

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Since I wrote to you for the last Magazine I have been to Colombia twice for botanical reasons. This means I have not had much time to enjoy the wild flowers of Britain this summer. Sadly, the dry weather has not helped wild flowers in the southwest this year.

My first trip to Colombia was to help their national forest inventory by identifying the many herbarium collections they had made of the plant families in which I specialise: the Brazil nut family Lecythidaceae and the coco plum family Chrysobalanaceae, amongst others. The forest department of Colombia has set up a large number of forest inventory plots to accurately determine what species are there to provide data for forest conservation. At present I am doing all I can to encourage Colombia to preserve their forests rather than burn them down as is currently happening in Brazil. The fires in Brazil alarm me, but what the press does not say is they are nothing in comparison to the deforestation of 2005 and 2010 when deforestation peaked. Also, many of the fires shown are outside the Amazon region. However, there is a grave reason for concern as President Bosonaro of Brazil is really encouraging the development of the Amazon and the invasion of indigenous territory. He is much more interested in profit than in preservation. This has given farmers the opportunity to cut and burn more forest. The Amazon rainforest is not the "lungs of the world" that the press

keeps on saying because it actually uses as much oxygen as it produces. However, the destruction of the forest should be of concern to all of us because the Amazon is a vital sink for carbon dioxide and it controls the rainfall of much of South America. The Amazon is helping to reduce the effects of global warming by absorbing much of carbon dioxide that the industrial world produces.

My second trip to Colombia in August was to attend and give a lecture at their National Botanical Congress in the small town of Florencia in the Colombian Amazon region. The congress had over 400 participants. I was greatly encouraged to see so many young scientists and students working in botany and especially to hear about their concern for environmental issues. A highlight for me was to attend a session where a number of high school students presented their science and conservation projects. The standard was high and their concern for the environment was obvious. It reminded me that we need to do more to encourage young people to join the Wild Flower Society. While I was in Bogotá, the capital city, I felt greatly honoured to be admitted as an Honorary Member of their Academy of Sciences. I am now looking forward to a quieter autumn in the UK and am just about to go out to look at a restored meadowland in Dorset.

GHILLEAN PRANCE

EDITORIAL

In this issue of the WFS magazine the debate about what counts as a wild flower continues. Our Chairman, Peter Llewellyn has written an article, on behalf of the Committee, discussing some of the issues surrounding this debate. The general feeling is that it is impossible to make a hard and fast ruling and that, at the end of the day, it is down to the conscience of the observer.

Interestingly, Peter Marren, in the latest issue of *British Wildlife* (vol.30, no. 6 August 2019 p427) extends the debate, this time considering the idea of nativeness in our British flora. Several species that were formerly considered to be native, such as our beautiful Fritillary *Fritillaria meleagris*, are now considered by some to be garden escapes from the 18th-century. At what point does a modern garden escape become part of our established flora?

The North-west Rare Plants Initiative has been set up to help conserve some of our rarest plants and Joshua Styles reports on some of their progress. This is painstaking work, that has been supported by a grant from WFS, involving the breeding and reintroduction into suitable habitats of several very rare native species. But, what would you do if you

encountered one of these reintroductions in the wild? Would you even know? And so the debate continues.

When all of this becomes too much, do have a go at Gareth Bursnall's Botanical Latin Quiz.

This magazine covers member's findings on the different hunts offered by the Society, from the monitoring of 10Km squares, to the seasonal hunts through the winter and at the beginning and end of the season. These are becoming increasingly popular and our Secretaries are to be thanked for undertaking a mammoth task of collating and reporting on your findings. If you don't currently participate in these hunts do give it a go. It is a good way to 'keep your hand in' at a time when flowering is limited and it gives a good focus to winter walks.

I continue to be in the fortunate position of having a lot of copy for the magazine, so if I haven't printed your report yet I apologise. Most of the field meeting reports will appear in the Winter and Spring issues, ready to whet your appetite for the new season.

ANNE KELL

**Copy date for Winter magazine
1st November, 2019**

NOTICES

The Presidents' Award 2019

The annual Presidents' Award, chosen jointly by the Presidents of the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (BSBI) and the Wild Flower Society (WFS) acknowledges "the most useful contribution to the understanding of flowering plants and ferns of the British Isles through a book, major paper, discovery or outstanding exhibit" in a calendar year.

The current Presidents, Chris Metherell for BSBI and Sir Ghilleen Prance for WFS, agreed that this year's award should go to Angus Hannah for his book *Isle of Bute Flora*. This is the first ever county flora for the Isle of Bute and is the outcome of 20 years' intensive research by the author.

The award will be presented at the BSBI's Annual Exhibition Meeting and AGM, held at the Natural History Museum, London on 23rd November.

Vegetative Key to the British Flora

A much-revised second edition of the Vegetative Key to the British Flora (written by two WFS members John Poland & Eric Clement) is due out this November. The authors have spent the last ten years improving the keys and have added more species, new ID characters and (out of necessity!) updated the scientific names. A special offer will be announced at the end of September at www.bsbi.org/vegkey.

Changes to responsibilities

Following the recent AGM Pauline Wilson, currently the Spring Week Hunt secretary, will be joining the committee.

Dorothy Ross, who has overseen the Winter Months Hunt for the last three years, has decided to step down and her position will be taken by Pippa Hyde. Our thanks go to Dorothy for her sterling work in collating the data and compiling the reports. Please can you send your records for the 2019/2020 Winter Months Hunt to Pippa.

Her e-mail address is pippahyde3323@gmail.com

Referees

Following changes to the role of Branch Secretaries it was considered a good idea to have a team of experienced botanists to act as referees in cases where there might be a dispute over the identification of a plant. These referees can also be approached for clarification over species identity. Our three referees are Heather Colls (heather.colls@btinternet.com), Pippa Hyde (e-mail above) and Peter Jepson (pjepson@ecology.btinternet.com). Please do feel free to contact them if you have any queries.

IS IT WILD?

Introduction

In the Spring magazine Richard Robinson raised the question: 'What is a wild flower?' Strangely the executive committee had already decided that it would be a good topic to explore so this article is a shorter version of what was written for them a month or two ago.

To start with we have to say what we usually mean by wild. The simplest definition is that a plant is wild if it hasn't been deliberately planted by a human being. Unfortunately, that doesn't give enough clarity or cover all the possibilities, which is why the debate continues each year. In this article I give my understanding of the concept of wildness, but I know from the start that not everyone agrees. Ultimately, the individual botanist will just have to make a personal judgement because there are no other objective criteria she or he can use.

Clearing some odd confusions

1. Native plants

The first muddle is a strange one which until recently I hadn't heard about: a wild plant can't be foreign! True wild plants are British or Irish ones.

This is incorrect and confuses 'nateness' with 'wildness'. Many of the plants described in British and Irish Floras are originally from other countries and are clearly not native to these islands. Native plants have been established in these islands

since the last ice age some 12,000 years ago but in 2019 a huge number of British and Irish plants are not natives.

The Botanical Society of the Britain and Ireland created a very useful list of plants called BSBI2007 which is on an Excel spreadsheet. They list over 7,800 taxa (different plants) which have at one time or other been found growing in the wild in Britain. Of these only about 1,500 were thought to be definitely native.

2. Active Gardens

It has been said that you can't find wild plants in gardens. Gardens are cultivated areas full of deliberately planted ornamental species, so that makes sense, doesn't it?

Not really.

The bane of a gardener's life is the weed problem. These weeds just keep appearing without anyone planting them or tending them afterwards. But annual weeds such as Hairy Bittercress *Cardamine hirsuta*, Thale Cress *Arabidopsis thaliana* and Petty Spurge *Euphorbia peplus* are wild plants whose life cycle is particularly suited to the rich soils we create in our gardens. Some of these unwelcome and unplanted weeds are not only perennial but, once present, very difficult to remove. Such species as Field Horsetail *Equisetum arvense*, Greater Bindweed *Calystegia sylvatica* and Couch Grass *Elymus repens* (formerly *Elytrigia repens*) are not only wild but persistent.

Pale Galingale at base of wall-
parent growing in bed above

But what about the more attractive species? In some gardens, wild orchids such as Common Spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* can grow without the owners doing anything much to encourage them. It is likely that one of the fungi, upon which orchids depend for part of their life cycle, has somehow established itself in the soil and the orchid seed, which is so light it can travel anywhere on the wind, has settled, germinated and grown into a full plant. In which case, it starts out as a wild plant, in my opinion.

It isn't simple though. What if the owner then "cultivates" the orchid patch by restricting competitors or preventing mowing at certain times? That once wild plant is now being "gardened". This is where the judgement comes in. There is no right answer to this: you must make up your own mind.

3. Boundaries

How far from the edge of a garden does wildness begin? Is a plant wild if it grows in a garden but also grows outside on the grass verge? It depends. In the case of a plant like Yellow Archangel *Lamiasstrum galeobdolon* ssp. *argentatum*, which is probably no more than a garden cultivar of the woodland wild plant, it is entirely possible that a plant in the verge outside a garden is still part of the patch in the garden itself. So for some plants you must check to see if it is still "attached" to the cultivated garden.

Walls are different. If, as a gardener you've ever tried to plant something in a crack in a wall, you'll know it nearly always dies. A plant growing



vigorously out of a small crack is, for me, wild. Plants such as Pellitory-of-the-Wall *Parietaria judaica*, Wall Rue *Asplenium ruta-muraria* and Wall Lettuce *Mycelis muralis* are usually found in or on walls. They are wild.

On top of walls there are a huge number of plants to be found, particularly on old walls by the seaside. It is not uncommon to find Lesser Trefoil *Trifolium dubium*, Sea Fern-grass *Catapodium marinum*, Fern-grass *C. rigidum*, Hairy Bitter-cress *Cardamine hirsuta* and, even occasionally, Thrift *Armeria maritima* on top of walls. For some reason the tops of walls are good places to look for plants that are not obviously 'wall plants'. I always look on top of a wall for Flattened Meadow-grass *Poa compressa* for instance. The wall may be a garden boundary, but these are surely wild plants.

4. Old gardens and derelict land

These areas are amongst the most problematic when determining whether a plant is wild and not planted. Old gardens and derelict land always have a mixture of genuine wild plants, which have taken advantage of the absence of tidy humans, plus previously planted, garden plant survivors. Shrubs and

Photo: Anne Kell



Warley Place

Warley Place, Essex:
Once a stately home with grounds containing wonderful collections of spring flowers, it is now hardly recognisable as a cultivated garden and the plants have expanded way beyond the old borders. The trick here, for those who want to be scrupulous in adding to their lists only those plants which are

trees, particularly ornamental ones should be treated with suspicion unless it is obvious that they have suckered elsewhere or produced seedlings.

There are two good examples which come to mind when working out whether a plant is wild under this heading:

The Great Orme in North Wales: while much of the area is genuinely and obviously wild there are parts which were once cultivated gardens but quite a long time ago. Just to make matters complicated though, the gardens nearest to habitation and the Café are still properly gardened. Plants from the current cultivated gardens and from the old overgrown parts escape into the genuinely wild areas of the Great Orme. An example is Mediterranean Spurge *Euphorbia characias* which was obviously a favourite in the garden but, if you look carefully, can be found in the nearby woodland. You will perhaps know from your own experience that this species does self-seed easily.

genuinely wild, is to determine where the boundaries were. Beyond the boundaries, the plants have spread somehow and could be considered wild but within they are best simply admired and not recorded. Even if they have reproduced themselves within the boundaries there is no way of knowing for sure.

