

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

As I write this climate change is very much on my mind as I see so much evidence of it around the world and realise the damage that it is doing to the flora of the world. The latest report of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), issued last week, is most alarming and calls for urgent action by everybody around the world. My hope is that the COP 26 meeting on climate change in Glasgow in November will make definitive decisions and not just be political talk like several of the past meetings have been. The effects of climate change in the UK have been relatively mild in comparison to some places in the world, but it is beginning to affect wild flowers and gardening here too. There is no doubt that climate is getting warmer here and that climate zones are moving northwards. This week I was talking to an apple grower in Devon and he informed me that the traditional Devon apple varieties no longer do well there and are more suitable for North Wales and Cumbria. He is now planting apple varieties from northern France in his Devon orchard. This change also has an effect on our wild flowers as climate zones move north and the south receives plants and insects migrating over from the continent, such as the various species of Tongue-orchids *Serapias* that are recent additions to our flora (see picture on the back cover). Within the UK our native orchids are

moving north as climate zones change. The Bee Orchid *Ophrys apifera* has recently reached Scotland and the Southern Marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* is now as far north as Newcastle. There is a noticeable increase in the populations of species able to tolerate drought and gardeners are planting more drought-tolerant species as well. At home I have tried to reduce my carbon footprint as much as possible through such things as solar hot water and solar electricity on my roof as well as a wood pellet boiler for heating.

My only real botanical excursion this year has been back to my old hunting ground in the Cotswolds as it has still not been safe to venture into Latin America. I identified over 70 species in flower on a June day on Cranham Heath, near Painswick, and saw so many old plant friends of the limestone Cotswold flora. In addition, this was the first trip in my new electric car, another way in which I am trying to stop using any fossil fuels. But it was good to get about further afield after the restrictions of lockdown. I hope that all our members are enjoying this freedom and are adding interesting plant records to their Diaries, but I also hope that you are all doing all you can to reduce your carbon footprint too.

GHILLEAN PRANCE

**Copy date for Winter magazine
1st November 2021**

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the Autumn issue of the Wild Flower Magazine and many thanks to all our contributors. At long last we can all get back out into the field, spread our wings and visit a wider range of habitats to feast our eyes on the diversity of wild plants that this country has to offer. The vast majority of our field meetings have been able to take place this year, even if numbers were somewhat limited in the spring. Reports from the early season meetings are included in this issue of the magazine and it is very encouraging to find a number of our newer members contributing and giving such positive accounts of their experiences.

The Winter Months' Hunt saw bumper numbers of participants, many spurred on by the need to get some fresh air and be out in the environment during the limited freedoms of lockdown. It's amazing the diversity of plants that are able to survive the rigours of winter and still find the energy to flower.

Gareth Bursnall has produced another of his challenging quizzes on the origins of some of the Latin names that regularly appear as epithets in specific names. If you

want the added challenge, cover over the right-hand side of the page which gives you a list of the possible answers.

Moirá O'Donnell has very kindly produced a superb key to the more common species of Speedwells *Veronica* spp. that can be found in the British countryside. As this covers 11 species, there was a lot of information to cram into a relatively small space, so I am sorry that the print is quite small but being keen botanists you will always have a hand lens available should you need to magnify the text. Once our new website is up and running we plan to upload all of the keys that have appeared in previous magazines so you should be able to run off a larger copy if you so wish.

As I write this I have just returned from another excellent AGM and Members' Weekend at Margam, near Port Talbot. It was good that about 40 of our members felt able to join us for the event. We were blessed with glorious autumnal weather and visited some interesting sites. Details of this weekend will be published in the next issue of the magazine.

ANNE KELL

NOTICES

1km Square Study

If you decide to continue to study the same square as in a previous year you only need to send the Branch Secretary a list of the new species found in that particular year. All lists should be sent to the Branch Secretary for the area in which the study was undertaken. This may be different to the area in which you live. Please check.

WFS Gift Cards

Would you like to give someone a present of a year's subscription to the Wild Flower Society? It would make an ideal Christmas gift, for example.

We now have gift cards available for you to send.

To purchase your gift subscription, please get in touch with our Membership Secretary, Sue Poyser, whose contact details are on the last page of the magazine.

WFS Note Cards

We also have available blank A5 size cards with the WFS logo on the front. These can be bought from Sue Poyser in packs of 2 for £2 or 5 for £4.

Photo Library

Many thanks to those people who responded to our earlier requests for photos. We have received some wonderful images but would like even more, particularly eye-catching images of plants in flower - they don't have to be rare or unusual. We would also like more images showing people botanising. The photos will be stored in an online photo library and would be available for use on the website, in the magazine or for publicity purposes. Photos used in the magazine or in publicity will be attributed to their owner.

If you would like to share some of your photos, please contact either me (wfs.gensec@gmail.com) or Helen Dignum (wfs.instagrams@gmail.com). If you have just a few, they can be sent directly by email, but they must be full size files. If you have more, let me know and I will send you a link so that you can upload them directly to the library. (It's a very simple process.)

Alternatively, if you prefer, you could send your photos to me on a memory stick/flash drive.

A special plea - please make sure that the photo is renamed to give the name of the plant or location of the meeting and the photographer's name. (This also applies to photos sent directly to the editor for the magazine.)

SHEILA WYNN

Online talks

There are still three more online (Zoom) talks to come this autumn. See page 6 for further details.

BSBI New Year Plant Hunt

As in 2020/21 (see p 4-7 of the Spring 2021 issue of the Wild Flower Magazine) some members of the WFS are hoping to take part in the BSBI New Year Plant Hunt next January. If you wish to join in, keep an eye on the website and email alerts for further details of locations. Alternatively, you could just do your own survey in an area local to you. Details of the hunt can be found on the BSBI website.

ONLINE FIELD MEETINGS 2021

Botanical Walks in the Engadine – presented by Lyn Jones 23rd February 2021

What a treat in February to go walking in the meadows of the Engadine in Switzerland. Well not exactly “walking” but there was a real sense of being there and enjoying the scenery and the flowers even if it was vicariously! As Lyn said in his talk, it was “Exciting to see some of our great rarities – and often in relative profusion”. Gwyndaf and I have bounded up (OK, OK, trudged slowly

up) Ben Lawers, scrambled around Glen Clova and wended our way up the Cuillins on Skye and Snowdon in Wales to see wonderful alpine flowers and here they were in the Engadine valley in their thousands; Snowdon Lily *Gagea serotina*, Alpine Milk-vetch *Astragalus alpinus*, Whorled Solomon’s-seal *Polygonatum verticillatum*, Alpine Forget-me-not *Myosotis alpestris*, to mention just a few. You can only imagine the challenge it was on Glen Clova to reach the site of the Purple Colt’s-foot *Homogyne alpina* and then



Photos: Peter Llewellyn

the disappointment that all that was found were a few rather bedraggled leaves.

Lyn did a very effective advertising job for the Swiss botanical tourist industry. I doubt if there were any of the many participants of the meeting that have not now got the Engadine on their bucket list.

Thank you to Lyn for giving us a real sense of what treasures this region has to offer a botanist.

JANET JOHN

In Search of the Snowdon Lily – presented by Peter Llewellyn 16th March 2021

In this, our third Zoom meeting, Peter took us on a tight little tour of Cwm Idwal and of Snowdon itself; the two sites where one might find Snowdon Lily *Gagea serotina* in Britain.

When beginning his botanical career, he found himself fascinated by the Bird's-eye Primrose *Primula farinosa*, Scottish Primrose *P. scotica*, Yellow Star-of-Bethlehem *G. lutea* and the Snowdon Lily *G. serotina*. This last has stayed with him for many an excursion since. This must be so, for he gave us a panorama of Cwm Idwal in sunshine, something I have never seen in many a visit. His floristic excursion took us from the car park to the top of the Devil's Kitchen, whetting our appetite every step of the way. A Hawkweed *Hieracium carneddorum* gives a flavour. Quillwort *Isoetes lacustris*, Awlwort *Subularia aquatica*, Water Lobelia *Lobelia dortmanna* and many bog-loving plants conducted us to the



Snowdon Lily growing on
Snowdon

lower approaches of Llyn Idwal thus setting the superb scene on our approach to Twll Du (Devil's Kitchen). Peter's explanation of why there was such diversity growing on and beneath the rocks here was quite masterly. Many excellent examples accompanied his commentary. Ferns (too many to mention), Viviparous Sheep's-fescue *Festuca vivipara*, which always touches a spot when first encountered, and montane flowers from which we select Tufted Saxifrage *Saxifraga cespitosa*, an arctic-alpine in sharp decline, and Purple Saxifrage *S. oppositifolia*, a really early bird, beautiful when in bloom, but often missed by later visitors. (It was usually under snow for us in Glen Lyon and on Jock's

Road.) As global temperatures warm, the Tufted Saxifrage gets swamped by more rampant vegetation and is probably no longer at this location. We know it has gone from the Cairngorms too. (One can look for it growing sparsely on the Grey Corries above Spean Bridge and at Inverlael nowadays.) As he moved us to the top of the Kitchen, the search took us to the rear of the outcrops.

Specimens are here all right, but very difficult to see, tending to be single growths among more virile competitors. Identification tends to involve binoculars and is often none too satisfactory. The Lily formerly bloomed around the first week of June - when Peter first started his forays. With the warming climate, timings have receded at least to the last week of May and perhaps earlier than this. As a follow-on from Lyn Jones' Engadine exposé, Peter reiterated that whilst Snowdon Lily may be rare in Britain, it is fairly common in Europe. With this the scene moved on to Snowdon itself. Here, not too far from the tourist traffic, one may find specimens suitable for photography. He warned that dry weather should be chosen for any exploration since the ground is steep, very loose and not safe for those rummaging around in the wet. If Peter's snaps are anything to go by, the wait for a fine day is well worth it.

In conclusion, this was a well-prepared, well-illustrated, well-presented and hugely interesting study; so congratulations to Peter. It comes with a 'highly recommended' tag from us.

BILL AND CAROL HAWKINS

Orchids of the North East - presented by Chris Metherell 20th April 2021

This was a most informative and enjoyable event. At the end, I was better informed about orchids and helleborines and I shall now try to identify them for real 'in the field'. Thanks go to Chris for sharing his extensive knowledge of orchids with us. It is always a privilege to listen to, and learn from, a specialist such as Chris. It was also useful to have simultaneous opportunities to look at the illustrations in my Blamey, Fitter and Fitter book (*Wild Flowers of Britain and Ireland*) and to compare them with Chris's images which proved a help to deeper awareness.

KEN FISHER

If you missed the first three talks or would like to see them again, they can be found on YouTube by putting 'The Wild Flower Society' in the Search and then clicking on the logo.

