	PETAL	SPUR	OVARY
BUD	LIP	OVARY	ROOT	PETAL	SPUR	NODE	LEAF	STEM
PETAL	SPUR	NODE	LEAF	OVARY	STEM	ROOT	BUD	LIP
SPUR	STEM	LIP	OVARY	LEAF	PETAL	BUD	ROOT	NODE
LEAF	OVARY	BUD	NODE	SPUR	ROOT	STEM	LIP	PETAL
ROOT	NODE	PETAL	STEM	BUD	LIP	SPUR	OVARY	LEAF