In both cases and many others like them you, the botanist, must decide whether you think it reasonable to regard such plants as genuinely wild or not.

5. Lawns

Lawns were usually originally turfed or sown with a grass seed mixture but inevitably some species arrive in your lawn which are often known as Lawn Weeds. You can even get selective weed killers to get rid of them. The obvious and common ones are Dandelions *Taraxacum* spp. and Daisies *Bellis perennis*. These are wild just as the weeds in cultivated beds are wild.

Other species which take advantage of the lawn as a habitat include Lawn-lobelia *Pratia* spp. and Slender speedwell *Veronica filiformis*. Not

only do these plants thrive any mowing regime but our lawn maintenance methods seem to help spread them. They are, in my opinion, wild plants.

Harder to determine are grass species. Many lawns are sown with Rye-grass *Lolium* spp. or Fescues *Festuca* spp. but you can't rule out Sweet Vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* in the seed mix so that could be wild or not. The wild grasses growing in a lawn would need to be determined carefully.

6. Churchyards and Cemeteries

Like old gardens and derelict land, it is tricky to determine whether the plants you are seeing are original planted species or mature plants which the original planted species have produced. The rough guide is that the original isn't wild because it was planted but the progeny are wild because they are naturalised, non-planted species. In these cases written guidance isn't anywhere near as useful as seeing the site, ideally with one or two other interested botanist friends, and making decisions based on what you assess is the wildness or otherwise of the various plants you are considering. There are some cases where it is a bit clearer that the plant is wild.

Primroses *Primula vulgaris* are not uncommon in churchyards and can easily hybridise with nearby Wild Cowslips *P. veris* producing a new plant: the wild hybrid *P. x polyantha*. Of course, if it is obvious that the original planting included Garden Polyanthus, then that confuses the issue again.

The grassland areas of churchyards and cemeteries are different. Even if well maintained there can be a variety of genuinely wild plants such as Field Wood-rush *Luzula campestris* or Sweet Vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* which are perhaps unlikely to have been planted and are therefore wild. Indeed some grassland within churchyards and cemeteries may be wild native turf.

The last category of plants you may see are Orchids which, because of their fungus-dependent life cycle, are more likely to be wild. Parasitic or hemi-parasitic plants such as member of the Broomrape family *Orobanchaceae* or members of such genera as Eyebrights *Euphrasia* are also unlikely to have been planted and are almost definitely wild.

7. Bird Seed and Fly tipping

Anyone with a bird feeder and who, like me, isn't careful about tidying underneath, will know that it isn't uncommon to find strange looking plants growing under the feeder in summer. In this case you haven't planted them deliberately, but you did put the seed in a place where there was a good probability that some would fall and germinate. I would not count these as wild.

People still throw out garden waste onto verges or unoccupied land in the countryside in spite of the frequency of council facilities for disposal of such unwanted material. A heap looking distinctly out-of-place but with a Garden Marigold *Calendula* spp. flourishing on top is typical. Is it wild and can you count it? Should it be on your list? Not for me unless the plant



Stag's-horn Sumach growing on road-side verge 200m from nearest house. Rarely self-sown (Stace). Garden throw-out? Clearly established and suckering. Is it countable?

persists for quite a few years and has clearly naturalised. But even then, the process of tipping is by human hand – a kind of careless planting if you will.

8. Roadside verges

In the past decade or so, the new verges and banks of roads and motorways have been sown with 'wild flower seed mixes' under the banner of 'landscaping'. The confusion here is that in time these can look plausibly wild. Cowslips *Primula veris*, which flower a lot earlier than our native species, cover the roadside verges in a mass of yellow but are not originally wild and may be non-native forms. Of course, they could have produced wild offspring but that will be hard to tell if they occur within the same patch.

Some roadside verges have been designated as nature reserves because they contain valuable wild and sometimes rare flowers. These are virtually always genuine wild flowers.

In March or April it is possible to see huge patches with millions of whitish flowers at the sides of our motorways and in the central reservation. This is Danish Scurvygrass *Cochlearia danica* which has spread inland from the coast, taking advantage of the salty habitats we humans have created through our winter road treatment programmes. Are these patches of wild Danish Scurvygrass wild? Yes they are. Can you count then for your diary? Probably not if you saw it from inside a car – a little known rule of the Wild Flower Society is that you can't count a plant as "seen" if you drive past it and don't have the opportunity to assess it properly. We may need to revisit this rule.

9. Arable Field Margins

Arable weeds may be *archeophytes* or *neophytes* but have one thing in common, they are 'casuals' in that they depend upon the annual ploughing of fields to trigger germination in the soil seed-bank. This is fine, but caution is needed as certain agri-environment schemes

foster the sowing of field margins with 'wild flowers and grasses' for gamebirds and biodiversity. Most laudable environmental motives but the first generation plants cannot be regarded as wild. The trouble starts in subsequent years, are these second or third generations or plants arising from previously dormant seed. It can only be left to individual judgement.

Another example is provided by seed contamination. A farmer close to my house consulted me about some strange plants he saw after planting his potato field. The potatoes were well on their way but interspersed with something completely different with quite large leaves and at the ploughed field margins, some very strange looking plants had started to grow.

He had Sunflowers *Helianthus* spp., Thorn-apple *Datura stramonium* and Angel's Trumpets *D. ferox* growing in his field because his potatoes were contaminated with these unwanted seeds. I would regard these plants as wild which goes contrary to the first definition. The farmer did plant them, but by accident. He didn't know the seeds were there and didn't want those plants in his field. Again, though you must make a judgement by looking at the, possibly, wild plants.

10. Very old trees, shrubs and hedges

I have heard it stated that none of our old Beech trees *Fagus sylvatica* are wild: all were planted many years ago. It isn't really possible to counter this sort of assertion. Trees live much longer than we do. If a tree started life nearly 80 years before our society

was founded in 1886, which is entirely possible as one of the trees in my garden did, we can't possibly know. You need to look for seedlings or suckers with flowers if possible.

Very old shrubs and most hedges have very often been planted so, unless you have good evidence for them being wild, its best to assume otherwise. Some shrubs self-seed very easily so it is entirely possible that they are genuinely bird-sown wild. An example of an easily bird-seed sown shrub is Flowering Currant *Ribes sanguineum* and many others, such as Japanese Knotweed *Reynoutria japonica* (formerly *Fallopia japonica*), reproduce vegetatively so can be growing closely to one which was originally planted.

11. Nature reserves

You would think that the name Nature Reserve implies that a patch of valuable, biodiverse land has been protected because it contains wild species. Not necessarily.

Some plants have been introduced or re-established in nature reserves as part of a conservation programme. Gaitbarrows, in North Lancashire, is a case in point. Lady's Slipper *Cypripedium calceolus* was declared extinct in the British Isles at one point, until a specimen was found in a Yorkshire wood. A programme of planting at sites where this species was once known, has been completed successfully. If you visit Gaitbarrows at the end of May you will see a splendid display of Lady's Slipper, arguably Britain's most spectacular orchid.

All these beautiful Lady's Slippers are planted, protected with little plastic sleeves and treated with slug killer. A more gardenised "wild" species you are unlikely to find. So beautiful though they are, successful though the re-establishment has been, they really aren't wild.

The story doesn't finish there though. Eventually, it is hoped, these introduced orchids will reproduce naturally and their offspring will repopulate the same habitats they used to occupy centuries ago. Those offspring will be genuinely wild plants. So has it happened yet? Some say it possibly has. Some say it's too soon. They won't have the little plastic sleeves around them so that could be a clue, but you must make your own judgement.

Conversely, in certain nature reserves, strips of ground may be ploughed annually or occasionally to promote the germination of such rarities as Ground-pine *Ajuga chamaepitys* and Cut-leaved Germander *Teucrium botrys*. These are arising from dormant seed in the seed-bank, the ploughing only replicating the activities of wild boar etc. Such species are unquestionably wild.

In conclusion

Most habitats are managed by humans one way or another; whether it be a traditional hay meadow, grassland by grazing by sheep and cattle or reed-bed cut for thatch. These activities are invariably necessary to maintain populations of many plants. So where does such management end and 'gardening' start?

Peter Jepson has come up with a useful piece of guidance for the determination of the wildness of a plant which can be applied to situations such as lawns and flower beds, as well as elsewhere:

Jepson's first law states: *A plant can be considered to be wild if it is naturalised in a habitat managed for reasons other than for the plant's specific needs.*

Jepson's second law states: *A plant may be considered naturalised, and therefore wild, if it is reproducing by seed and producing offspring that reach maturity (or in the case of trees beyond the sapling stage); or spreading by vegetative means through runners or suckers and giving rise to plants divorced from their parent plant.*

Jepson's third law states: *A plant may be considered wild if it is growing in a 'natural' habitat and where it is long established and competing with species regarded as native to the particular habitat.*

So, supposing you created your flower beds for Dahlias and you got Creeping Buttercup *Ranunculus repens* as an extra; the Buttercup is wild. You sowed your lawn with grass seed and Self-heal *Prunella vulgaris* appeared and spread; the Self-heal is wild.

Once you have made your wildness assessment you can be 100% sure that someone else in our ancient society, for excellent reasons, will disagree with your decision vehemently. You will both be right. So have a drink together or perhaps fight a duel. Throwing Stace at each other from 20 paces would be most appropriate.

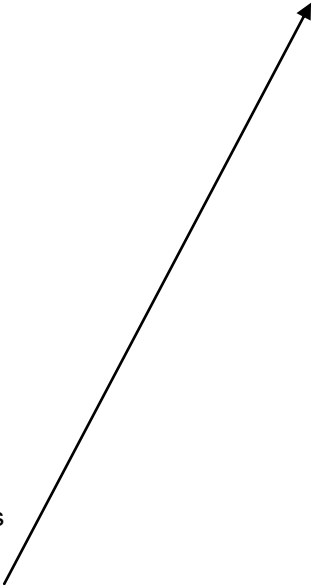
PETER LLEWELLYN

BOTANICAL LATIN QUIZ

And now for something a little more light-hearted.

The specific part of a plant's Latin name often refers to the habitat it is found in eg. woodland = *sylvatica*. Can you pair these up?

Meadow	<i>montana / alpinus</i>
Field	<i>ruderales / ruderalis</i>
Seashore	<i>fluviatilis / fluviatile</i>
Sand Dunes	<i>uliginosa / uliginosus</i>
Walls	<i>palustre / palustris</i>
Bogs	<i>sylvatica</i>
Marsh	<i>pratense / pratensis</i>
Mountains	<i>littorale / littoralis</i>
Sea	<i>riparia / rivularis</i>
Water	<i>rupicola / rupestre</i>
Riverside	<i>aquatica / aquaticus</i>
River	<i>nivalis</i>
Snow	<i>arvense / arvensis</i>
Rocks	<i>muralis / murale</i>
Waste Places	<i>arenaria / dunensis</i>
Woodland	<i>maritima / maritimus</i>



HAVE FUN

Answers on page 44

GARETH BURNSALL

SOME SECRETS ABOUT IVY REVEALED

Photo: Stephen Clarkson



Look at the picture above and tell me what you see. Yes, it shows Ivy *Hedera helix* flowers just before they start to form their berries. The photo was taken in the Autumn around October time. The fruit is starting to develop and the inferior ovary is beginning to swell. A lady in my local Natural History Society branch sent me a picture and asked me what the white crystal-like formations were on the surface of the ovary. This turned into a fascinating search and I consulted many botany books but kept on coming up against a brick wall. I then went on line and I could not believe the amount of research that has gone into looking at this phenomenon and the number of scientific papers that have been written.