Online talks for the autumn:- held from 18:30 to 19:30

A walk in the Pennines	Lizzie Maddison	Tuesday 19th October
A seasonal excursion	Anne Kell	Tuesday 9th November
Plant identifying around the World	Peter Llewellyn	Tuesday 7th December

If you wish to join any of the Zoom meetings please email Janet John wfs.meetings@gmail.com and a link will be sent to you nearer the date.

FIELD MEETINGS 2021

ISLES OF SCILLY 17th - 21st MAY

Monday 17th May

The lockdown 'will we, won't we', wait was over. Twelve of us met on The Strand in Hugh Town, St Mary's in evening sunshine and old friendships were rekindled. Some folk had had a tortuous journey, including a moderate to rough crossing in the Scillonian flat-bottomed boat, but we soon recovered in the laid back island atmosphere.

Tuesday 18th May 2021 – St Mary's

We met on a bright, sunny, clear morning on Porthcressa Prom and set off along the coast towards Old Town. A quick look at planted evergreen shelter hedgerows revealed that Karo *Pittosporum crassifolium* from New Zealand, had leaves with no teeth and walnut-sized seed pods and Evergreen Spindle *Euonymus japonicus* from Japan, had leaves with teeth. They were interspersed with sprawling Wireplant *Muehlenbeckia complexa*. The Dewplants and lush yellow-flowered Aeoniums were not ignored, but it was the grasses that captured our attention. Rough Dog's-tail *Cynosurus echinatus* with its lovely long awns was admired and those that had knees that still worked studied Rat's-tail Fescue *Vulpia myuros*. Wrinkly-leaved Balm-leaved Figwort *Scrophularia scorodonia*, a southern coastal speciality, came next, the commonest figwort on the islands.

In a bulb field, a fine show of Portugese (Peruvian) Squill *Scilla*

peruviana from the western Mediterranean attracted much photography. Small-flowered Buttercup *Ranunculus parviflorus* was one of our early finds amongst the wonderful array of arable weeds of the bulb fields that we came across.

Then it was on to Old Town churchyard to pay our respects to the late Labour Prime Minister, Harold Wilson and his wife, Mary. Incongruously, it was decorated with one artificial flower and a bunch of wilted ubiquitous Three-cornered Garlic *Allium triquetrum*. A closer inspection revealed that the grave had been colonised by Slender Rush *Juncus tenuis*.



Paying homage to Harold Wilson

Photo: Gwyn John

This was thirsty work so we then called for coffee in Old Town before going on along the Lower Moors Nature Trail where there were handsome specimens of Royal Fern *Osmunda regalis* unfurling their croziers. Around the coastal lanes, it was great to see the rare Lanceolate Spleenwort *Asplenium obovatum* where we could compare it with Sea Spleenwort *A. marinum* and Black Spleenwort *A. adiantum-nigrum*. Four great ferns on our first morning, plus many commoner ones, was a great start.

After a pleasant stroll through lanes and paths past naturalised Bear's-breeches *Acanthus mollis* and the stunning Giant Herb-Robert *Geranium maderense* from Madeira, we arrived at tea rooms at Longstone for a hasty but tasty lunch. A sharp shower sent us scurrying to pay and recover our waterproofs for a meander to Pelistry, where Gwyndaf had found us a fine and fragrant specimen of Sea Kale *Crambe maritima*. He had worked out that the pipe in the bay was carrying water to the desalination plant nearby for St Mary's water supply.

The rain cleared as we headed for Porth Hellick Down and we ended the day with archaeology and culture at a very fine Bronze Age Burial Site, including an impressive Giant's Tomb. A wonderful coastal sunset later portended a fine Wednesday for our boat trip to Tresco.

RUTH DAWES

Wednesday 19th May - Tresco

All the group took the short crossing by sea to Tresco. After gathering at

New Grimsby quayside and admiring Hoary Stock *Matthiola incana*, we set off across the island with the Abbey Gardens as our ultimate destination. At Old Grimsby, cottage gardens and lush vegetation were a delight, colourful *Echiums* and Asteraceae leading down to the sandy beach. Crossing an open area, we were alerted to the presence of a botanical 'highlight' by the sight of a kneeling group, hand lenses in use: Orange Bird's-foot *Ornithopus pinnatus* had been found! In the Abbey Gardens the top terrace was stunning: an abundance of Protea and many other exotics with the wonderful views across to the other islands. Before we left the gardens, we were entertained by the antics of red squirrels. All this, and wonderful sunshine! A great day!

PAM CRAWFORD AND MARGARET REID

Thursday 20th May - St Martin's

On the day of our planned trip to St Martin's the winds were gusting at over 60mph. All public boat trips were cancelled. However there would be one boat to St Martin's on an essential return journey. As WFS had a long-standing booking we could join this boat for a shortened stay on the island. Huddled together in the wind our group considered this offer. One look at the waves was enough for the majority to decline. Three intrepid souls were made of sterner stuff and decided to go: Peter Hilton, Charles Whitworth, who were determined to see the fabled St Martin's Buttercup *Ranunculus marginatus* for the first time, and Gwyndaf John who knew the location from a previous visit.

A delightful morning followed. The

field margins at Churchtown Farm were awash with arable weeds. A good patch of the buttercup was found mixed with bright pink fumitory. Though whether Western Ramping-fumitory *Fumaria occidentalis* or White Ramping-fumitory *F. capreolata* was open to debate (where is Bill Hawkins when you need him?). Musk Stork's-bill *Erodium moschatum*, Dove's-foot *Geranium molle* and Cut-leaved Crane's-bills *G. dissectum* were growing closely together. Spring Beauty *Claytonia perfoliata* and Small Nettle *Urtica urens* were also found.

Peter's cap had accompanied him on many previous WFS trips over the years, but as we emerged into the open from the hedge sheltered fields it was blown away never to be seen again. Happily, we survived the "invigorating" journey back to St Mary's!

GWYNDAF JOHN



Peter Hilton examining St Martin's Buttercups

Friday 21st May - Bryher

Ruth, Allan, Pam and Margaret were the only four tourists to make it to Bryher today thanks to the kindness of the Tresco boatman, who landed us safely on Anneka's Quay at low tide so we didn't have to paddle. The Dwarf Pansy *Viola kitaibeliana* eluded us, but Spring Vetch *Vicia lathyroides*, and Hairy Bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus subbiflorus*, were both exquisite. Moist Carrot *Daucus carota* ssp. *sativus* cake at Hell's Bay Hotel was a highlight. Dirty work, but somebody had to do it. Two Great Northern Divers *Gavia immer* on the choppy sea were a bonus. We only encountered light showers and had a wonderfully peaceful day.

On behalf of the group I would like to give Janet and Gwyndaf John a huge vote of thanks for co-ordinating this complex trip, made doubly challenging by COVID-19 pandemic uncertainties beforehand and threats of violent weather in situ. They went beyond the call of duty by buying and including the heavy local flora in their limited baggage allowance and hiring bikes to do a fast recce of St Mary's when our local leaders were unable to attend. We were also grateful to Rosemary Parslow for copious written notes with directions and information, which greatly added to our finds. Experts within the group freely shared their knowledge too.

My abiding memory of these, clean, quiet and picturesque islands lies with the Scillonians for their adaptability and resourcefulness and their charm, friendliness, patience and good humour with us grockles.

RUTH DAWES

EXMOOR 5th - 6th JUNE

Dunster Beach and North Hill, Minehead.

Given uncertainties about numbers allowed in gatherings and knowing that many Somerset Rare Plants Group members know both of these sites on the Exmoor coast quite well, we decided to restrict the meeting to WFS members only, which gave us 13 visitors. This was the luckiest decision ever! The most exciting plants at both locations are extremely small and this year, after a cold, mostly dry spring, this was all too apparent. A greater number of bodies trying to keep distancing round minute specimens would have led to people feeling shut out and unable to see enough which is, anyway, an effect we both worry about when trying to plan meetings. In the event, a larger crowd would have been a disaster because not only were the target plants so difficult to see, but the group had a very wide range of experience.

A concern for botanical planners is always how to keep a happy balance between beginners who need to feel supported and experienced botanists who don't want to be held back. In this we were extraordinarily lucky as numbers were almost evenly divided between highly skilled members and absolute beginners and friendliness, kindness, patience and generous help flowed easily from one group to the other from the start. Graham and I learned a great deal ourselves because at least two copies of Stace were carried throughout and the owners were willing to go head down

over keys as soon as any details needed checking. After the two days we were the happiest of organisers and have decided never to try to lead larger groups again.

The locations helped the happiness of course and weather was ideal – sunny with touches of breeze from the sea, so never too hot. At Dunster beach on Saturday our target plants included various annual clovers and Smooth Cat's-ear *Hypochaeris glabra*. Two uncommon seaside Fescues, Dune Fescue *Vulpia fasciculata* and Bearded Fescue *V. ciliata* ssp. *ambigua*, have been recorded here in the past but they are very similar and we hoped to solve the 'one or both?' question. The long stretch of shingle bar behind the beach here is backed by a stretch of stony and sandy ground in front of the famous row of chalets which are now reputed to cost as much as a full-sized house. Most of this ground is heavily trampled and all is exposed to full wind force and salt spray in stormy weather, so it's a specialised habitat. Native plants such as Viper's-bugloss *Echium vulgare*, Hound's-tongue *Cynoglossum officinale* and Musk Thistle *Carduus nutans* flourish in these tough conditions and put on fine displays and we were at peak flowering season for Fragrant Evening-primrose *Oenothera stricta*, a 19th century introduction from Chile which has been known here for many years. The real treasures however meant putting noses to the ground, so we gathered quite a few curious stares and questions about what we were doing. One of the first clover

Mary and David finding a new
patch of Smooth Cat's-ear among
the Fragrant Evening-primroses



species to be found was the tiny Bird's-foot Clover *Trifolium ornithopodioides*, its single white flowers scattered level with the ground. It proved very abundant (on both days) so it was easy to 'get the eye in' and recognise from head height the slightly darker green patches made by the spreading plants. It was accompanied by the commoner Rough Clover *T. scabrum* with Knotted Clover *T. striatum*, and Lesser Trefoil *T. dubium* with Slender Trefoil *T. micranthum*, allowing for plenty of practice in telling these 'pairs' apart. A real rarity which proved to be having a good year was Suffocated Clover *T. suffocatum* with its bright yellowish-green rosettes and curious green flowers buried in the centre of the tufts.

Another target species, the Smooth Cat's-ear *Hypochaeris glabra* was

also abundant in several places. A newish member Mary Ensor and her partner David Ware know and like this part of Somerset but they have always come as birders. Indeed Mary told me later that when the group first left the cars, immediately falling to their knees and spouting Latin names, the Ensors very nearly 'quietly disappeared'. I'm so glad they didn't! The pleasant sharing of knowledge within the group tempted them to stay and they found a lovely population of the Cat's-ear in a previously unrecorded location. The species lists for the two main monads in this much-recorded place already had large totals, but amazingly this day managed to add to both although the confusing Fescues remained stuck at 'probably' only one species, even with the help of Rodney Burton's nobly carried herbarium specimens for comparison!