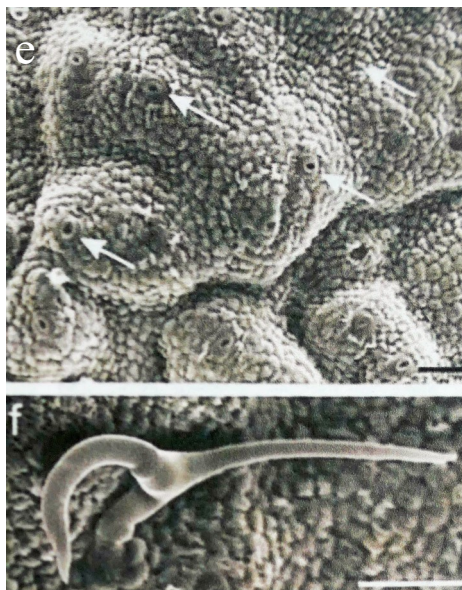
I looked at many plants myself and saw this white encrustation on many flowers. When the buds open these white crystals are not evident but develop later on. Looking at them under a microscope they are very

small transparent crystals which are easily dislodged. However, I couldn't get enough of them to get a taste!

Ivy is an evergreen climber and can live for several hundreds of years. Its flowers appear in the Autumn on mature climbing shoots of at least eight years of age. These flowers are visited late in the season by many insects which include bees (especially the Ivy Bee *Colletes hederae*), wasps, hoverflies, flies and late season butterflies. Ivy nectar comprises mainly glucose but also contains other sugars.

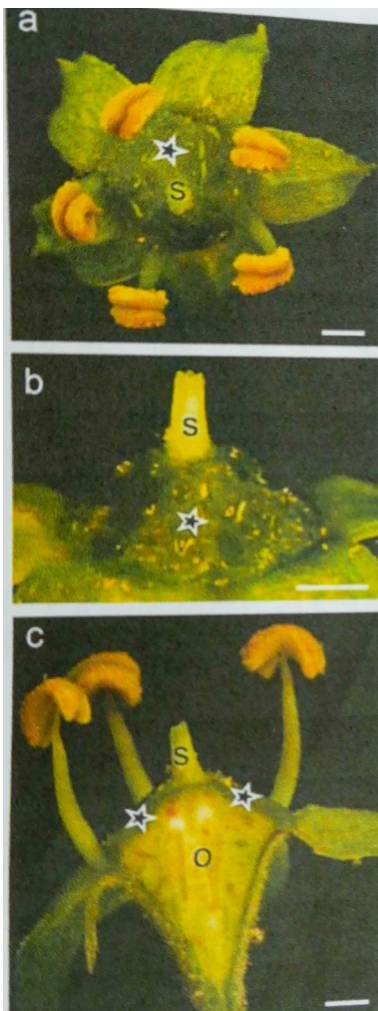
Polish scientists have conducted much research and have examined the flowers under light, scanning and transmission electron microscopes. But it's when you look at the surface of the ovary at electron microscope level that you can appreciate and wonder at the invention of Mother Nature. The scans reveal an undulated surface covered in many hundreds of nectaries which can

secrete up to 80% glucose. The flow of nectar is slowed down by the presence of microscopic T-shaped hairs, called trichomes, and what secretions aren't lapped up by insects turn into sugar crystals.



e - Nectary surface
f - Trichome

At the start of secretion the nectar gland is green but during successive days of flowering they become browner in colour as anthocyanins are produced which help to protect the flower from lower temperatures and UV light. Ivy is common and available in all sorts of habitats. It is hugely important to all sorts of insects. It is also considered to be a pest and is often removed for the damage that it is thought to do to buildings and trees, but, in fact, it rarely harms either. Another paper showed that an average of 98% of pollen pellets that were collected by



a - Flower from above
b - Flower from side
c - Longitudinal section

Asterisk shows position of nectary

honey bees in the Autumn were from Ivy. It is stated that Ivy should be considered as a keystone species with a high value in the conservation of flower-using insects in the Autumn.

STEPHEN CLARKSON

Reference : Konarska, Agata (2014)
Characteristics of flower nectaries of *Hedera helix* L. (Araliaceae) *Acta Sci. Pol. Hortorum Cultus*, 13 (3), pp.109-122

North-west Rare Plants Initiative

The North-West Rare Plants Initiative (NWRPI) is a project with the aim of conserving the rarest plants across Vice-Counties 58, 59, 60 and 64 with the employment of both *ex* and *in situ* conservation techniques. Across all parts of reintroduction or reinforcement projects, we adhere to IUCN and JNCC translocation guidelines and the BSBI Code of Conduct. This article is to look at some of the work undertaken by myself as part of the NWRPI over the past year.

Greater Manchester Mosslands

Many of the Greater Manchester bogs were formerly host to a range of rare plants in the region including White Beak-sedge *Rhynchospora alba*, Great Sundew *Drosera anglica* and Bog-rosemary *Andromeda polifolia*. Following extensive suitability assessment and consent from Natural England, we were able to plant many of these formerly-extinct species back onto several of the restored peatlands. Several of these species have been extinct in South Lancashire Vice County for over 150 years!

Most of these mosslands were historically drained and harvested for peat which meant that the peat-forming vegetation layer (acrotelm) disappeared along with many of the specialists that formerly inhabited these sites. A great many of the rarer species disappeared permanently after drainage largely due to an inability to disperse or a short-lived seed bank. Whilst re-wetting has meant that the peat-forming layer of

vegetation has recovered, many of the plants that historically lived on these bogs are missing.

Most notable of our rare peatland plant reintroductions is that of Great Sundew *D. anglica*; this is a species found in fewer than 100 hectad localities across the country and is also re-listed 'Endangered' in England. Formerly widespread across the Greater Manchester peatlands, the species disappeared following drainage; being a plant of the wettest bits of *Sphagnum* bogs, it's often the first plant to disappear when a bog begins to dry out.

A total of ten plants were re-introduced across suitable bog pools at Risley Moss during July 2019, together with a variety of other plants including Bog-rosemary *A. polifolia*, Bog Asphodel *Narthecium ossifragum*, Bog Myrtle *Myrica gale*, Oblong-leaved Sundew *D. intermedia* and White Beak-sedge *R. alba*.

It is hoped that these re-introductions do well in the years to come, as checking up on one previously reintroduced carnivorous species, Lesser Bladderwort *Utricularia minor*, showed some really promising results! From reintroduction during late 2018 at one mossland, after 150 years of absence in South Lancashire VC, the population has exploded. From a small number of plants originally introduced, monitoring during June found an exceptionally large population of >100 vigorous plants, with a massive increase in distribution at the receptor site.

The Sefton Coast

Moving away from mosslands, the Sefton Coast is the largest continuous sand dune system in Britain and was host to a fair number of now lost plant species, including Small Cudweed *Logfia minima* (formerly *Filago minima*) and the nationally 'Endangered' Heath Cudweed *Omalotheca sylvatica* (formerly *Gnaphalium sylvaticum*). These plants declined around the time that grazing became less common on the dunes and previously grazed habitats became more highly vegetated due to an absence of grazing animals. Following the re-instatement of suitable management across parts of the Sefton dunes, again with relevant permissions from land owners and Natural England, I have been able to reintroduce both species back to parts of the coast from extinction in the area. Thanks to seed donated to the NWRPI from one of the closest extant sites by Brian Laney, we were able to cultivate over 1000 plants of Heath Cudweed which were then planted across areas of dune heath and acid grassland at three localities. Small Cudweed was similarly grown *en masse*, though rather than plants, seed was scattered over areas of seemingly suitable, grazed heath. Monitoring of all reintroduced localities is planned for 2019 and into the future.

Perhaps most notable of the NWRPI's achievements this year for the coast has been to obtain material of Dune Wormwood *Artemisia campestris* ssp. *maritima* from its last known locality on the Sefton dunes. Dune Wormwood is a species fully protected under statute, whilst it is

also one of the rarest plants in Britain, with four plants left in the wild across the British Isles. Under special licence from Natural England, I was able to sample a limited number of cuttings, enabling me to bring plants into cultivation. These cuttings are hoped to be used in reinforcement in the near future to ensure this very special plant doesn't become extinct any time soon.

Finishing notes

Thus far into 2019, the NWRPI has been involved in the re-establishment of a total of eleven target species (of 43) including Bog-rosemary *Andromeda polifolia*, Great Sundew *Drosera anglica*, Small Cudweed *Logfia minima*, Ivy-leaved Bellflower *Wahlenbergia hederacea* and Lesser Bladderwort *Utricularia minor*. This is all with funding support from Chester Zoo, Lancashire Wildlife Trust and the Wild Flower Society. Thank you.

To find out more, take a look at our website: www.nwrpi.weebly.com or @nwrpi on twitter.

JOSHUA STYLES

Dune Wormwood



Photo: Phil Smith

10 KM SQUARE STUDY (NORTH) 2018

Name	Hectad	Location	Year	New	Total
Julie Clarke	SD48	Lindale & Whitbarrow	16	0	758
	SD58	Milnthorpe	16	14	450
	SJ66	Winsford	29	0	764
	SJ76	Sandbach	30	0	728
Anthony & Rita	SE23	Horsforth & Rodley	8	10	494
Grainger	SE24	Otley & Wharfe Valley	8	14	350
Peter Jepson	SD61	Bolton (North)	38	1	507
	SD62	Darwen and Blackburn	44	1	864
	SD71	Turton	37	1	456
	SD72	Accrington	44	2	625
Graeme Kay	SJ57	Frodsham	22	0	708
	SJ67	Northwich	20	5	532
	SJ87	Alderley Edge	30	11	517
	SJ97	Macclesfield	32	5	587
	SJ98	Marple	40	6	673
Andrew Kafel	SE02	Halifax	12	8	758
	SE12	Brighouse	11	0	651
	SE22	Morley, Dewsbury & Batley	10	4	853
Keith Robinson	NZ24	Chester-le-street	6	38	559
Dorothy Ross	SD32	Lytham	16	1	376
	SD45	Galgate	6	3	299
	SD63	Longridge	31	0	374
	SD64	Chipping	8	0	198
	SD73	Whalley	14	0	288
	SD74	Clitheroe	29	7	368
	SC39	Ballaugh, Isle of Man	21	7	764
Jesse Tregale	SE13	Bradford	27	14	1723
Sheila Wynn	SD64	Bowland, Lancashire	12	0	237
	SD65	Forest of Bowland	8	0	149
	SD74	Clitheroe, Lancashire	12	7	558
	SD75	Slaidburn, Gisburn Forest	12	0	239

Julie has added to one of her squares this year. In SD58 she found the Common Lords-and-Ladies with the yellow spadix appendage *Arum maculatum* var. *latrellei*. Coralroot *Cardamine bulbifera* was at Ackenthwaite, the rare French Sorrel *Rumex scutatus* was on a wall at Milton and American Speedwell *Veronica peregrina* in a field gateway, also in Milton.

Anthony and Rita found new plants for both of their squares. Unusual finds in SD23 were *Dahlia x hortensis* in Town Street, Horsforth, Giant Herb-Robert *Geranium maderense* on the Ginnel by Horsforth Library and on waste ground in Horsforth the white form of Purple Toadflax *Linaria purpurea* 'Alba'. Common Fiddleneck *Amsinckia micrantha* was on waste

ground in Yeadon (SD24), with Goldilocks Buttercup *Ranunculus auricomus* in Weeton and Abraham-Isaac-Jacob *Trachystemon orientalis* on Engine Fields, Yeadon.

Peter found some interesting plants. In SD61 the rare Velvet Lady's-mantle *Alchemilla monticola* was found on a verge near Belmont, confirmed by the BSBI *Alchemilla* expert Mark Lynes and is a new VC record. In SD62 Floating Water-plantain *Luronium natans* was in a seasonal pool by Sunnyhurst Hey Reservoir. In SD71 Large-leaved Avens *Geum macrophyllum* was in woodland at Turton. Another rarely recorded plant is Tall Mouse-ear-hawkweed *Pilosella praealta* ssp. *thaumasia*, found in open habitat in acidic grassland at Cribden Hill, Haslingden (SD72).

Andrew found new plants in two of his squares. Leading a Bradford Botanist's field meeting at Hollis Bridge in SE02 he found the hybrid between Alder and Grey Alder *Alnus x hybrida*, Fodder Burnet *Poterium sanguisorba* ssp. *balearicum* and Wild Clary *Salvia verbenaca* ssp. *verbenaca*. The latter is almost certainly an introduction being the rarer sub-species mainly confined to Guernsey but looking well naturalised in the rough grassland by the river. Leading another BBG field meeting, this time at Craken Edge, Dewsbury, (SE22) some interesting garden escapes were found including the double Soapwort *Saponaria officinalis* 'Rosea Plena', Chilean Potato-tree *Solanum crispum* and Van Houtte's Spiraea *Spiraea x vanhouttei*. The green-fruited Elderberry *Sambucus nigra* forma *viridis* was found by the

River Calder on Thornhill Road, Dewsbury.

Graeme has added to four of his squares. He visited Dones Green in SJ67 to check the only known site for White Ramping-fumitory *Fumaria capreolata* ssp. *babingtonii* and a local meeting at Neumann's Flash, Northwich provided him with Wayfaring-tree *Viburnum lantana* and Horned-pondweed *Zannichellia palustris*. Most of Graeme's new plants in SJ87 were found on a track by the railway in Chelford, including Persian Ivy *Hedera colchica*, Chinese Bramble *Rubus tricolor* and Chenault's Coralberry *Symphoricarpos x chenaultii*, all rather invasive aliens. An unusual Broad-leaved Dock with all three valves with tubercles *Rumex obtusifolius* var. *obtusifolius* f. *trigranis* was at Alderley. Interestingly I also found this in Bradford. Both were named/confirmed by John Akeroyd, the BSBI Dock expert. Two nice aliens found on the canal in SJ97 were Beggarticks *Bidens frondosa* at Adlington and Orange Balsam *Impatiens capensis* at Clark Green. Neither has yet reached the Leeds-Liverpool Canal in Bradford. Also at Clark Green was the Prickly Sowthistle with undivided leaves *Sonchus asper* var. *integrifolius*. All Graeme's finds in SJ98 were interesting aliens on disturbed ground by the canal at Marple, including Thorn-apple *Datura stramonium* var. *stramonium*, Hairy Finger-grass *Digitaria sanguinalis* and Green Bristle-grass *Setaria viridis*.

Keith always seems to record plants I have not heard of with Fish-plant *Houttuynia cordata* and the Waterlily



Photo: Jesse Tregale

African Lily

I visited my Isle of Man (SD71) square twice in 2018 finding a splendid Thorn-apple *Datura stramonium* on the road-side in Ballaugh Glen in July. On our visit in September I was able to visit the Cronk beach with Philippa Tomlinson, the VC71 BSBI recorder, with her husband, Peter, to look at the Oraches. However, with a gale force wind blowing, we only managed to collect a few specimens, one of which appeared to be the hybrid Spear-leaved x Babington's Orache *Atriplex prostrata* x *A. glabriuscula*. This was later confirmed by the BSBI expert John Akeroyd and is the first record for the Isle of Man.

In my Bradford square Michael Wilcox found the Late Tulip *Tulipa tarda* on the rough verge on Alter Lane, Bingley. Wayfaring Tree *Viburnum lantana* was self-sown on the marina wall at Apperley Bridge and African Lily *Agapanthus praecox* was a throw-out in a field off Childs Lane, Wrose.

Sheila has added to her Clitheroe square (SD74) finding Keeled Garlic *Allium carinatum* in West Bradford, the woodland subspecies of Tufted Hair-grass *Deschampsia cespitosa* ssp. *parviflora* in Cross Hills Quarry and Honeybells *Nectaroscordum siculum* at Worston.

Thanks to all who sent records - as usual lots of exciting plants found, some new to me, which I will have to look out for, and I wish you all good hunting in 2019

B.A. 'JESSE' TREGALE

Nymphaea x marliacea found in Langley Park. He re-found Wild Liquorice *Astragalus glycyphyllos* in Pelaw Wood, thought to be lost following a landslide a few years earlier and, in Waldridge, he found his first identified Dandelion *Taraxacum pseudohamatum*, which has the rather grand English name of False Hooked-lobed Dandelion. Also at Waldridge was Narrow-leaved Ragwort *Senecio inaequidens* which still appears to be heading North.

Dorothy found Californian Poppy *Eschscholzia californica* by Fairhaven Lake at Lytham (SD32). Sweet Alison *Lobularia maritima* and Millet *Panicum miliaceum* were at Glasson Dock (SD45) and on a visit to Crosshill Quarry (SD74) she found Spiked Sedge *Carex spicata* and Trailing Tormentil *Potentilla anglica*.

10 KM SQUARE STUDY (SOUTH) 2018

Name	Hectad	Location	Year	New	Total
Gareth Bursnall	TQ23	Crawley, West Sussex	4	8	556
Rodney Burton	TQ56	Darenth Valley, Kent	24	7	664
Anne Daly	SO88	Kinver, Staffs	6	0	677
	SO98	Stourbridge, Staffs	5	0	516
José Gibbs	TR37	Margate, Kent	4	33	112
Barbara Mathews	TM23	West Felixstowe, Suffolk	21	6	681
	TM24	Woodbridge, Suffolk	19	4	538
	TM33	East Felixstowe, Suffolk	22	3	660
	TM34	Shottisham, Suffolk	10	18	354
Daphne Mills	TQ75	Maidstone, Kent	9	34	673
Mike Mountford	SP09	West Bromwich	2	38	139
Ron Parker	TQ17	Hounslow & Richmond, Gt. London	18	0	568
	TQ26	Sutton, Gt. London	27	0	1019
	TQ38	East London	25	22	640
Ted Phenna	SH57	Bangor & Anglesey	11	4	430
	SH67	Llanfairfechan, Gwynedd	15	10	669
	SH68	Llangoed, Anglesey	6	11	314
	SH78	Great Orme, Gwynedd	39	3	706
Sue Poyser & Doug Grant	TQ76	Rochester & Chatham, Kent	21	6	890
	TQ77	Higham and Cliffe, Kent	13	5	612
Ted Pratt	SY97	Worth Matravers, Dorset	7	17	569
	SY98	Wareham & Corfe, Dorset	11	29	1211
	SZ08	Studland, Dorset	13	38	1202
Janice Reynolds	TQ40	Newhaven, East Sussex	17	38	682
John Swindells	SP38	Radford, Coventry	3	0	122
Pat Verrall	TQ04	Shere, Surrey	27	2	530
	TQ05	Woking, Surrey	1	112	112
	TQ14	Dorking, Surrey	25	10	564
	TQ15	Leatherhead, Surrey	7	29	413

Thank you all for sending lists promptly in mid-January and for your notes and letters which add interest to the report.

Gareth's favourite discoveries were his first and last of the year. In February a hybrid between Chinese and Japanese Quince *Chaenomeles*

x superba was in flower by a lake, then in October a cancelled train gave him time to explore a hedgerow where he found Orange-peel Clematis *Clematis tangutica*. Other unusual records of garden escapes included Garden Strawberry *Fragaria ananassa* in a pavement and Spring Sowbread *Cyclamen repandum* on a

roadside, while the sterile hybrid Purple Cranesbill *Geranium x magnificum* was established in a hedgerow.



Thorow-wax

Photo: Ken Southall

Rodney had a couple of plants of garden origin. The pavement in his road had Thorow-wax *Bupleurum rotundifolium* self-sown from his own garden and, further along, were numerous seedlings of Argentine Vervain *Verbena bonariensis*. However, the majority of Rodney's records were native plants: he spotted five tufts of the robust ssp. of Fern-grass *Catapodium rigidum* ssp. *majus* in Kemsing, where he also

added a Hawkweed *Hieracium trichocaulon*. In April he found Hairy Whitlow-grass *Erophila majuscula* on a farm track at Lullingstone, which turned out to be a new plant for Kent.

The thin ribbon of North Kent coast constituting TR37 gives José a very limited habitat but she records methodically in sections, noting how the vegetation varies from east to west. This year she focused mainly on the cliff tops, enjoying a colourful array of flowers - Corn Poppy *Papaver rhoeas*, Viper's Bugloss *Echium vulgare*, Lady's Bedstraw *Galium verum*, Scarlet Pimpernel *Lysimachia arvensis* (formerly *Anagallis arvensis*) and Corn Marigold *Glebionis segetum*. A walk through masses of wild flowers on a cliff top path at Foreness Point gave José one of her highlights of the year, her other was finding dozens of Ivy Broomrape *Orobancha hederæ* on a road edge.

Barbara's most exciting discovery was Navelwort *Umbilicus rupestris*, quite a rarity in East Anglia but she spotted several dozen growing happily on the mossy roof of an old outhouse by Falkenham Church (TM23). Passionflower *Passiflora caerulea* was recorded in both this hectad and TM33. Barbara has for several years been watching these plants which had self-seeded outside garden fences. She is, rightly, conscientious about garden plants being properly established before counting them and this year they flowered and set fruit at both sites, earning their place on her list. Spiny Bear's-breech *Acanthus spinosus*, first observed two years ago in a pile of dumped rubbish by a track in

TM23, has also been worth waiting for, having increased to two rosettes and a flower spike. Greek Dock *Rumex cristatus* was a new find, extending for three metres along a footpath from Old Felixstowe to the cliff (TM33). While recording butterflies in her northern squares at Ramsholt (TM34) Barbara had the bonus of finding Mossy Stonecrop *Crassula tillaea* and Subterranean Clover *Trifolium subterraneum*, but her grand finale for the year was Giant-rhubarb *Gunnera tinctoria* in a wet area between the River Deben and Melton Station (TM24), still bearing a battered flower head in November.

Daphne was particularly pleased to see Narrow-leaved Bitter-cress *Cardamine impatiens* and, on a walk whilst waiting for her car to be serviced, to discover the hybrid of Blue and Pink Water-speedwells *Veronica anagallis-aquatica* x *V. catenata* = *V. x lackschewitzii*. Apart from a hybrid Self-heal *Prunella vulgaris* x *P. laciniata* = *P. x intermedia* at Detling almost all Daphne's records were from Aylesford and included some interesting grasses: Water Bent *Polypogon viridis* and Annual Beard-grass *P. monspeliensis* were noted and Common Millet *Panicum miliaceum*. Several attractive garden escapes included Love-in-a-mist *Nigella damascena* and the purple cultivar of Siberian Melick *Melica altissima* 'Atropurpurea', an ornamental grass which is deservedly becoming popular. Self-seeding from gardens it has now made its way into Stace's *New Flora* (Fourth Edition).