Photo: Ro FitzGerald



Photo: Ro FitzGerald

North Hill, the location for the second day, is a big rocky shoulder nearly 300m high which cradles a corner of Minehead old town. The North edge falls steeply to sea cliffs while the ridge gives wonderful views of the Exmoor coast. We were relying on the spectacular location to make the day memorable, as this site lacks large, pretty flowers and we were again anxious that weather might have restricted what could be found. However the 'eyes down' practice on Saturday had made the group highly attuned to almost-invisible species and everyone was soon finding, not only Bird's-foot Clover in amazing quantity, but having no trouble with different uncommon tinies such as Upright Chickweed *Moenchia erecta* and Spring Vetch *Vicia lathyroides*. These plants are both notoriously inconspicuous but our team proved terrific at spotting them. In fact by the end of the day the vetch had been added to a new monad and their charms were much appreciated, both the miniature pink vetch flowers and the elegant silver-edged green sepals of the Upright Chickweed. Combined with the landscape looking its best, this would have made an enjoyable day, but something unexpected happened too. A disused quarry floor near the track gives interesting dry and damp microhabitats, so everyone

Eyes down by the famous chalets

had a wander here. I like this site because my favourite Pearlwort can usually be found. Heath Pearlwort *Sagina subulata* always looks so smart with its little white eyes, unlike the near-invisible greenish petals of its relatives. We were enjoying plenty of little flowering clumps when Steve Little reached for a Stace and began counting stamens, petals and sepals. His incredibly sharp eyes had told him that these were giving contradictory and variable information and soon there was an intense gathering with all the copies of Stace out and texts and emails rushing out for further information. After much discussion and counting of parts, it became clear that something was going on in the community of Pearlworts! All agreed in the end that the hybrid between *S.subulata* and *S.procumbens* was present among plenty of both pure species. This is a rare hybrid, *S. x micrantha*, previously unknown in Somerset, so the find made a really star achievement for the day, a historic occasion for VC5 in particular, and a superb lesson in the value of keying plants out in the field if conditions allow.

After so many worries about weather and virus conditions, it was really wonderful that the weekend was so enjoyable and so valuable to Somerset botany. Correspondence from members afterwards mentioned the pleasure of 'meeting up with like-minded friends' and 'appreciating our wild flowers in all their glory' even if you needed your specs on, and the coastal landscapes certainly helped. Our heartfelt thanks go to all who attended and made it such a joy.

RO FITZGERALD

WINTER MONTHS' HUNT 2020 - 2021

Name	County/Counties	No. of Sp.	Dec	Jan	Feb
N. Counties					
Barbara Allen	S. Lancashire	91	74	34	27
Julie Clarke	Lancashire	60	47	31	31
Judith Cox	N. Yorkshire	84	53	26	42
Everald Ellis	E. Yorkshire	38	30	26	11
Anthony & Rita Grainger	W. Yorkshire	93	68	41	39
Trish New	N. Yorkshire	39	35	20	13
Dorothy Ross	Lancashire	76	63	29	25
Mary & Claire Smith	Derbyshire	114	82	68	40
Sheila Wynn	Lancs & Derbyshire	74	66	19	17
Midlands/Wales					
Jackie Hardy	Worcs & Warwickshire	166	134	87	61
Anne Hercock	Gloucs & Monmouth	48	33	22	30
East Anglia					
Stephen Clarkson	Suffolk	100	56	48	58
Carol Hawkins	Norfolk	163	125	76	71
Anne & Dennis Kell	Suffolk	179	159	98	85
Barbara Mathews	Suffolk	92	72	54	46
S. and S.E.					
Enid Barrie	London & Essex	122	101	57	50
Caroline Bateman	Surrey	133	94	83	70
Sue Buckingham	Kent	162	131	49	36
Ben & Tessa Fisher	Essex	139	114	81	73
Doug Grant & Sue Poyser	Kent	189	164	102	92
Susan Grimshaw	Berkshire	76	69	47	29
Pippa Hyde	Surrey	92	64	72	62
Daphne Mills	Kent	190	153	106	84
Jill Oakley	Sussex & Hants	205	148	121	71
Ron Parker	Surrey & London	131	121	59	50
Janice Reynolds	Sussex	136	120	57	44
Mike Robinson	London	59	43	32	25
Heather Silk	Kent	90	72	46	27
Diana Stroud	Berkshire	156	123	121	101
John Swindells	London	86	64	53	50
S.W.					
Ed Dolphin	Devon	38	-	24	30
Ro Fitzgerald	Somerset	176	130	108	73
Sally Maller	Devon, Dorset, Hants	240	96	67	77

It was a bumper year for participants in the 2020/21 WMH with 33 people taking part. 639 different plants were recorded. Only one plant was seen by everyone during the hunt, Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* agg. Lists came from all areas of England and one from Wales. I have arranged the table and report differently this year, by region, so that it should be easier to see records in your area. As many of us realised, it was overall a colder winter than average. This was despite December and February being slightly milder than normal. January knocked everything back with frequent frosts and bursts of snow. The snow I experienced to my cost in January by falling over in it and not being able to get up again. The penalties of more rural living meant that I lay and waited for someone to find me and help! Participants also had to contend with 'lockdown' during the hunt and although this meant more local botanising, people soon discovered there was much to find. I very much enjoyed the article in the spring issue of the WFS magazine about the BSBI New Year Plant Hunt. This is a great hunt to do in conjunction with the WMH, double the fun during January.

Starting with the Northern counties of England. Barbara Allen sent a good list that made me feel hungry on reading some of the entries. Tomato *Solanum lycopersicum*, Radish *Raphanus raphanistrum* and Chicory *Cichorium intybus* were good finds. Julie Clarke broke her wrist mid WMH which must have been a very painful thing to do. She found Fern-leaved Beggarticks *Bidens ferulifolia* which had escaped from a hanging basket.

She commented that the Winter Aconite *Eranthis hyemalis* she found provided a lovely display and amongst her other finds were five Speedwells *Veronica* spp. Judith Cox completed her first WMH and sent in a splendid list. This included four types of *Crocus*, four of Snowdrop *Galanthus* and Himalayan Honeysuckle *Leycesteria formosa*. Everalld Ellis said that even the Pale Corydalis *Pseudofumaria alba* she was lucky enough to find gave up in February. There were, however, Primroses *Primula vulgaris* and Snowdrops *Galanthus nivalis* to provide some colour and cheer to the miserable weather. Anthony and Rita Grainger had a bumper month for them, in December, which included finding Garden Tree-mallow *Malva x clementii*. They also found Winter Jasmine *Jasminum nudiflorum*, which was a new one for their main Diary and braved the floods in January to find Buttonweed *Cotula coronopifolia* under two feet of water. Trish New started her first WMH in December seeing Wild Angelica *Angelica sylvestris* and Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* and finished in February with Cherry Plum *Prunus cerasifera*. Dorothy Ross said she had a satisfying December finding Meadow and Creeping Buttercups *Ranunculus acris* and *R. repens*. Toad Rush *Juncus bufonius* was a surprise find in the town centre. She was pleased with her finds but sad that spring-flowering plants had not appeared by the end of February. Mary and Claire Smith found Yellow-flowered Strawberry *Potentilla indica* which was a new one for their winter months' hunting. They were pleased to see Alder *Alnus glutinosa* which

had been missing from their list for some years. I was pleased to see Sweet Cicely *Myrrhis odorata* on their list, a plant that is not easy to find for us southerners. Sheila Wynn sent a lovely list and commented that it was good to see Water Avens *Geum rivale*, Wood Avens *G. urbanum* and the hybrid *G. x intermedium* all flowering together in a lane.



I received two lists from the Midlands. Jackie Hardy lives on the boundary of Worcestershire and Warwickshire and enjoyed hunting in both. She spent time looking at ferns in more detail, which she enjoyed, and also found Stinking Hellebore *Helleborus foetidus*, Lenten-rose *H. orientalis* and Green Hellebore *H. viridis*. Anne Hercock searched in Gloucestershire and provided the WMH's only records from Wales. She is lucky enough to have a colony of Prostrate Rock-cress *Arabis procurrens* to record close to her home. She also saw her first Lesser Celandine *Ficaria verna* in December although it was a sorry specimen. By February there was a glorious show to be seen.

East Anglia provided four participants for the hunt. Stephen Clarkson sent in his usual fascinating list of plants. Wonders that included Peruvian Lily *Alstroemeria aurea*, Common Fiddleneck *Amsinckia micrantha* and Bacopa *Chaenostoma cordatum*. Carol Hawkins sent in a detailed list that included six species of *Crocus*, three sorts of Snowdrop *Galanthus* and one of my favourite flowers of the

spring, Balkan Anemone *Anemone blanda*. Anne and Dennis Kell found Musk Thistle *Carduus nutans* on Christmas Day. They also found Jersey Cudweed *Laphangium luteoalbum* in Felixstowe and along with other people who did the hunt saw Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*. Barbara Mathews found Orange-peel Clematis *Clematis tangutica* which she had seen before but was able to add Early Virgin's-bower *C. cirrhosa* var. *purpurascens* 'Freckles'. The latter was growing in an area far from any garden. Barbara found that in January even Dandelions *Taraxacum officinale* agg. were struggling to survive.