Work on his second novel allowed

less botanising time for Mike but he recorded a good number locally in Sandwell Valley. Branched Bur-reed *Sparganium erectum* and Purple Loosestrife *Lythrum salicaria* were here and a shady stream had both Common Duckweed *Lemna minor* and Least Duckweed *Lemna minuta*. On the site of an old orchard demolished in the 1950s Apple *Malus domestica* (formerly *M. pumila*) and Pear *Pyrus communis* were naturalised. Further afield in West Bromwich Mike found Red Valerian *Centranthus ruber* and Traveller's-joy *Clematis vitalba* in scrub alongside the tram station.

Ron had an interesting list from the Bow Canal. There were alien casuals, such as Mexican-tea *Dysphania ambrosioides* and Mexican Aster *Cosmos bipinnatus*, and two attractive perennials: Flowering-rush *Butomus umbellatus* and Galingale *Cyperus longus*. He also spotted Hybrid Woundwort *Stachys x ambigua* (*S. sylvatica* x *S. palustris*). Ron's other site, Mile End Park, had some smaller native plants including Musk Stork's-bill *Erodium moschatum* and Subterranean Clover *Trifolium subterraneum*.

Ted Phenna's most interesting find was Broad-leaved Helleborine *Epipactis helleborine* on the edge of a potato field at Llanfaes (SH67), a species not seen in Anglesey since 2005 when a single plant was recorded a mile away from Ted's site. On the mainland he recorded Fly Honeysuckle *Lonicera xylosteum* naturalised by a path and, back on Anglesey, there were several conifers: Douglas Fir *Pseudotsuga menziesii* was at Coed Môr (SH57)



Crown
Vetch

Photo: Sue Grayston

and, at the north end of the island, Sitka Spruce *Picea sitchensis* and Monterey Pine *Pinus radiata* were naturalised on the edge of a limestone quarry (SH68). In his home square on Great Orme (SH78) Ted recorded Elephant-ears *Bergenia crassifolia* in January, then in September describes his best-looking plant for the year as a magnificent fully-flowering Chimney Bellflower *Campanula pyramidalis* growing out of the sea-wall on Llandudno promenade.

Sue and Doug found a few additions in both their hectads, perhaps the most exciting being a rare subspecies of Nipplewort *Lapsana communis*

ssp. intermedia, a new record for East Kent (v-c 15). Another good find in TQ76 was Jersey Cudweed *Laphangium luteoalbum* (formerly *Gnaphalium luteoalbum*) growing as a Chatham street-weed in block paving. In TQ77 they added Trailing St John's-wort *Hypericum humifusum* and a field trip to the North Kent marshes with Geoffrey Kitchener produced the hybrid of Marsh and Bulbous Foxtail Grass *Alopecurus bulbosus* x *A. geniculatus* = *A. x plettkei*.

Ted Pratt continues to study some challenging genera, now adding Elms *Ulmus* to his work on Daffodils *Narcissus* and Dandelions *Taraxacum*. He makes good use of his Sell & Murrell, but acknowledges John Richards' identification of Dandelions, a genus Ted says have not been exhaustively studied in Dorset, and five of his are new county records. However, he writes that "the greatest pleasure was the sight of golden glowing flowers of Marsh Marigold *Caltha palustris* in a dark pond in an ancient wood", which seems to me to epitomise the WFS ethos, take time to simply enjoy wild flowers whatever your level of expertise. On a roadside in Worth Matravers (SY97) Ted was pleased with Common Evening-primrose *Oenothera biennis* as, despite its name, it is the least common Evening primrose in Purbeck. At Arne (SY98) he identified the hybrid between Silver Birch and Downy Birch *Betula x aurata* using the Atkinson Discriminant Function, which involves much leaf-folding, tooth-counting, measuring - and patience! In October he tackled Glassworts *Salicornia*, another difficult genus,

finding Yellow Glasswort *S. fragilis*, Purple Glasswort *S. ramosissima* and Glaucous Glasswort *S. obscura* at Studland (SZ08).

For a second year Janice regularly explored areas of imported soil on waste ground in Newhaven and again recorded an astonishing array of casual species. She describes finding Velvetleaf *Abutilon theophrasti*, Longspine Thorn-apple *Datura ferox*, Meadow-foam *Limnanthes douglasii* and two species of Millet, *Sorghum halepense* and *S. bicolor* growing within a few feet of one another. Crown Vetch *Securigera varia* was here too and she saw another very attractive flower, Chinese Hound's-tongue *Cynoglossum amabile*, at Seaford where it had recently turned up, as reported in BSBI News No.134.

My own additions for TQ04 were sparse but Garden Lobelia *Lobelia erinus*, self-sown from a window-box, brightened up a pavement crack in Shere. Further afield in TQ14 Sneezewort *Achillea ptarmica* and Marsh Ragwort *Senecio aquaticus* were flowering by a pond on common land south of Dorking. It had been brutally cleared several years ago so I was pleased to find natural vegetation returning. Many of my records are spotted while reccyng walks for local friends. Thus it was that in TQ15 I found masses of Small Toadflax *Chaenorhinum minus* when crossing Effingham Golf Course and a self-sown Walnut *Juglans regia* sapling by a stony woodland track on the North Downs. No parent nearby so I guess it was delivered by a squirrel. Having led many walks in TQ05 I decided to start a new 10km

Diary there to fill the gap between my existing squares. The Wey Navigation towpath from Ripley produced a score of common grasses, but most interesting was to find Flowering Rush *Butomus umbellatus* and Orange Balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*, the latter near to where I first identified it as a child, incurring parental wrath for falling into a very muddy ditch in my excitement.

Wishing you all a happy year's botanising in 2019 and I look forward to hearing about your latest finds.

PAT VERRALL

Photo: Ken Southall



Flowering
Rush

2018 AUTUMN ONE DAY AND ONE WEEK HUNTS

Name	Area	Total week hunt	Total day hunt
Barbara Allen	South Lancs	100	73
Sheila Anderson	North Kent	106	82
Anthony and Rita Grainger	Lancs/Yorks	107	56
Doug Grant and Sue Poyser	Kent	203	133
Sue Grayston and Ken Southall	Suffolk	90	77
Dennis and Anne Kell	Suffolk	115	77
Simon Leach	Somerset	214	162
Ian Sapsford	Kent	117	53
Branch N3	Lancs		73
Branch Y	Norfolk		77
John Crellin	Powys		9
Owen and Carol Fawcett	Lancs		24
Anne Griffiths	Powys		16
Susan Grimshaw	Berks		73
Anne Haden and Rachel Rabey	Guernsey		85
Dawn Nelson	West Sussex		87
Priscilla Nobbs	Surrey		67
John Swindells	Middlesex		40
Gareth Burnsnall	Sussex	125	
Anne Daly, Jackie Ellis & Jim Hough	Staffs/Worcs	122	
Rosemary FitzGerald	Somerset	152	
Pat Graham	Hants	134	
Anne Hercock	Monmouthshire	77	
Helen Jackson	Midlothian	100	
Sally Maller	Devon	90	
Barbara Mathews	Suffolk	148	
Ron Parker	London	148	
Lindsay Pyne	Lundy/Alderney	137	
June Robinson	Sheffield/ Peak District	61	
Michael Robinson	London	74	
Dorothy Ross	Lancs/Merseyside	118	
Alan Swainscoe	Warwickshire	21	
Pauline Wilson	Avon	89	
Number of species seen		513	352

Plants new to the Week Hunt: Stinking Fleabane *Dittrichia graveolens*, Sweet Tobacco *Nicotiana glauca*, Tall Fleabane *Erigeron annuus*, Large-flowered Tomatillo *Physalis philadelphicus*, a hybrid Dock *Rumex x duftii* (*R. obtusifolius* x *R. sanguineus*), Sweet Spurge *Euphorbia dulcis* and Stingless Nettle *Urtica dioica* ssp. *galopifolia*.

Plants seen by all on the Week Hunt: Yarrow *Achillea millefolium*, Shepherd's-purse *Capsella bursa-pastoris*, Groundsel *Senecio vulgaris*, Smooth Sowthistle *Sonchus oleraceus*, Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* agg. and Red Clover *Trifolium pratense*.

Twelve people combined their one day and one week hunts.

The majority of Barbara Allen's Hunt was around St. Helens, where she spotted Hemp Agrimony *Eupatorium cannabinum* and Flax *Linum usitatissimum*. She drove up to Morecambe to join Branch N3 on a very windy day where they recorded Curled Dock *Rumex crispus* ssp. *littoreus*. This plant is usually found by the sea and has three developed tubercles whereas subspecies *crispus* only has one. Barbara was pleased to add Indian Balsam *Impatiens glandulifera* on the way back from the meeting.

Sheila was pleased to improve her total this year. It was bright and sunny for the Hunt and she soon spotted a rural roadside verge which looked interesting. On a closer look she identified five species of Clover, including Strawberry *Trifolium fragiferum* and Alsike *T. hybridum*. She was the only person to see the former on the One Day Hunt. At the lovely named Snowgoose Reserve she found Yellow-wort *Blackstonia perfoliata* and Square-stalked St. John's-wort *Hypericum tetrapterum*.

Anthony and Rita spent their One Day Hunt looking in their local area of

Leeds in the vicinity of Kirkstall Forge railway station and around Horsforth. They were pleased to see Sticky Groundsel *Senecio viscosus*, Yellow-flowered Strawberry *Potentilla indica* and Common Fiddleneck *Amsinckia micrantha*. They then travelled to join the Branch N3 meeting at Morecambe. In fact they stayed for a long weekend which enabled them to see the 'sights' of Morecambe Bay. Chicory *Cichorium intybus* was seen at RSPB Leighton Moss, Sweet Tobacco *Nicotiana glauca* on a roadside at Bolton le Sands, which proved to be a first, and in the old village at Heysham another Tobacco plant *N. glauca* x *N. forgetiana* = *N. x sanderi* was found.

Doug and Sue spotted Stinking Fleabane *Dittrichia graveolens* and say this is spreading on the M20 and proved to be a new plant for the Week Hunt. Another plant was Mind-your-own-business *Soleirolia soleirolia*, a member of the Nettle family, and, on research, they found it also comes under the names of Angel's Tears and Peace-in-the-home. The last flowers of Golden Samphire *Inula crithmoides* were seen on the last day on the banks of the River Medway. These added to finds of Stinking Chamomile *Anthemis cotula* and Common

Cudweed *Filago vulgaris* along a chalky field edge on their One Day Hunt.

Having already joined Branch Y for their One Day Hunt, scouring Mousehold Heath on the outskirts of Norwich, Sue and Ken extended their week around their local arable farm land and were pleased with Field Woundwort *Stachys arvensis*. Other notable finds were Fiddleneck *Amsinckia micantha* and Common Cudweed *Filago vulgaris*, although I believe it is not common any more! Branch Y were the only ones to see Caucasian Mullein *Verbascum pyramidatum*.

For part of the Hunt Anne Kell cycled the lanes and byways near home. She says it is just the right speed to see the plants covering a reasonable amount of ground. She spotted both Perennial Flax *Linum perenne* and Oxford Ragwort *Senecio squalidus* at Copdock. The latter was introduced to the Oxford Botanical Gardens during 1690 and was plentiful on walls by 1794. With the advent of the railway systems it quickly spread over the UK. At Pin Mill, by the River Orwell, was Common Cord-grass *Spartina anglica* and Anne and Dennis were the only members to see Musk Thistle *Carduus nutans*.

Simon joined the Somerset Rare Plants Group for the One Day Hunt saying many eyes make light work!! Two good finds were Pennyroyal *Mentha pulegium* on a grass verge in Taunton, not seen since 2004, and Hairy Bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus subbiflorus* near Taunton Railway Station. He says the former probably 'takes the biscuit' as this was a new

record for the Taunton area and probably came in with a grass-seed mix. Other plants found over the week were Cockspur *Echinochloa crus-galli* at Winterwell (and at the time of writing it certainly feels like winter) and I have noticed that the record of *Rumex x dufftii* is a first for the Hunt; it was also seen in Taunton.

All the species Ian found on the One Day Hunt were seen on the RSPB reserve Cliffe Pools, a place with a good variety of habitats. Here he saw species such as Common Cord-grass *Spartina anglica*, Stinking Chamomile *Anthemis cotula* and Buck's-horn Plantain *Plantago coronopus*. He feels his best find for the week was one stem of Dittander *Lepidium latifolium*, found whilst visiting his caravan storage area. Pignut *Conopodium majus* and Bulbous Buttercup *Ranunculus bulbosus*, found on the Wye Downs, are good finds for the time of the year.

The following people only completed the One Day Hunt.

John Crellin was the only person to find Intermediate Lady's-mantle *Alchemilla xanthochlora*, which he found abundantly in flower.

Owen and Carol split their day in two halves. In the morning they visited the beach at Fleetwood and in the afternoon, a local nature reserve, Marton Mere. They were pleased that the Sea-holly *Eryngium maritimum* was still flowering.

Anne Griffiths found the Hawkweeds *Hieracium* agg. to be abundant and to still be flowering strongly while other species were sporadic and in poor quality.

Susan saw all her species within a mile of her home, in and on grass verges, embankments, shady lanes, pavement nicks and the weedy gardens of Cox Green. She was pleased to see Many-seeded Goosefoot *Chenopodium polyspermum* and Wild Basil *Clinopodium vulgare* but thought Sowbread *Cyclamen hederifolium* was her best find.



Anne Haden flew to Guernsey to join Rachel Rabey for the hunt. They saw some interesting and unusual species including Bay *Laurus nobilis*, Butcher's-broom *Ruscus aculeatus* and Hoary Stock *Matthiola incana*.

Dawn was pleased to find so many species still flowering, being the only one to see Hybrid Fescue *Schedonorus pratensis* x *Lolium perenne* = X *Schedolium loliaceum*.

Priscilla Nobbs did the same day as last year, same route and amazingly saw the same number of plants flowering – 67, but 24 of them were different! Finding Broad-leaved Everlasting-pea *Lathyrus latifolius* and Large-flowered Evening-primrose *Oenothera glazioviana* were a delight to see still flowering so nicely.

John Swindells spent about 40 minutes searching and was pleased to see Sickie Medick *Medicago sativa* ssp. *falcata* and Crown Vetch *Securigera varia*. He was the only person to see a plant I have never

seen Large Nipplewort *Lapsana communis* ssp. *intermedia*.

The following people only sent in records for the Week Hunt.

Gareth says, as usual, Eastbourne gave him interesting records including Blue Eryngo *Eryngium planum* and Sweet Scabious *Scabiosa atropurpurea*. His record of Sweet Spurge *Euphorbia dulcis* is a first for the Hunt. Other finds were Orange-peel Clematis *Clematis tangutica* and Whorled Clary *Salvia verticillata*.

This is Anne Daly's first Hunt, which she enjoyed with two friends who have since joined us. Streets, churchyards, canal etc. were scoured and on an old iron works site she found a new plant for the Hunt. This was Tall Fleabane *Erigeron annuus*. This plant has also proved to be a first for both VC 37 and 39. Two other good finds were Golden Dock *Rumex maritimus* and Wallflower *Erysimum cheiri*.

Ro says there were lots of things still out having put on growth after the welcome rain. She found an oddity on dumped earth near to a farm. This was Large-flowered Tomatillo *Physalis philadelphica*, a first for the Hunt. A splendid plant of Purple Viper's-bugloss *Echium plantagineum* was spotted as a pavement weed which later Ro identified as the variety 'Blue Bedder'. She had two firsts for her own Hunt list and these were Dwarf Mallow *Malva neglecta* and Himalayan Honeysuckle *Leycesteria formosa*.

Pat visited her daughter in Winchester for the week of the Hunt where she found a different flora from that in Durham where she lives. Her daughter enjoyed taking her to the New Forest where Pat was delighted to find Buck's-horn Plantain *Plantago coronopus* as it has been several years since she saw it last and, as twilight was setting, the white flowers of White Campion *Silene latifolia* showed up in the gloom. She was the only member to see Swine-cress *Lepidium coronopus*.

Anne Hercock was pleased to find 77 plants in bloom for her first Hunt. She has given me a numbered key to the various habitats which I have found useful. Greater Chickweed *Stellaria neglecta* was by an arable field edge and not seen for the Hunt since 2003. Waste ground I find to be the typical place for Hoary Ragwort *Senecio erucifolius*. In a woodland ride was Angelica *Angelica sylvestris* and by the river Common Comfrey *Symphytum officinale*.

Helen enjoyed her Hunt this year near home. She was pleased to find

Black Horehound *Ballota nigra* in a council flower bed as it is usually weeded out. A tangle of Tomato plants *Solanum lycopersicum* with both flowers and red fruits had survived on the beach but she says the Forth is too polluted for them to be eaten. A nice surprise was to see Crosswort *Cruciata laevipes* at the edge of the community vegetable garden.

Sally was pleased to increase her total from 2017 adding new plants to her Autumn Hunt list. She says she knows where to find the regulars now. Fennel *Foeniculum vulgare* was seen at Wembury Point, Rock Samphire *Crithmum maritimum* at Langdon Beach and Sally was the only member to record Thrift *Armeria maritima*, seen at Mothercombe.

Within three miles of home Barbara Mathews managed four days hunting this year and had rain on just one of the days. She found Dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*, Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum* flowering together in a hedge. She was the only person to see White Bryony *Bryonia dioica*.

Ron visited Sutton and the Kew Towpath, his usual places for the Hunt, as well as Eastbourne. Plants seen were Rock Soapwort *Saponaria ocymoides*, Mexican Aster *Cosmos bipinnatus* and the Stingless Nettle *Urtica dioica* ssp. *galeopsifolia*. The latter is a plant of fens, damp places and riversides and a first for the Hunt. He also spotted Water Bent *Polypogon viridis*. This grass is certainly travelling north with a vengeance and it has reached

Cumbria.

Lindsay's home is Alderney but during the Hunt she made a brief trip to the Isle of Lundy. She must have been too late for the Lundy Cabbage but found Hay-scented Buckler-fern *Dryopteris aemula* and Bog Asphodel *Narthecium ossifragum*, not seen since 1990 and 1995 respectively. At home she spotted Atlantic Ivy *Hedera hibernica*. Stace states that this plant has pale yellowish-brown hairs with rays lying parallel to leaf surface. Not to be confused with *Hedera* 'Hibernica' of gardens. A surprise was to find Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* in flower.

One of June's hunting days was the coldest on record for the time of the year and large snowflakes fell, but she says the plants still smiled. A typical Derbyshire plant found on lead spoil heaps was Spring Sandwort *Minuartia verna*. Herb Robert *Geranium robertianum* appeared on all her walks, shining pink and she was the only member to record Creeping Bellflower *Campanula rapunculoides*.

This is Mike's first hunt, centred on Bexley/Cray Marshes, where he saw Soapwort *Saponaria officinalis*. Broad-leaved Everlasting-pea *Lathyrus latifolius* was on the up platform at Bexley Heath Railway Station and Jersey Cudweed *Gnaphalium luteoalbum* was a pavement weed in the Barry Avenue area.

Autumn Hunt week meant half term for Dorothy and an enjoyable stint looking after grandchildren. A trip to Blackpool did not yield much but

Southport fared better with Sea Plantain *Plantago maritima* and Buttonweed *Cotula coronopifolia* seen on the salt marsh. Salthill Quarry at Clitheroe proved productive with three species of Scabious flowering, namely Devil's-bit *Succisa pratensis*, Field *Knautia arvensis* and Small *Scabiosa columbaria*. Near home in Darwen Hedge Crane's-bill *Geranium pyrenaicum* was spotted on waste ground.

Alan says it's not how many but the taking part that counts – how true. Both Scarlet Pimpernel *Anagallis arvensis* and Wood Avens *Geum urbanum* were on the Bubbenhall village green and flowering in his front garden was Smooth Hawk's-beard *Crepis capillaris*.

Pauline was surprised to find that the gang mowers had cut the roadside verges early this year resulting in loss of plants she would normally be able to see. However, to compensate, a natural flower meadow was a mass with Rough Hawkbit *Leontodon hispidus* – the only plant flowering. She was pleased to find Small Toadflax *Chaenorhinum minus* in an arable field and although Black Horehound *Ballota nigra* is not a common plant for Pauline, she managed to find one in flower.

Thank you all for joining the Hunts. Disappointing that plant numbers are down this year. Was it the hot dry summer? Always remember ferns must be recorded in spore, plants in flower and horsetails in cone.

JULIE CLARKE AND IAN GREEN

WINTER MONTHS HUNT 2018-19

Name	County (s)	No. sp.	Dec	Jan	Feb	Total Records
Phyl Abbott	Yorks/Staffs	46	26	14	27	67
Barbara Allen	Merseyside	54	36	---	28	64
Sheila Anderson	Kent	72	44	20	38	102
Fred Booth/ Daphne Mills	Kent	160	134	97	66	297
Sue Buckingham	E. Kent	179	148	60	52	260
Gareth Bursnall	London	141	96	54	55	205
Julie Clarke	Lancs/Cumbs	82	47	55	44	146
Stephen Clarkson	Suffolk	50	41	23	23	87
Anne Cooper	Suffolk	115	91	58	43	192
Frances Critchlow	Northants	71	34	52	35	121
Sue Denness	W. Sussex	233	148	150	121	419
Everald Ellis	Yorkshire	43	25	21	48	94
Ben Fisher	Essex	110	89	67	56	212
Rosemary FitzGerald	W. Somerset	174	140	94	91	325
Charles Flynn	W. Yorks	48	32	1	15	48
Pat Graham	Co. Dur/Hants	57	20	35	44	99
Rita & Anthony Grainger	Yorkshire	75	51	44	44	139
Doug Grant/ Sue Poyser	Kent	196	142	124	105	371
John Guest	Yorkshire	63	54	53	24	131
Anne Hercock	Mon/Glouce	92	61	52	57	170
Pippa Hyde	Surrey etc	95	72	60	62	194
Anne & Dennis Kell	Suffolk	129	99	86	63	248
Sue Kightley/Diana Stroud	Bucks	123	96	80	82	258
Geoff & Sarah Kitchener	Kent/Sussex	147	74	106	55	335
Sally Mallar	Devon etc.	78	60	54	45	159
Barbara Mathews	Suffolk/Norfolk	130	97	69	60	226
Dawn Nelson	W. Sussex	290	203	181	168	552
Jill Oakley	Sussex/Hants	253	166	161	132	459
Elizabeth Oxenham	Cheshire etc.	58	41	29	24	94
Lindsay Pyne	Alderney CI	120	102	87	82	271
Janice Reynolds	Sussex	128	96	54	64	214
Dorothy Ross	Lancs/Mersey	86	62	55	55	150
Eliza Sackett	W. Somerset	121	80	56	56	192
Mary & Claire Smith	Derbyshire	135	106	83	50	239
John Swindells	London etc.	89	57	43	54	154

Total number of species seen: **599**

New to the Hunt: **30**

Total Records 2018/2019: **7294**

Total species found to date: **1141**

Everyone saw;

Daisy *Bellis perennis*, Common Chickweed *Stellaria media*, Shepherd's Purse *Capsella bursa-pastoris*, Dandelion *Taraxacum officinale* agg., Hazel *Corylus avellana*, Gorse *Ulex europaeus*, Red Dead-Nettle *Lamium purpureum*, Groundsel *Senecio vulgaris*.