The South and South East provided plenty of lists. Enid Barrie said her favourite plant was Common Fumitory *Fumaria officinalis* which continued flowering on a waste-ground verge right throughout the hunt period. Hunting in London gave her good entries in Pink-headed Persicaria *Persicaria capitata* and Garden Lobelia *Lobelia erinus*. Caroline Bateman had a patch of Early Meadow-grass *Poa infirma* at the end of her road, in flower in early

Photo: Sue Grayston



Photo: Ken Southall

December. She commented that Water Bent *Polypogon viridis* is now present in most urban streets round where she lives. She also recorded Barren Brome *Anisantha sterilis* for her list. Sue Buckingham has a beach near where she lives with many naturalised garden escapes. Hunting there she saw Snake's-head Iris *Iris tuberosa* and Elephant-ears *Bergenia crassifolia* plus two different Fumitories *Fumaria*. Ben and Tessa Fisher were pleased to find Colt's-foot *Tussilago farfara* in February saying it was a glad sight after a hard winter. Narrow-leaved Ragwort *Senecio inaequidens* and Fennel *Foeniculum vulgare* were also good finds. Doug Grant and Sue Poyser found Holly *Ilex aquifolium* flowering in January with berries as well as a few flowers. One Goat Willow *Salix caprea* in a local park never let them down and had three or four open male flowers each time it was visited. At the end of the hunt Common

Whitlowgrass *Erophila verna* was seen everywhere, in pavement cracks and forming sheets of white on waste ground. Susan Grimshaw has Jersey Cudweed *Laphangium luteoalbum* as an established weed in her garden which had arrived in a pot of something she had purchased. She too saw Common Whitlowgrass *E. verna* and Fox-and-cubs *Pilosella aurantiaca*. I added two new plants to my lifetime WMH list with Wild Thyme *Thymus drucei* and Mouse-ear-hawkweed *Pilosella officinarum*. Daphne Mills said that Fairy Flax *Linum catharticum* was one of her favourite and least expected finds, which she found along with Nettle-leaved Bellflower *Campanula trachelium* and Yellow-wort *Blackstonia perfoliata*. Jill Oakley combined the BSBI New Year Plant Hunt along with the WMH. She commented that, apart from that hunt, it was a delight, towards the end of February, to visit a woodland site to see Primrose *Primula vulgaris*, Daffodil *Narcissus pseudonarcissus* ssp. *pseudonarcissus* and Wood Spurge *Euphorbia amygdaloides* in flower. It was great to receive a list from Ron Parker. He saw Snowdrop *Galanthus nivalis*, Greater Snowdrop *G. elwesii* and the hybrid between the two. He was also one of two people who saw Himalayan Balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*. Janice Reynolds spoke for all of us with the message she sent with her list. 'It's been good, more so this year, to do the Winter Month's Hunt in these strange times. To go for a walk and feel great for the rest of the day'. New ones for her list were Hairy Violet *Viola hirta* and Stinking Hellebore *Helleborus foetidus*. She also found Japanese Anemone *Anemone x*

hybrida in December and January. Mike Robinson visited Lesnes Abbey Park and found Lesser Calamint *Clinopodium nepeta*. He also hunted along the Thames Footpath and found Sea Aster *Tripolium pannonicum*. He ended the hunt by finding one of his favourite wild flowers, Ivy-leaved Speedwell *Veronica hederifolia*. Heather Silk found some lovely plants still in flower. Sharp-leaved Fluellen *Kickxia elatine* is always a good one to see and Yellow-flowered Strawberry *Potentilla indica*. Apple-of-Peru *Nicandra physalodes* was another good find. Diana Stroud went out every day walking and botanising and achieved her highest ever totals for the WMH. She found new ones for her hunt too which included Pale Persicaria *Persicaria lapathifolia*, Rose Campion *Silene coronaria* and Wych Elm *Ulmus glabra*. All but two of John Swindells' records were from Tower Hamlets. Rue-leaved Saxifrage *Saxifraga tridactylites* was found flowering in January which was a pleasant surprise. John ventured into Hackney in January as well and found White Ramping-fumitory *Fumaria capreolata* ssp. *capreolata* and Green Alkanet *Pentaglottis sempervirens*.

In the Southwest Ed Dolphin, who is a new member of the WFS hunted during January and February. A good list was compiled and it was great to see some ferns on there. These included Hart's-tongue *Asplenium scolopendrium*, Maidenhair Spleenwort *Asplenium trichomanes* and Scaly Male-fern *Dryopteris affinis*. Ro FitzGerald sent a fascinating list and email about her finds. She found Coral Spurge

Euphorbia corallioides just outside Minehead en route for her Covid vaccination. Ro told me 'It's a lovely spurge, and a big, long-established population, second record for VC5'. Two other spurges were new to Ro's list, Wood Spurge *E. amygdaloides* ssp. *robbiae* and Mediterranean Spurge *E. characias* ssp. *veneta*. Sally Maller hunted mostly within a three-mile radius of her home seeing Greater Quaking-grass *Briza maxima* and both male and female flowers on Hazel *Corylus avellana*. She managed a trip to East Dorset and Hampshire during early December which provided more finds. She saw Sweet Alison *Lobularia maritima* during the trip at Mudeford in Dorset. A place I know from childhood holidays staying in my grandmother's bungalow.

As always it has been a pleasure looking though all your lists. I shall look forward to seeing what people find this winter.

PIPPA HYDE



Photo: Ken Southall

EXOTICS REPORT 2020

I haven't had any records passed onto me for the Exotics Report so I have had to improvise a little. Aaron Woods kindly let me have details of the *Narcissus* cultivars he has recorded recently as escapes and I thought that readers would be interested in those that are not mentioned in Stace (2019). The locations follow in brackets. From S. Devon (VC3): *Narcissus* 'Fortune' (Sprydun Beacon) and *Narcissus* 'St. Patrick's Day' (Broad Clyst, east of Ashclyst Forest). From Herefordshire (VC36): *Narcissus* 'White Lady' (Stanford Bishop), *Narcissus* 'Ice Follies' (Ledbury) and *Narcissus* 'Princeps' (Bosbury). From Worcestershire (VC 37): *Narcissus* 'Conspicuous' (Alfrick).

Photo: Aaron Woods



Narcissus
'White Lady'

Aaron Woods also found a *Rhus* in Herefordshire in 2020 which he has tentatively identified as *R. x pulvinata*. There was also a report of this taxon from Swanage in Dorset (VC9) by David Leadbetter in 2020. It seems to be a variable hybrid of Stag's-horn Sumach *R. typhina* and *R. glabra*. It can be distinguished from *R. typhina* by its less hairy to subglabrous young branches with shorter hairs (less than 1mm). If/when you are recording *Rhus*, most probably in the form of suckers, this hybrid might be worth considering if none of the species keyed in Stace (2019) seem to provide an answer.

Eric Clement also thought it was of interest that there had been three recent records of Iranian Wood-sage *Teucrium hircanicum* in East Sussex, two for Eastbourne (2016 and 2020) and one for Newhaven (2020). It has been thought of as a rare garden plant but such things can change suddenly and I have seen for myself in a local park, where it was planted in two different spots, just how readily it self-sows. For various reasons these records do not appear in the BSBI Distribution Database, where the solitary record is for Soham in Cambridgeshire (VC29). It is a species to keep in mind.

Details of your records 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

ONE DAY MEETING HEDGERLEY 24th APRIL

Hedgerley, a pretty village just south of the Chilterns, wall-to-wall sunshine, bird song and Red Kites, and a day's botanising just as we emerged from lockdown – what could have been better?

Our walking took us round Church Wood (a RSPB reserve) and the surrounding meadows. We began in the damp meadow where there were carices and grasses and large patches of Cuckooflowers *Cardamine pratensis* and Cowslips *Primula veris*. In the village pond we saw Marsh Marigold *Caltha palustris* and Skunk Cabbage *Lysichiton americanus*. Overhanging the pond was a hybrid willow: Crack Willow x White Willow. This is the Weeping Crack-Willow *Salix x pendulina*. If you happen to see a 'Weeping Willow' in the wild it is very likely to be this taxon.

In the wood, flowers were plentiful: large clumps of Primroses *Primula vulgaris* and Greater Stitchwort *Stellaria holostea*, masses of Common Dog-violets *Viola riviniana* and Bluebells *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* stretching as far as the eye could see. Tucked in between these we spotted several small patches of two of the all-time woodland favourites: Wood Sorrel *Oxalis acetocella* and Wood Anemone *Anemone nemorosa*. From time to time the books would come out and there was head scratching as we gathered round to work out what we had found and we were delighted with the tiny Hairy Woodrush *Luzula pilosa* and, later, Few-flowered Garlic *Allium paradoxum*. Most of us had

walked past the latter but Stephen Clarkson's sharp eyes picked it out. Stephen also dissected a flower of Lords-and-Ladies *Arum maculatum* to show us its structure and how it really worked – it was fascinating.

We had hoped to see some Early-purple Orchids *Orchis mascula* in flower but sadly they were only in leaf. However, we had a nice surprise with Solomon's-seal *Polygonatum multiflorum*. It has been known for many years at this site though it seldom seems to show itself. We found two patches of it nicely in flower.

As I walked back to the car at the end, I was footsore and weary but we had had a feast of good things. After the long winter all of us appreciated the companionship and being able to talk to one another face-to-face (no masks!) and I think we all felt refreshed in mind and spirit.

DIANA STROUD

Photo: Diana Stroud



BOTANICAL LATIN QUIZ – GROUPS

In this last quiz the object is to complete the missing members of the group. One example is given for each one.

Compass Points

- Northern -
- Southern -
- Eastern - orientalis
- Western -

Seasons

- Spring -
- Summer -
- Autumn - autumnalis
- Winter -

Shades of Yellow / Brown

- Yellow - lutea or flava
- Straw yellow -
- Yellow turning pale yellow -
- Bright brown -

Shades of Red

- Red - rubra
- Scarlet -
- Blood red -
- Flesh coloured -
- Rose red -
- Rusty brown -

Shades of Blue / Purple

- Sky blue -
- Pure deep blue - azurea
- Purple -

Shades of Green

- Fresh green - viridis
- Grey-green -

White / Grey / Black

- Black - nigra
- Hoary white / Grey -
- Milk white -

Below is a list of words that you could use. Cover it over if you want more of a challenge.

rosea
vernalis
borealis
ochroleuca
incanus
caerulea
glaucus
australis
hyemalis
fuscus
sanguineus
ferrugineus
purpurea
lacteus
occidentalis
aestivalis
flavescens
coccineus
Incarnates

Answers on page 44

10 KM SQUARE STUDY (NORTH) 2020

Name	Hectad	Location	Years	New	Total
Julie Clarke	SD48	Lindale & Whitbarrow	18	11	785
	SD58	Milnthorpe	18	1	509
Anthony & Rita	SE23	Horsforth & Rodley	10	47	605
Grainger	SE24	Otley & Wharfe Valley	10	35	415
Peter Jepson	SD61	Bolton (North)	40	0	509
	SD62	Darwen and Blackburn	46	2	870
	SD71	Turton	39	0	456
	SD72	Accrington	46	0	625
Andrew Kafel	SE02	Halifax	14	141	914
	SE12	Brighouse	13	5	666
	SE22	Morley, Dewsbury & Batley	12	1	854
Graeme Kay	SJ57	Frodsham	24	0	719
	SJ67	Northwich	22	0	532
	SJ87	Alderley Edge	32	6	535
	SJ97	Macclesfield	34	3	592
	SJ98	Marple	42	6	679
Keith Robson	NZ24	Chester-le-street	8	27	622
Dorothy Ross	SD31	Southport	2	0	120
	SD32	Lytham	18	0	379
	SD45	Galgate	8	0	299
	SD63	Longridge	33	3	380
	SD64	Chipping	10	3	205
	SD73	Whalley	16	9	302
	SD74	Clitheroe	31	4	377
Jesse Tregale	SC39	Ballaugh, Isle of Man	23	0	766
	SE13	Bradford	31	60	1810
Sheila Wynn	SD64	Bowland, Lancashire	14	0	237
	SD65	Forest of Bowland	10	0	175
	SD74	Clitheroe, Lancashire	14	14	576
	SD75	Slaidburn, Gisburn Forest	14	0	239

As usual, Julie had some interesting finds in SD48 with Motherwort *Leonurus cardiaca* in Nineserge Lane, Levens, Garden Stork's-bill *Erodium manescavii* by the sea wall in Grange-over-Sands and she went to see the rare Round-leaved Wintergreen *Pyrola rotundifolia* ssp. *rotundifolia* at Whitbarrow. Also at Whitbarrow was

the Great x American Willowherb hybrid *Epilobium ciliatum* x *E. hirsutum*, which was confirmed by Geoffrey Kitchener, the BSBI Willowherb expert. This is the easiest hybrid Willowherb to identify, with large flowers, a confused stigma and short fruits containing a few, fertile seeds, with many minute infertile

seeds. Only one new plant in SD58 – at Watery Lane.
Prickly Lettuce *Lactuca serriola*, on the motorway bridge at Farlton.

Anthony and Rita had some nice finds in SE23. The rare Grey Field-speedwell *Veronica polita* was found on Stanhope recreation field and Sweet Violet *Viola odorata*, which I am still searching for in SE13, was on Scotland Lane. The rarely-recorded, pink-flowered Salmonberry *Rubus spectabilis* was on the edge of King George playing field and, new to me, was Sorbaria *Sorbaria sorbifolia*, in a hedgerow on Church Lane. In SE24 Wood Horsetail *Equisetum sylvaticum* was in Lindley Wood and Smooth Lady's-Mantle *Alchemilla glabra* on waste ground in Horsforth. The pink-flowered Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* var. *rosea* at Weeton seems to be native. It often occurs with native blue Bluebells but the white-flowered Jacob's-ladder *Polemonium caeruleum* var. *album* on the old railway track in Yeadon is almost certainly a garden escape.

Peter was confined to his home range in SD62 and was not able to visit his other squares. He found Prickly Sedge *Carex muricata* on a shaded, steep, sandy slope under trees in the clough woodland about 110 metres from a garden fence. It had been there for a good number of years, which goes to show that, even after recording the same square since 1975, new plants can be found. His other new plant was Narrow Male-fern *Dryopteris affinis* ssp. *cambrensis*, found in scrubby woodland on the top of a massive stone structure over a weir and culvert entrance for the River Darwen

Andrew had a terrific year in SE02, mostly recording in his home monad and the adjacent ones, SE0923 & SE0924. Some nice natives included Blue Fleabane *Erigeron acris* in a gutter on Sedburgh Road, Square-stalked Willowherb *Epilobium tetragonum* ssp. *lamyi*, which is rare in Yorkshire, also in a gutter but on Canal Street, and Southern Marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* on waste ground by the old gas works. Busy Lizzie *Impatiens walleriana* was a pavement/wall weed by the Royal Oak Pub. As I live only a couple of bus rides away, I visited Andrew. A self-sown Whitebeam had us confused, growing out of the wall on Trooper Lane. This was named by Tim Rich as Austrian Whitebeam *Sorbus austriaca*, the second or third record for it self-sown. We could not identify a Sedum growing out of the wall of St. Anne's Road but a photo sent to Ray Stephenson, the Sedum expert, identified it not as a Sedum but as Lamb's-tail *Chiasophyllum oppositifolium*. In SE12 Andrew had a 12-mile walk with friends (non-botanists), finding Western Sword-fern *Polystichum munitum* and Yellow-flowered Strawberry *Potentilla indica* in a ginnel between Hightown and Liversedge. Dittander *Lepidium latifolium* was added to his SE22 list; it is abundant on America Moor, Morley, but he had not recorded it when last seen in 2016.

Graeme in SJ87 found a nice garden escape, Honey Garlic *Allium siculum* ssp. *dioscoridis* in a gateway at Harehill, looking to have originated from a cottage 100 yards or so down the lane. Pellitory-of-the-wall

Parietaria judaica was seen at Knolls Green and also in a hedge at Knolls Green was Steeple-bush *Spiraea douglasii* ssp. *douglasii* with Confused Bridewort *Spiraea x pseudosalicifolia* in another hedgerow on Paddock Hill. Hungarian Brome *Bromopsis inermis* was in Middlewood Way in SJ87, as was, the seldom recorded, Narrow-fruited Watercress *Nasturtium microphyllum*. In SJ98 Heath Groundsel *Senecio sylvaticus* was found at Higher Poynton and Tall Tutsan *Hypericum x inodorum* was on the bank of the Macclesfield Canal.

Keith found the white-flowered Peach-leaved Bellflower *Campanula persicifolia* var. *alba* and the variegated Lesser Periwinkle *Vinca minor* 'Argenteovariegata' at Plawsworth. At Great Lumley he saw the alien grass Ripgut Brome *Anisantha rigida*, which now appears to be more common than the similar Great Brome *Anisantha diandra*. Water Bent *Polypogon viridis*, seen on Chester Moor, is now becoming widespread in the north.

Dorothy has found new plants in four of her squares. In SD63 a rather splendid Pyrenean Lily *Lilium pyrenaicum* was found in woodland at Salesbury. In SD64 Woodruff *Galium odoratum* was in a hedgebank at Doeford Bridge and Wheat *Triticum aestivum* at Higher Hodder Bridge. Of Dorothy's nine new plants for SD73, four were on the roadside by the Parsonage Reservoir, including Yellow-loosestrife *Lysimachia vulgaris*, Shining Crane's-bill *Geranium lucidum* and Wavy Hair-grass *Avenella flexuosa*. Heath Bedstraw *Galium saxatile* and Heath

Rush *Juncus squarrosus* were found on moorland above Waddington in SD74.

I did not visit the Isle of Man this year so no new plants. In early March I decided to retire from my 3-day a week job, leaving at the end of June, but, due to Covid restrictions, I actually left in mid-March but was confined to my statutory exercise of walking the dog from home. This was an ideal time to start some monad recording, doing my home square, SE1635, and the one adjacent, SE1634, so every day I walked Max, the dog, over parts of

Photo: Jesse Tregale

Blue Thimbleflower



my two monads recording the plants. I found *Mizuna Brassica rapa* var. *niposinica*, identified by David Broughton from my photo, on Cornwall Road. The long-sought-after Meadow Barley *Hordeum secalinum* was on the verge on Kings Road, an area usually mown but left this year, and on another verge on Ashbourne Gardens several plants of Blue Thimbleflower *Gilia capitata* were found. Fang's Cotoneaster *Cotoneaster fangianus* was on waste ground on Bolton Road, the fourth British record. Himalayan Birch *Betula utilis* var. *jacquemontii* seedlings were growing beneath planted trees on Hamm Strasse. Michael Wilcox told me where a number of new plants could be found, including Purple Viper's-bugloss *Echium plantagineum* on a disturbed bank on Valley Road and the hybrid Mouse-ear-hawkweed x Fox-and-cubs *Pilosella* x *stoloniflora* appearing amongst the long established parent plants on the brown field site at Fairweather Green.

Sheila added 14 new plants to her SD74 square. The Lords-and-Ladies with yellow spadix *Arum maculatum* var. *tetreltii* was in West Bradford and Pampas-grass *Cortaderia selloana* on the roadside by the railway bridge on Pimlico Road, Clitheroe. Finally, a rather surprising find in the often visited Salthill Quarry was 100-plus Round-leaved Wintergreens *Pyrola rotundifolia* ssp. *maritima*.

Thanks to all who sent in their records. Many members were unable to visit their squares due to the Covid restrictions but some of us, due to the restrictions, covered our home squares more thoroughly and, in fact,

2020 was the best year in my Bradford square for over 20 years.

I hope that everyone has been able to botanise further afield this year now restrictions have been lifted. So good hunting everyone.

B.A. 'JESSE' TREGALE



Purple Viper's-bugloss

10 KM SQUARE STUDY (SOUTH) 2020

Name	Hectad	Location	Years	New	Total
Nick Barber	SP22	Churchill, Oxfordshire	2	19	204
Gareth Bursnall	TQ23	Crawley, West Sussex	6	22	597
Rodney Burton	TQ56	Darenth Valley, Kent	26	14	696
José Gibbs	TR37	Margate, Kent	6	25	163
Pippa Hyde	TQ15	Leatherhead, Surrey	2	204	294
Barbara Mathews	TM23	W. Felixstowe, Suffolk	23	2	683
	TM24	Woodbridge, Suffolk	21	0	538
	TM33	E. Felixstowe, Suffolk	24	5	668
	TM34	Shottisham, Suffolk	12	7	361
Daphne Mills	TQ75	Maidstone, Kent	11	8	703
Ted Phenna	SH57	Bangor & Anglesey	13	0	432
	SH67	Llanfairfechan, Gwynedd	17	15	691
	SH68	Llangoed, Anglesey	8	0	314
	SH78	Great Orme, Gwynedd	41	10	726
Sue Poyser & Doug Grant	TQ76	Rochester & Chatham, Kent	23	7	900
	TQ77	Higham & Cliffe, Kent	15	5	618
Ted Pratt	SY97	Worth Matravers, Dorset	9	16	598
	SY98	Wareham & Corfe, Dorset	13	14	1256
	SZ08	Studland, Dorset	15	21	1247
Janice Reynolds	TQ40	Newhaven, E. Sussex	19	9	699

2020 was the first year that I received records for the 10 km Square Study (South) and I am astounded by the dedication and expertise of all the botanists who sent their entries to me. The letters, emails and comments that were included with their records were especially useful and gave me a valuable insight into their squares.

Nick spent much time at home in 2020, however he was still able to add more species to his Oxfordshire 10km square SP22. At the start of the year Green Hellebore *Helleborus viridis* was a lovely find in a hedgerow and later in March he spotted Lesser

Periwinkle *Vinca minor*. July was Nick's main botanising month when he found Meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, Great Willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum* and, beside a stream, Yellow Iris *Iris pseudacorus*. Nick saw several species in grassy places which included Agrimony *Agrimonia eupatoria*, Meadow Crane's-bill *Geranium pratense*, Rosebay Willowherb *Chamaenerion angustifolium* and Hedge Woundwort *Stachys sylvatica*. Throughout 2020 Nick was busy mothing; a timely 2019 Christmas present of an actinic light trap enabled him to add many extra species to his garden moths list.