This year I have received a record number of entries for the Winter Months Hunt, with some very long and varied lists which would not be inappropriate to submit for a year's Diary! Unlike last year with its severe cold snaps, 2018/2019's winter has been, on the whole, mild for most of us, with a particularly warm spell in February and these milder weather conditions may be reflected in your lists.

Phyl saw many lovely plants whilst spending 2 weeks of the winter in South Africa but, though her finds back in England were less exotic, she managed to see some nice species including Elephant-ears *Bergenia cordifolia* and Chamomile *Chamaemelum nobile*.

Barbara Allen wanted to 'keep it simple', as she had only hunted near her home, but still managed a reasonable total including Black Horehound *Ballota nigra* and Shaggy-soldier *Galinsoga quadriradiata*.

Sheila also hunted close to her home in Kent and was one of the few who saw Common Gromwell *Lithospermum officinale* and the only person to spot Thyme-leaved Sandwort *Arenaria serpyllifolia*; a common enough plant in the summer, but obviously far less so in the winter months.

Another excellent list from Fred and Daphne, who were hoping that February's warm spell would produce more plants. This proved not to be the case, but they were nonetheless pleased to find Broad-leaved Everlasting-pea *Lathyrus latifolius* and Water Bent *Polypogon viridis*.

Congratulations to Sue for finding and identifying no less than four Fumitories *Fumaria* spp. For me, fumitories are a difficult genus and I often just list them as '*Fumaria* sp.'. She did well to see Carline Thistle *Carlina vulgaris* hanging on into December.

Gareth has really enjoyed getting out in the 'dark and cold weather' to look for plants. He was amazed to see Field Woundwort *Stachys arvensis* and Butcher's-broom *Ruscus aculeatus* and to find Winter Honeysuckle *Lonicera x purpusii* on a wall in London.

Julie submitted 'the usual' list, but with some nice finds such as Black Nightshade *Solanum nigrum*, Abraham-Isaac-Jacob *Trachystemon orientalis* and was one of the few to see Small Toadflax *Chaenorhinum minus*, which grows behind her house. She also found Early Dog-violet *Viola reichenbachiana* locally.

Stephen sent in a relatively modest list, but managed to include two species which no-one else saw,

namely Field Wormwood *Artemisia campestris* and Early Star-of-Bethlehem (Radnor Lily) *Gagea bohemica* which not surprisingly he found in Radnorshire.

Anne Cooper sent an interesting letter with her list, describing how the autumn rains following the dry summer brought a 'bonanza' of species. Common Fiddleneck *Amsinckia micrantha*, Mexican Aster *Cosmos bipinnatus* and Stinking Hellebore *Helleborus foetidus* were all good finds.

This is Frances' second Winter Months Hunt, which she says adds interest to her walks - I'm sure many of you agree. She was 'surprised' to find Peach-leaved Bellflower *Campanula persicifolia* and Climbing Corydalis *Ceratocarpus claviculata* in bloom and 'very surprised' to see Burnet Saxifrage *Pimpinella saxifraga*.

As Sue Denness, Dawn Nelson and Jill Oakley tell me they do a lot of their WMH hunting together, I am putting them together in this report. Sue's impressive list from West Sussex includes several species new to the Hunt, notably Snow-in-Summer *Cerastium tomentosum*, Sea Buckthorn *Hippophae rhamnoides* and Hare's-tail *Lagurus ovatus*, which I saw last year in abundance on the dunes near Littlehampton. Once again Dawn has amassed a truly magnificent total. Among the several new-to-the-Hunt species she found was Garden Rocket *Eruca vesicaria*. Jill, along with the other two took part in the BSBI New Year Plant Hunt, which I imagine is quite a challenging competition. For our Hunt she

reached a huge total from Hampshire and West Sussex and was alone in spotting Dame's Violet *Hesperis matronalis* and one of the few to see Hollyhock *Alcea rosea* and Head-to-head Daffodil *Narcissus x cyclazetta*.

Having moved to East Yorkshire last year, Everald has new WMH hunting ground by the Leven Canal. She was very impressed by a 'Snowdrop Spectacular' and many specimens of Butcher's-broom *Ruscus aculeatus* seen on a family outing to Burton Agnes Hall.

Another WMH first-timer is Ben, who hunted with his wife Tessa, and wanted to know what 'counted' for the Hunt, suggesting a guidance sheet. I suspect there would be many differing opinions from WFS members as to what to include. Ben managed to see two new species: Green Amaranth *Amaranthus hybridus* and Maple-leaved Goosefoot *Chenopodium hybridum* (formerly *Chenopodium hybridum*).

Ro has taken part in the WMH for many years and has sent her usual generous list, though she feels her numbers are low this year. In her Somerset 'patch' she was pleased with Rue-leaved Saxifrage *Saxifraga tridactylites*, one of my favourite plants, and Early Meadow-grass *Poa infirma*, found at a local caravan site.

In Yorkshire Charles experienced a cold snap in late December/early January, so really only hunted in December and February. Therefore his list isn't long, but contains some good plants such as Love-in-a-mist *Nigella damascena* and Bugloss

Anchusa arvensis and he was the only member to spot a Crowfoot: Round-leaved Crowfoot *Ranunculus omiophyllus*.

Pat sent a nice newsy letter with her list, explaining that she'd done quite a bit of travelling up and down the country to see family during the winter months. In Hampshire she found Small Nettle *Urtica urens* and Yew *Taxus baccata*, which grows in Chawton, Jane Austen's home village.

Like Charles, Anthony and Rita experienced some cold weather in January and February, but managed a decent total. Fat Hen *Chenopodium album* and, the rather more attractive, Common Fiddleneck *Amsinckia micrantha* were growing on the roadside at Horsforth.

Another huge WMH total came from Doug and Sue, made all the more impressive as everything was found within a ten mile radius of their homes. Now, there's a challenge for the WFS! They were especially pleased with Common Cornsalad *Valerianella locusta* and both Wych and English Elms *Ulmus glabra* and *U. procera*.

Despite some personal problems, John Guest has amassed a decent total mainly seen from his South Yorkshire home. Common Hemp-nettle *Galeopsis tetrahit* and Green Hellebore *Helleborus viridis* were good finds.

Anne Hercock has been very diligent



Photo: Dennis Kell

in identifying some of her plants through Twitter! She says she has found the discipline of keeping proper records useful and has sent a good list from hunting in Gloucestershire and Wales. She was one of only a few to spot Ploughman's Spikenard *Inula conyzae* and Climbing Corydalis *Ceratocarpus claviculata*, both in Monmouthshire.

Pippa acquired a few personal new WMH records this year and is enjoying being able to botanise two minutes from her home in Surrey. Chinese Mugwort *Artemisia verlotiorum*, Round-leaved Crane's-bill *Geranium rotundiflorum* and Hoary Mustard *Hirschfeldia incana* were some of her finds.

Anne Kell, with her husband, Dennis, still finds time away from her WFS duties to enter the Hunt. They have sent a long and varied list, including Fern-grass *Catapodium rigidum* and Chalk Knapweed *Centaurea*



Spring Beauty

list. Three-nerved Sandwort *Moehringia trinerva*, which she saw in all three months, is another example of a 'summer' plant now overwintering.

Barbara Matthews is pleased with her very respectable total this year, but was disappointed to find plants on her local verges not re-growing after being cut back. However she was pleased to find Ivy *Hedera helix* in January and was the only person to see Cape Daisy *Osteospermum jacundum*.

debauxii, not seen by anyone else in this year's Hunt. Anne was, however, disappointed not to see Alexanders *Smyrnium olusatrum* in time to count it for her total.

February's unexpected warmth delighted Sue and Diana as it added quite a few species to their already decent total, which included Russian Vine *Fallopia baldschuanica* which they were the only ones to spot. In December they found Cut-leaved Crane's-bill *Geranium dissectum*, which was new to their personal WMH list.

Geoffrey and Sarah have seen an impressive number of species and were surprised to find Highclere Holly *Ilex x altaclarensis* well established in Petts Wood. They did well to add three Spurges: Sun, Balkan and Petty *Euphorbia helioscopia*, *E. oblongata* and *E. peplus* to their list.

Like many of you, Sally found that plants were emerging earlier this year; for example she found Quaking-grass *Briza media* in January - another 'first' for the Hunt

Elizabeth got off to a good start in December and, although she saw less in the later months, she has sent in a respectable list from her part of Cheshire including Spring Beauty *Claytonia perfoliata*, Honesty *Lunaria annua* and Greather Periwinkle *Vinca major*.

In Alderney, Lindsay found a very large and varied selection of plants. It must have been satisfying to find such plants as Three-cornered Leek *Allium triquetrum*, Sea Fig *Carpobrotus acinaciformis* and Crimson Clover *Trifolium incarnatum*, a new entry to the Hunt's ever-increasing list of species.

Janice was delighted by displays in her local churchyard of Snowdrop *Galanthus* species and Early Crocus *Crocus tommasinianus*. She has sent in a good list of plants, including Buck's-horn Plantain *Plantago coronopus*.

My own list is fairly modest as usual, with no big surprises, but I was pleased to find the attractive Seaside Daisy *Erigeron glaucus* and Field

Madder *Sherardia arvensis* hanging on into January. Also, my late February visit to Marshside RSPB reserve yielded Alexanders *Smyrnium olusatrum*, which often doesn't appear till mid-March.

This is Eliza's first Winter Months Hunt and she has been fortunate in having the chance to botanise with Ro FitzGerald, to whom she gives some of the credit for a pretty good first list. Her 'highlight' is Navelwort *Umbilicus rupestris*, seen in February, and she couldn't miss Pink-headed Knotweed *Persicaria capitata* as it grows outside her house!

Mary and Claire have had a 'bumper season', thanks to the milder weather. They were pleased to have Water Chickweed *Stellaria aquatica* (formerly *Myosoton aquaticum*), Mudwort *Limosella aquatica* and two Dock *Rumex* species, Golden Dock *R. maritimus* and Marsh Dock *R. palustris*, as personal 'firsts'

for the Hunt. The last three species are new to the WMH list also, so well done!

Last but not least, John Swindells says that among his most pleasing finds were Fiddleneck *Amsinckia micrantha* and Tall Nightshade *Solanum chenopodioides*, both found in London. He has found Pink-headed Knotweed *Persicaria capitata* in the last 15 winters; London's climate must suit this plant.