Gareth got off to a flying start in February in his TQ23 hectad when he discovered an unusual and striking form of Lesser Celandine *Ficaria verna* "Collarette" with attractive bronze stripes on the leaves. In spring he found white varieties of two species, Primrose *Primula vulgaris* var. *alba* in a churchyard and Columbine *Aquilegia vulgaris* "Nivea" on a pavement. Two exciting finds in June were Great Lettuce *Lactuca virosa* on waste ground and the blousy Peony-flowered Opium Poppy *Papaver somniferum* var. *paeniflorum* on the edge of a wall. One of Gareth's 2020 projects was to search for different forms of Field Bindweed *Convolvulus arvensis* and his sharp eyes spotted five different forms on various roadside verges; they were forma *pallidiroseus*, f. *decarrhabdotus*, f. *perroseus*, f. *pentastictus* and f. *decemvulnerus*, all illustrated in Volume three of Sell and Murrell. On an October outing Gareth came upon Yellow Trumpet *Phygelius aequalis* with bunches of creamy yellow tubular flowers, a great addition to the year's botanising.

Rodney decided that in 2020 he would undertake surveys of four monads covering the village of Eynsford and adjacent fields, all within his Darenth Valley 10km square TQ56 in Kent. He started surveying in April and continued until September adding 12 species to his hectad. A 10m long patch of Rose-of-Sharon *Hypericum calycinum* had spread along a lane where he also found Fox-and-cubs *Pilosella aurantiaca* ssp. *carpathicola*, which spreads by stolons rather than by rhizomes. Rodney spotted a hybrid of

American Willowherb and Hoary Willowherb *Epilobium ciliatum* x *E. parviflorum* = *E. x floridulum* in a car park and a nice woodland find was Cher Hawkweed *Hieracium cheriense*. Squirrel-sown plants of Walnut *Juglans regia* were growing in two places on field borders and he found a seedling of Lime *Tilia x europaea* in woodland. Two species on Rodney's list which were not in his monads survey were eight flowering suckers of Pride-of-India *Koeleruteria paniculata* on a steep bank and in a lawn a very exciting find was Spreading Mouse-ear-hawkweed *Pilosella flagellaris* ssp. *flagellaris*, although Rodney says the plant is not so exciting to look at without flowers!

José's 10km square TR37 includes Margate and incorporates an interesting section of the north Kent coast, including cliff-tops, promenades, residential areas and grass verges. In 2020 José concentrated on the immediate vicinity of her home, as the increased numbers of out-of-town visitors on the cliffs and along the promenade had made botanising more difficult than usual. A nice cliff-top discovery in mid-February was Common Whitlowgrass *Erophila verna*. Among José's finds in May were Tamarisk *Tamarix gallica* on a cliff-top and in the undercliff area Hybrid Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* x *H. hispanica* = *H. x massartiana*, Common Vetch *Vicia sativa* and, towards the end of the month, Knotted Hedge-parsley *Torilis nodosa*. A favourite plant was Broad Bean *Vicia faba* growing at the base of a tree in a residential road; unfortunately later it became severely affected with blackfly and did not

produce any beans! Opium Poppy *Papaver somniferum* was growing on a cliff-top edge in June and, although it was extremely dry throughout July and into August, José managed to find Hoary Willowherb *Epilobium parviflorum* and on a railway bank she discovered Russian-vine *Fallopia baldschuanica*.

Pippa was very busy in the second year of recording in her TQ15 10km square in Surrey and has added an extremely commendable 204 species to her list in 2020. She concentrated on the area around her home in Leatherhead and made some excellent finds. A lovely early discovery beside a bridleway in March was Spring Starflower *Tristagma uniflorum* with its starry, six-petalled flowers. In May, River Water-crowfoot *Ranunculus fluitans* was an interesting sighting in the River Mole and Water Dock *Rumex hydrolapathum* was found beside the river later that month. Lesser Meadow-rue *Thalictrum minus* and the yellow-headed Fern-leaf Yarrow *Achillea filipendulina* were great finds in June. Pippa spotted Pale Yellow-eyed-grass *Sisyrinchium striatum* next to a cycle path. Other interesting plants included Yellow-juiced Poppy *Papaver lecoqii* by a roadside, Cornflower *Centaurea cyanus*, which had established itself in paving cracks and Broad-leaved Everlasting-pea *Lathyrus latifolius* which had made its home in an alleyway next to Waitrose. After such a splendid couple of years we look forward to seeing Pippa's 2021 records.

During the spring and summer of 2020 Barbara was temporarily living by the Norfolk Broads, so although a



lovely location, it was quite a distance from her three Suffolk 10km squares. All three of her hectads have a great number of records already, but even so she has been able to add some extra species to her lists. In the TQ33 square East Felixstowe, Barbara was surprised to find four tall suckers of Silver Wattle, the florists' Mimosa, *Acacia dealbata* living up to its name with attractive silvery foliage, beside a path to the Felixstowe cliffs. Strangely there was no evidence of a parent tree. When some tall nettles were cut down to the ground it revealed Four-leaved Pink-sorrel *Oxalis tetraphylla*. The Suffolk Biological recorder confirmed the identification as this was a new plant for Barbara. She found Orange-peel Clematis *Clematis tangutica* scrambling along old railings on an overgrown footpath, its cheerful flowers brightening a dull day. Barbara realised that she needed to add two records from previous years to her TQ23 square list, Water Forget-me-not *Myosotis scorpioides* and Turkey Oak *Quercus cerris*, both seen at Gulpher.

Photo: Ken Southall

Daphne's 10km square TQ75 in Kent is not within easy walking distance from her home, but even so in 2020 she managed to add to her very impressive total. On her September visits to Cuckoo Wood, in Sandling, Daphne added three species to her list. She was particularly pleased to locate Copse-bindweed *Fallopia dumetorum* by a roadside verge by following the directions given to her by the Kent recorder, Geoffrey Kitchener. Bifid Hemp-nettle *Galeopsis bifida* was a nice find in a small Maidstone wood. In spring Daphne discovered Rosy Garlic *Allium roseum* in Aylesford village and in July she identified Greater Duckweed *Spirodela polyrrhiza* in Teston.

Ted Phenna studies four 10km squares in North Wales; he has been recording the Great Orme area for 41 years and it is amazing that he could add ten new species to his already magnificently long lists. Among Ted's new finds in 2020 were Yellow Chamomile *Cota tinctoria*, with its solitary, long-stalked, yellow flowers, beside a post box and the very showy China Aster *Callistephus chinensis*. A Purple x Pale Toadflax hybrid *Linaria purpurea* x *L. repens* = *L. x dominii* was an interesting discovery in Llandudno and surprisingly the striking white Altar-lily *Zantedeschia aethiopica*, was growing on waste ground on the West Shore. In SH67, the Llanfairfechan area, Ted's records included Leek *Allium porrum* on a railway embankment, Needle Spike-rush *Eleocharis acicularis* in a marshy area, Common Millet *Panicum miliaceum* along a beach footpath and Hybrid Woundwort *Stachys x ambigua* next to a farm

roadside. Ted's record of Narrow-leaved Ragwort *Senecio inaequidens* was the only one in the hectad, showing that it is continuing to increase its range in the UK.

Sue and Doug had been out quite a bit together in 2020 and found a good number of plants in both their squares to add to their already outstanding totals. They made a special effort to do more recording in their TQ77 square Higham and Cliffe, to increase the number of species recorded to the north of Rochester. They had hoped that two chalk pits in this area would yield a good number of species, but on arrival they found that building work had started there! However, they were still able to find some good plants. They discovered Sneezewort *Achillea ptarmica* in Upnor and, in Frindsbury, Spiked Sedge *Carex spicata*, Fox-and-cubs *Pilosella aurantiaca* with its bright orange flowers and Sulphur Cinquefoil *Potentilla recta*. Sue and Doug's other square TQ76 Rochester and Chatham, produced some interesting species. In June, Common Fiddleneck *Amsinckia micrantha* was discovered at Borstal and, in other areas, Crown Vetch *Securigera varia*, Twiggy Mullein *Verbascum virgatum*, Pale Yellow-eyed-grass *Sisyrinchium striatum* ssp. *striatum* were all good finds. For many years Sue had been puzzling about a patch of leaves that had been appearing in her garden, but in 2020 the plant suddenly decided to burst into bloom and was soon identified as Common Blue-sowthistle *Cicerbita macrophylla*.

It was amazing that Ted Pratt could add any more plants to the very impressive totals in his three Dorset

hectads. In SY97 he surveyed eight fields for the National Trust and his highlights included a long stand of Turkish Iris *Iris orientalis*, which the grazing stock had left untouched, a clump of a primrose-coloured hybrid of Hedge x Lady's Bedstraw *Galium x pomeranicum*, a colony of Alsike Clover *Trifolium hybridum* and, growing beside a track, Meadow Crane's-bill *Geranium pratense* cultivar Silver Queen. Ted's best find in the hectad was a colony of the nationally scarce Upright Spurge *Euphorbia stricta* along a roadside in Worth Matravers village. In his SY98 hectad Ted found a Hollyhock *Alcea rosea* which managed to produce flowers and fruit despite growing on the edge of the main road through Corfe Castle village. A Wellingtonia *Sequoiadendron giganteum* had self-sown beside a public footpath in Wareham. Ted was delighted to discover a large Leopard-spotted

Southern Marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* var. *junialis* by a minor road at Creech. Growing in the gutter right outside Ted's house in his SZ80 square were 15 spikes of the lovely annual campion Rose-of-heaven *Silene coeli-rosa*. Other garden escapes in the hectad included Greater Musk-mallow *Malva alcea* and Pencilled Crane's-bill *Geranium versicolor*.

Once again imported soil on waste ground in Newhaven produced some unusual species for Janice in her TQ40 square. In March Cyclamen-flowered Daffodil *Narcissus cyclamineus*, with its strongly reflexed tepals, was found together with Hyacinth *Hyacinthus orientalis*. The following month Shrubby Scorpion-vetch *Coronilla valentina* and the exotic Giant Viper's-bugloss *Echium pininana* were great finds. Janice discovered Perennial Candytuft *Iberis*

sempervirens in a pavement crack in Bishopstoke, where, in December, she also found Hedge Hebe *Veronica x franciscana* which was her last record of the year.

I hope that you will find 2021 an interesting and productive year for botanising and I am looking forward to receiving your new records. Thank you all for sending me your 2020 lists and the very helpful additional information.

JILL OAKLEY



Meadow Crane's-bill
var. Silver Queen

ONE DAY MEETINGS 2020

LOWER MOOR FARM AND THE WARREN 26th APRIL

The start of the botanical season proved challenging for WFS Field Meetings in 2021. At the time of this meeting the “Rule of Six” was in operation. To cope with this restriction Gwyndaf and I joined Pauline and Richard Wilson on their recce a few days before the official meeting.

Lower Moor Farm is the main reserve in a group of four adjacent nature reserves, totalling 312 acres in area, in Wiltshire. They feature lakes, woodland, swamp, pasture and flower meadows. It was a glorious Spring day for our visit with birds chirping and flowers blooming. Being a recce, our focus was on checking for any Health and Safety issues, checking on the availability, or not, of toilets, a suitable place to stop for lunch and whether or not the hoped-for flowers were putting in an appearance.

The answers to the above were:- H&S – nothing untoward, toilets – due to Covid, bushes were all that was on offer, lunch – some conveniently placed socially distanced logs, and flowers – happily mostly yes, though not the Early-purple Orchids *Orchis mascula*. We did see some wonderful Marsh-marigolds *Caltha palustris* and a brilliant display of Fritillaries *Fritillaria meleagris*, though Pauline said they were at the beginning and would provide even more of a show by the time of the WFS meeting. Richard,

with a lifetime spent in horticulture, focussed our attention on soil and landscape conditions and hence the likelihood of various plants in different fields and even different sections of a field.

The visit to The Warren in the afternoon, a site that you would need to be aware of in order to find, was equally rewarding and, amongst other plants, the Pasqueflowers *Pulsatilla vulgaris* were found.

A couple of weeks later Pauline led the WFS Field meeting and reported that they were ages getting to the Fritillaries because other things, especially sedges, proved a distraction. They were two inches from the ground so participants were on their stomachs trying to ID and photograph them. There were a number of Green-winged Orchids *Anacamptis morio* dotted around and the leaves of what was concluded to be Meadow Safron *Colchicum autumnale*.

Moving on to The Warren, the Vice County Recorder had been there the previous Sunday counting the Pasqueflowers (1600) - apparently very much down on the last time he had a record in the 1990's. He had sent grid references for Dwarf Mouse-ear *Cerastium pumilum* and Early Forget-me-not *Myosotis ramosissima* so the group set about pursuing these references. The Early Forget-me-not was found without

problem, and a Mouse-ear, but much deliberation on this resulted in the conclusion that it almost certainly wasn't *pumilum*. It would have been a nice find if it had been.

Two excellent sites and the conclusion at the end of the day was that another WFS Field Meeting to the site a little later in the year would prove to be of interest and rewarding.

JANET JOHN

COCK MARSH, COOKHAM 5th MAY

Spring 2021 and the gradual relaxing of the second lockdown due to Covid was under way. I hadn't left London since the previous October, had been botanising only in my central London patch and attendance of botanical group events had been strictly via Zoom. For me therefore, joining the WFS for an exploration of this area of water meadows and steep chalk hillsides on the River Thames near Cookham was a happy and significant occasion – it was also my first meeting with the WFS.

The 'Rule of Six' still applied so we split into three groups. After the cold spring, we knew many things were late but nevertheless set off full of optimism from the NT car park on the edge of the village. It was a bright, crisp morning with clouds scudding across the sky.

The first section of the path lay amongst trees and scrub and here we noticed Lords-and-Ladies *Arum maculatum* in profusion. Gwyndaf John showed us the fascinating structure of male and female flowers concealed at the base of the spadix and, above them, the ring of thread-like sterile flowers which act as a one-way door to capture insects in the base of the flower where they

become covered in pollen; these hairs then wither away to allow the insects to escape and take the pollen to other plants. Another plant in noticeable numbers was Caper Spurge *Euphorbia lathyris*. We saw a densely-flowered Gorse *Ulex europaeus* that turned out to be the double-flowered cultivar 'Flore Pleno'.

Our path traversed a flank of Winter Hill from where we had glimpses of Cliveden amongst the trees on the other side of the Thames. A Whitethroat sang loudly as we passed by. In the fields alongside, Bulbous Buttercup *Ranunculus bulbosus* was in flower with its reflexed sepals. We examined the tiny blue flowers of a Cornsalad *Valerianella* but, without fruits, we were unable to identify it to species. We dipped down to look at the banks of the Strand Water drainage sluice which were thick with Greater Pond-sedge *Carex riparia*, Glaucous Sedge *C. flacca*, leaves of Common Comfrey *Symphytum officinale*, an Angelica, possibly an escaped *Angelica archangelica* rather than *A. sylvestris*, the tangle punctuated by big clumps of Greater Tussock-sedge *C. paniculata*.

Passing under a railway bridge our path levelled and we walked at the foot of a steep escarpment where the chalk showed itself everywhere the surface was disturbed. These slopes demand a visit later in the year, the turf being thick with rosettes and emergent leaves of what was to come. But one beautiful plant was already in flower, the Meadow Saxifrage *Saxifraga granulata*, with delicate clusters of flowers held high on fine, reddish stems. The colour, as we saw on closer inspection, is created by the red-tinged glandular hairs which cover the stems and calyx.

To our right lay the marshy river meadows which have been common land used for grazing since 1272.

This grazing and a scrub clearance regime has created a wonderful habitat of varied plant communities and the fact that the whole area is subject to periodic flooding and drying out is also a factor in maintaining the botanical richness. The scene in front of us was like a painting – meadows, patches of water with lopsided willows and groups of grazing cattle.

A series of silted pools lay ahead with a wealth of plants ranging from those on the hoof-churned muddy sides to the willows standing, but half falling, in the water. Here we had our first sight of the exquisite Water Violet *Hottonia palustris* found particularly in calcium-rich waters such as these. Each flower spike emerges straight



out of the water, the whorl of leaves which supports it being just below the surface. The flowers were mid-pool so we couldn't approach closely to observe them, but we knew they were in *Primulaceae* and have two types of flowers, pin and thrum. In this pool we saw our first Water-crowfoot of the day; these plants also favour alkaline water. The leaves of Yellow Iris *Iris pseudacorus* dominated the edge and shallower parts along with Glaucous Sedge *Carex flacca*.

At the furthest pool our three groups loosely gathered for a rest and picnic lunches. Here there were many more *Hottonia* in flower and other plants were just showing their leaves above the surface of the water.

Roger Heath-Brown talked us through the features to notice in Water-crowfoots, drawing our attention to the two types of leaves, floating laminar and underwater filigree, the disposition of the petals, which on some species overlap and on others are widely and gap-spaced and the shape of the nectar-pits at the base of the petals. We'd seen Common Water-crowfoot *Ranunculus aquatilis* with leaves both floating and submerged, petals overlapped and circular nectar-pits, and Thread-leaved Water-crowfoot *R. trichophyllus* with all leaves submerged and filigree, petals widely spaced and crescent shaped nectar-pits. There were other Water-crowfoots which couldn't definitively be identified.

Moving on we turned towards the river taking the boardwalk that



Meadow Saxifrage

crosses an ancient, abandoned channel of the Thames, which still floods regularly in winter. On drier areas of grassland the hairy rosettes of Hoary Plantain *Plantago media* were profuse; this again is a plant that favours chalk environments. On the way back along the riverbank with its many quaint houses and cabins, we saw plants characteristic of the waterside - Winter-cress *Barbarea vulgaris*, Water Dock *Rumex hydrolapathum*, Water Mint *Mentha aquatic* and Water Plantain *Alisma plantago-aquatica*.

By the time we got back to the car park the weather had turned squally and distant murmurs of thunder threatened. We therefore said our thanks to Janet and Gwyndaf John for organising a very enjoyable day and set off home before the downpour. I, for one, will definitely return to Cock Marsh both for the sheer beauty of the setting and for its abundance of interesting and rare plants.

MAUREEN PARRY

PRIOR'S COPPICE, RUTLAND

6th MAY

We were fortunate to be able to run this, early in the season, meeting albeit with 'Rule of Six' in force. Other restrictions were also thrown our way. A recce of the two sites the previous week showed that, because of the prolonged drought and the cold weather, there were very few Green-winged Orchids *Anacamptis morio* in flower in Merry's Meadows, in fact most were barely out of the ground; similarly for the Cowslips *Primula veris* and most of the other interesting plants. Hence it was decided to change the plan and not visit this Reserve. However, there was a good range of common and unusual woodland flowers at Prior's Coppice so plenty still to see. Weather was the next challenge – a rather cold, rainy day with even a number of hailstorms!

The visit to Prior's Coppice was enjoyed by our rather select group, despite the hailstorms. We found a

population of Herb Paris *Paris quadrifolia* with three, four and five leaves, which was interesting to see, given its scientific name!

According to Frances Critchlow, for whom this was her very first WFS Field Meeting, the highlights of her day were Midland Hawthorn *Crataegus laevigata*, Water Horsetail *Equisetum fluviatile*, Herb Paris *Paris quadrifolia*, Lesser Celandine *Ficaria verna*, Bulbous Buttercup *Ranunculus bulbosus*, Parsley Piert *Aphanes arvensis* and Green-winged Orchid *Anacamptis morio*. She also very much enjoyed the beautiful and tranquil habitats and remarked on the patience and clarity of the other members at the meeting in explaining the basics of the botany to her. Which we are pleased to hear as we make every effort to give people a helpful introduction!

GEOFFREY HALL

BERNWOOD FOREST AND MEADOWS, BUCKS

17th MAY

Bernwood Forest is an old Royal hunting forest of which there are roughly 100 hectares remaining. It is based in Buckinghamshire, borders Oxfordshire and is owned by the Forestry Commission.

The original date for this walk was the 12th May but due to the Covid 19 restrictions and a bigger group than allowed, it was moved to the 17th

May, the first day of more easing of restrictions and, even though we could have been having lunch inside restaurants and pubs, we opted for this walk. If that is not commitment, then what is?

Possibly the lure of inside lunches was too big for some as we ended up with a much reduced group of six people, our esteemed leader Roger

Heath-Brown, four natives and a foreigner. The last one would be me, a Dutch national who has been in the UK for some years and who recently started an interest in botany and went on her second walk with the Wild Flower Society and her first write-up of a WFS meeting. It is hard to know for a beginner what is of any interest, so I will describe the ones that were either new to me or enthused me for another reason.

We were promised a good variety of spring flowers and we were not disappointed, or rather, I was not disappointed. Even before leaving the car park to enter the woods, we counted 24 flowering species. One of the plants we saw here was Spotted Dead-nettle *Lamium maculatum*. Roger mentioned that this species has been recorded at one site for nearly 200 years, which made for an interesting discussion as to how long one calls a particular species a garden escape.

Further in the forest Roger pointed out three different kinds of Hawthorns, *Crataegus monogyna*, *C. laevigata* and their hybrid *C. x media*. I had not realised there were different kinds of Hawthorns within the UK and will next time not only look at the leaves but also will pay attention to the number of styles within the flower.

I was very excited to find a possible white orchid within one of the forest rides but it was quickly determined by the group that it was a most unusual white Bugle *Ajuga reptans*. Many of the group had never seen one before so I was rather pleased with the find.

We walked up a rather muddy path,



White-flowered
Bugle

which led us to some fields. In the first very muddy and sticky field we found some Field Pepperwort *Lepidium campestre* and Swine-cress *Lepidium coronopus*. However nothing could have prepared me for the second field, Bernwood Meadows.

Bernwood Meadows is a 7.5 hectare traditional meadow managed by the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust. In the meadow were hundreds and no, I am not exaggerating, and hundreds of Green-winged Orchids *Anacamptis morio*, what a feast for the eye. The vast majority were purple but there were some whites and pink to be found as well. I have to admit that when I saw this meadow, I simply could not stop smiling! I would be negligent not to tell you about the Adder's-tongue *Ophioglossum*

Photo: Anita Bathurst

vulgatum, which was also there and found in good numbers.

I was delighted that Bernwood Meadows was also our lunch stop for today. A perfect place and to make life even better, the sun came out, which was not forecast at all, so it was extra special. I did not mind when it was time to end our lunch and visit a different part of the wood. My cheeks had started to hurt from all the smiling and it had probably become a strange looking grimace by now. Here I was trying to make a

good impression, not sure I succeeded with that look.

In the afternoon we strolled slowly back to the car park via a different route. We discussed a possible Downy Birch *Betula pubescens*, had a short rain shower accompanied by some rather wonderful lightning and thunder. All in all, a very good day with some delightful, friendly people. I will need to do it again.

ANITA BATHURST

WEETING HEATH, NORFOLK 17th MAY

The meeting on April 10th last year was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and this was its replacement, the very first day on which we were allowed to gather together outside in groups of up to thirty people. Thirteen of us met up, plus our leader Stephen Clarkson, and the ebullient warden, James Symonds; sadly no sunshine but very fortunately no rain. Such is the fame of the three tiny Veronics – Fingered Speedwell *Veronica triphyllos*, Breckland Speedwell *V. praecox* and Spring Speedwell *V. verna* – that some heroes came from as far as away as Warwickshire, Yorkshire, Lincoln and South London.

After introductions we set off past a nice display of Field Mouse-ear *Cerastium arvense* to an arable field which was chosen fifty years ago by Norfolk Naturalists' Society, with the support of a friendly farmer, as a safe site on which to protect rare

Breckland arable species, especially the three Speedwells. As we entered the field we saw a beautiful Prickly Poppy *Roemeria argemone* and then it was a hands and knees or a low-bending job.

James thought that we were a bit late for the Fingered Speedwell but that there would be lots of Spring Speedwell but, in fact, we found several Fingered and Breckland Speedwells, but the Spring Speedwell flowers were the hardest to spot. Of the three the Fingered was the easiest to spot being erect and taller, all things being relative! In all cases there were a great many plants. Annual Knawel *Scleranthus annuus* ssp. *annuus* was another tiny treasure for the sharp-eyed and we enjoyed photographing a splendid patch of Bird's-foot *Ornithopus perpusillus*.

We then moved from this special arable field, which was sown with

Rye, to a large open heath and almost immediately saw a beautiful patch of Purple Milk-vetch *Astragalus danicus* in full bloom, a joy for those missing colour. Then on to a low bank for two very small calcareous-loving sedges the Rare Spring-sedge *Carex ericetorum* (which as its name suggests is very rare) and the more frequent Spring-sedge *C. caryophyllaea*. By this time we older botanists were a bit weary and headed back to our dog and our lunch, leaving the rest to botanise further. A very fruitful morning enjoyed particularly thanks to our charming and very hard-working warden, James. An all-round naturalist, he is a particularly keen lepidopterist with an on-site moth list of over 1100 species.

After lunch Stephen had a tempting add-on expedition to a site in nearby Mildenhall for the very rare Field Wormwood *Artemisia campestris* ssp. *campestris*. Currently only in leaf but masses of it on a big common near St John's Close. Flowering at the end of August it will be very easily found. In splendid colour at the moment were many clumps of Cypress Spurge *Euphorbia cyparissias*. So ended a happy, friendly and productive day. Our first WFS meeting but certainly not our last. Thank you Stephen.

BEN and TESSA FISHER

Several of us continued for the rest of the day taking in a couple more Breckland sites. These included Icklingham Triangle where we saw the tiny pink flowers of Spring Vetch *Vicia lathyroides* and the native Star-

of-Bethlehem *Ornithogalum umbellatum* ssp. *campestre*. The nearby Ramparts Field afforded us a patch of the very rare Blue Fescue *Festuca longifolia* and, for this year, a developing carpet of leaves of Russian Cinquefoil *Potentilla intermedia*. On these sandy soils can be found a diminutive form of Sheep's Sorrel with very narrow leaves, *Rumex acetosella* var. *tenuifolius*.

STEPHEN CLARKSON

P.S. Whilst looking at the Cypress Spurge in Mildenhall we noticed a few flower differences as if another species of Spurge was growing up through it. John and Monika Walton did a little bit of research to discover that these upright non-typical shoots were infected by a rust, either *Uromyces scutellatus* or *U. pisi-sativi*, producing a kind of gall. Microscopic examination of the spores is necessary to distinguish them but they are very rare. Fascinating stuff.



Photo: Anne Kell

NEW BUCKENHAM COMMON, NORFOLK

26th MAY

Eleven of us gathered on a very grey, spring day to take in the wild flowers of this 52 hectare, ancient common from the 12th century, with a small lake in the middle called Spittle Mere. We were off to a good start near the car park where we found some plants of Good-King-Henry *Blitum bonus-henricus* which can grow into a very



Green-winged Orchid

statuesque Goosefoot but unfortunately here cut back in its prime. On to the Common proper, where we came across carpets of Small-flowered Crane's-bill *Geranium pusillum* told by its dense, tiny, downward-pointing hairs on the leaves' petioles. Cow Parsley *Anthriscus*

sylvestris was growing in hordes, as was Bulbous Buttercup *Ranunculus bulbosus*, which has had an exceptional year everywhere this year. Meadow Foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis*, one of our earlier flowering grasses, was sticking its spikes up all over the place.

Spring was springing up in the forms of Sweet Vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, Good Friday Grass / Field Woodrush *Luzula campestris* and the

white flowers of Meadow Saxifrage *Saxifraga granulata*. The garden variety of Star-of-Bethlehem *Ornithogalum umbellatum* ssp. *umbellatum* appeared showing splendid towers of their white-tepalled flowers with a green stripe running down the middle.

Bill and Carol Hawkins were showing us this special area again but at lunchtime it proved hard to find a relatively dry spot to sit down and have our lunch. The skies got greyer and the temperature dropped but it didn't stop us enjoying the numbers of Green-winged Orchid *Anacamptis morio* that satisfied our eyes and our cameras. This was one of the best years that I have seen them there with their purple spikes and showing the green venation on the lateral sepals even more obviously on the less common white forms.

A Turtle Dove was then heard and a few of us tried to find it but we only saw it flying away from us. It was a keen eye that called us back to a spot where we found the unusual Adder's-tongue *Ophioglossum vulgatum*, a strange looking plant which amazingly has the highest chromosome count of any British plant. Why? Answers on a post card please.

After not being allowed out really for any form of meeting or adventure in 2020 it is such a pleasure to be out and about again with like-minded friends. Long may it improve and continue.

STEPHEN CLARKSON

BOOK REVIEW

Thorogood, C. and Rumsey, F. *Broomrapes of Britain & Ireland*.
BSBI Handbook 22 (2021). ISBN 9780901158598. £17.00



Ever since 1968 when the first edition of *Sedges of the British Isles* was published botanists have had an increasingly valuable resource to turn to. The Handbook series has included essentials such as Umbellifers (1980), Docks & Knotweeds (1981), Willows & Poplars (1984) as well as more critical groups such as Dandelions (1997), and rare treasures such as Sea Beans and Nickar Nuts (drift seeds, 2000). Recent additions include Fumitories (2009), Violas (2017) and Eyebrights (2018). They are used by BSBI members – most of the authors have been prominent in the society - and many others and have proved

endlessly useful. Long-term WFS members will know most of the authors, some personally. The books are all excellent as they completely lack the 'wikipedia syndrome' which makes information essentially doubtful. They have all been written by real experts on the plants they describe. Information may sometimes need updating, but is reliably true for the time it was written.

The format has remained unchanged except for the addition of colour photographs. Each species has a technical description (illustrated by clear line illustrations which include key critical details), notes on its habitat and a distribution map. Broomrapes are a notoriously difficult and mysterious group and this Handbook gives the accounts in a slightly different way with increasing use of photographs and the line illustrations merged into the text rather than on a separate page. My first reaction was to its appearance – the cover illustration has a row of four flower spikes in varying tones of purple, russet and near-white, lined up under the title and it looks an irresistibly beautiful little book. I have kept it in sight ever since my copy arrived! Within all is as good as usual, with a key, maps and accounts, while there are also chapters on 'Life Cycle and Biology', 'Non-photosynthetic Plants in Britain and Ireland' and 'Habitats and Ecology' which are really enlightening about these strange entities.

Chances to test my identification skills on this group come all too seldom, but the most likely to be encountered is naturally Common Broomrape *Orobanche minor* and this is of course one of the most difficult as it has six subspecies / varieties with differing host plants. Well, help is on the way! Twenty-six pages and a species key are devoted to it. The book is also designed to tolerate field use, being a slim but tough A5 soft cover, on shiny paper which looks as water-repellent as is possible.

All the Handbooks which are in print (and with luck some second-hand copies) are available through the BSBI booksellers Summerfield Books. I do recommend the series for groups which can be difficult. They go much further than any of the usual colour 'wild flower' books and, being illustrated, they are rather more approachable for most of us than 'Stace'. And even if our botany trips continue to have some restrictions, this book brings a smile to my face every time I see the cover!

RO FITZGERALD

BOTANICAL LATIN QUIZ – ANSWERS

Compass Points

Northern	- borealis
Southern	- australis
Eastern	- orientalis
Western	- occidentalis

Seasons

Spring	- vernalis
Summer	- aestivalis
Autumn	- autumnalis
Winter	- hyemalis

Shades of Yellow / Brown

Yellow	- lutea / flava
Straw yellow	- ochroleuca
Yellow turning pale yellow	- flavescens
Bright brown	- fuscus

Shades of Red

Red	- rubra
Scarlet	- coccineus
Blood red	- sanguineus

Shades of Blue / Purple

Sky blue	- caerulea
Pure deep blue	- azurea
Purple	- purpurea

Shades of Green

Fresh green	- viridis
Grey-green	- glaucus

White / Grey / Black

Black	- nigra
Hoary white/Grey	- incanus
Milk white	- lacteus

Flesh coloured	- incarnatus
Rose red	- rosea
Rusty brown	- ferrugineus