So, an impressive year for both the number of WMH lists submitted and some very long and interesting lists as well as a few photos I have enjoyed reading the letters which accompany your lists, as this gives background to your hunting, but sadly I don't have the space to share much of the detail. Happy hunting for Winter 2019/2020, and don't forget to include English names for all your plants.

DOROTHY ROSS



Pink-headed Knotweed

Photo: Ro FitzGerald

SPRING WEEK HUNT 2019

Name	Location	Total
Barbara Allen	Merseyside	27
Helen Ayres	East Kent	79
Caroline Bateman	London/Surrey	84
Sarah Beetham	Bristol area	36
Julie Clarke	Lancashire	27
Steve Clarkson & Group	Suffolk	47
Rosemary FitzGerald	Somerset	112
Rita & Anthony Grainger	Leeds	64
Anne Hercock	Monmouthshire	36
Pippa Hyde	Surrey	60
Helen Jackson	Musselburgh	52
Anne & Dennis Kell	Suffolk	60
Sue Kightly & Diana Stroud	Berkshire	67
Judith Lovelady	Anglesey	23
Sally Maller & Rob Hamer	South Devon	54
Barbara Matthews	Suffolk	55
Ron Parker	Surrey/E. London	59
Sue Poyser & Doug Grant	Kent	92
Lyndsey Pyne	Alderney	85
Rosemary Roberts	Kent	56
June Robinson	Sheffield	18
Eliza Sackett	Somerset	59
Ian Sapsford	Kent	51
John Swindells	Kent	62
Pauline & Richard Wilson	Bristol area	32
Total number of different species seen		145
Species only found by one person		100
Species new to Spring Hunt:		18

This has been an interesting event with 25 reports ranging from Alderney to Scotland with a much more average year's weather. 24 plants were recorded by almost everyone, but amazingly 100 were only reported by one person. 50 or so were native or endemic, flowering early or hanging on over the winter. So next short notes about those who took part.

Barbara Allen managed to find most of the flowers expected in early spring.

Helen was especially pleased to find Yellow Figwort *Scrophularia vernalis* flowering near Canterbury Abbey. She also found a number of trees flowering plus Wood Sorrel *Oxalis acetosella*.

Caroline recorded two plants new to the list: Rue *Ruta graveolens* and Annual Buttonweed *Cotula australis*. Of her other unusual finds Shaggy Soldier *Galinsoga quadriradiata* reminded me of finding this when I lived in London.

Sarah was the only person to record Fritillary *Fritillaria meleagris*.

Julie, together with other members of Branch N3, recorded Ivy-leaved Speedwell *Veronica hederifolia* ssp. *lucorum* and was very pleased to find Sweet Violet *Viola odorata*.

Steve and his group found Mezereon *Daphne mezereum*, Autumn Hawkbit *Scorzoneroides autumnalis* and Field Wormwood *Artemisia campestris* ssp. *campestris*.

Ro found a huge total of flowers including a number of grasses and trees, some new to the Hunt. Kidney Vetch *Anthyllis vulneraria*, Wild Strawberry *Fragaria vesca*, Scarlet Pimpernel *Lysimachia arvensis* (formerly *Anagallis arvensis*) and Greater Chickweed *Stellaria neglecta* are among other plants only she managed to find.

Rita and Anthony found Fool's Parsley *Aethusa cynapium* and Yellow Star-of-Bethlehem *Gagea lutea*. How I would love to find it. They also recorded a new plant for them, Glory-of-the-snow *Scilla forbesii*.

Anne Herccock sent a comprehensive list and found Hemlock *Conium maculatum* in flower.

Pippa found Round-leaved Crane's-bill *Geranium rotundifolium* and was the only person to record Winter Jasmine *Jasminum nudiflorum*.

Helen was thrilled to have Guernsey Fleabane *Conyza sumatrensis* confirmed, a new record for her. Out of her several interesting finds were Sweet Cicely *Myrrhis odorata* and Purple Toothwort *Lathraea clandestina*.



Yellow Star-of-Bethlehem

Anne and Dennis noted Spring Beauty *Claytonia perfoliata* and Field Pansy *Viola arvensis* were early records for them.

Sue and Diana. Among their early finds were Meadow Buttercup *Ranunculus acris* and Honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*.

Judith found Sea Mayweed *Tripleurospermum maritimum* and was one of only a few to find Red Campion *Silene dioica* in flower.

Photo: Anne Kell

Sally and Rob, perhaps not surprisingly, found several early flowering spring plants including Wild Garlic *Allium ursinum*, Rough Chervil *Chaerophyllum temulum* and Southern Woodrush *Luzula forsteri*.

Barbara Matthews managed to find several flowering plants not found by others including Common Cudweed *Filago germanica* (formerly *Filago vulgaris*) and Rough Comfrey *Symphytum asperum*.

Ron recorded a Celandine *Ficaria verna* ssp. *verna* new to the Hunt list. Germander Speedwell *Veronica chamaedrys* and Hairy Violet *Viola hirta* were early finds.

Sue and Doug found Scented Mayweed *Matricaria chamomilla*, a new entry for the list. Goat's-beard *Tragopogon pratensis* and Broad-leaved Spurge *Euphorbia platyphyllos* were not seen by others.

Lyndsey sent her first list including a vast number of plants only found by her which must reflect the warmer location in Alderney. Creeping Cinquefoil *Potentilla reptans* and Viper's-bugloss *Echium vulgare* were new to the list. Of the rest Hottentot Fig *Carpobrotus edulis*, Sea Fig *Carpobrotus acinaciformis* and Sea Campion *Silene uniflora* reflect the maritime setting.

Rosemary found some very early native plants in flower including Cuckooflower *Cardamine pratensis* and Yellow Archangel *Lamium galeobdolon*. Only one other person found Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* in flower.

Eliza also sent a first time list. Her early finds included Bush Vetch *Vicia sepium* and Field Penny-cress *Thlaspi arvense* both only found by one other person.

Ian was the only person to find Wild Cherry *Prunus avium* and Winter-cress *Barbarea vulgaris* in flower.

John majored on *Geranium* species, finding Small-flowered Crane's-bill *G. pusillum*, Round-leaved Crane's-bill *G. rotundifolium* and Hedge Crane's-bill *G. pyrenaicum*. Amazingly he also found Corn Poppy *Papaver rhoeas*. Two new records for the list are Austrian Chamomile *Cota austriaca* (formerly *Anthemis austriaca*) and Mediterranean Nettle *Urtica membranacea*.

Richard and Pauline are staggered at what other people found! We struggled to find what we did.

PAULINE AND RICHARD WILSON



Photo: Peter Llewellyn

SPRING ONE DAY HUNT

MOUSEHOLD HEATH - 9th MARCH

In this part of the world (East Anglia), our strategy is to visit a site twice in the year for the Spring and Autumn Hunts, so we revisited the Mousehold Heath area, almost in the centre of Norwich. It was disappointing that from the original number of twelve people who were supposed to be coming, for one reason or another, we were reduced to a merry band of four. And, like sleuths, we explored every nook and cranny to find any wild flower that might have sprung into bloom at this early time of the year.

garden escapes were welcome with Garden Grape-hyacinth *Muscari armeniacum* and Balkan Anemone *Anemone blanda* told by the hairless undersides to its sepals. There is one very low-growing, mat-forming plant which I always challenge myself to find a flower on and that is Mind-your-own-business *Soleirolia soleirolia* and, guess what, I found some minute flowers on the first piece that I picked. Which brought to mind one of my most favourite of words, serendipity!

STEPHEN CLARKSON

We started at the old red-brick prison overlooking the town and in no time at all amassed a few species which included Gorse *Ulex europaeus*, Annual Mercury *Mercurialis annua* and Common Mouse-ear *Cerastium fontanum*. Along with the common Dead-nettles was the more unusual Henbit Dead-nettle *Lamium amplexicaule* with its dark green, opposite leaves embracing the square stem and the purple flowers beginning to emerge in whorls.

Purple seemed to be the colour of the day with Honesty *Lunaria annua*, Sweet Violet *Viola odorata* and Greater Periwinkle *Vinca major* in flower, the last showing a pretty form where the petals are separate and gently twisted for the variety *oxyloba*.

Yellows were painted in a very early Broom *Cytisus scoparius*, a very late Autumn Hawkbit *Scorzoneroideis autumnalis* and Oregon-grape *Mahonia aquifolium*. A couple of



Broom

Photo: Peter Llewellyn

ONE DAY FIELD MEETINGS 2019

ARNSIDE KNOTT 13th APRIL

Our Bradford Botany Group friends joined us on this meeting making quite a large group. However, everyone helped and the camaraderie was good. So 25 plus set off on our 'ascent' to the Knott, which I believe is classed as a Marilyn. Our first stop along the promenade was to a small quarry where we found Winter Heath *Erica carnea*, along with the white form 'Springwood White' identified by Mr. McClintock in 1995. These were right at the top of the quarry and without more ado Gareth Bursnell had brought a sprig down for us all to see. I did warn members they were at the meeting their own risk!!

Further along our second special find was Maidenhair Fern *Adiantum capillus-veneris* growing in a wet gully in the limestone and above was Spurge Laurel *Daphne laureola*. Next, to a small nature reserve, Beech Wood, where Wild Daffodils *Narcissus pseudonarcissus*, White Butterbur *Petasites albus* and Goldilocks Buttercup *Ranunculus auricomus* were a few of our many finds. We were starting to climb now and, at the top of the track onto Redhills Road, a wall was covered with Lamb's-tail *Chiastophyllum oppositifolium* – now in Stace. Carrying on through a pasture we saw plenty of Blue Moor-grass *Sesleria caerulea* with its white form *S. caerulea* var. *albicans*. On reaching the eastern side of the

Knott, to members' disappointment, I could only show the rosettes of the Teesdale Violet *Viola rupestris*. The cold winds had kept it back this year. We did see Rare Spring-sedge *Carex ericetorum* but again, because of the weather, it was difficult to find. Then our descent to find the white form of Ivy-leaved Toadflax *Cymbalaria muralis* var. *alba* and finally, as we dropped down through woodland to the starting point of our meeting, we saw Toothwort *Lathraea squamaria* growing on Portugal Laurel *Prunus lusitanica*.

I would like to thank everyone for being so patient and helpful.

JULIE CLARKE



Photo: Peter Llewellyn

WAYLAND WOOD

14th APRIL

Wayland wood is owned and managed by the Norfolk Wildlife Trust. It is traditionally coppiced. This practice opens up the ground to the sunlight allowing a rich understorey of plants to develop. Over 125 different species of flowering plant have been recorded here including the rare Yellow Star-of-Bethlehem *Gagea lutea*. We were slightly too late to catch this wonderful plant in all its glory but it was still evident as fading flower heads. They weren't in good enough condition to make a decent photograph but good enough for us to count them. In previous years there have been two main patches and this year was no different. They grow along the main perimeter path and in a large patch on the far side of the wood. They do in fact appear to be spreading, which is good news for the plant and the management team.

Of course the wood has much more on offer. We spent all morning wandering slowly along enjoying the sight of the new spring growth and the promise of beauty to come. The emerging orchid leaves were inspected and the fact that they were shiny green both sides and had roundish blotches meant that they were Early-purple Orchids *Orchis mascula* rather than Common Spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* which has dull green leaves with transverse blotches. Ken Southall found a Goldilocks Buttercup *Ranunculus auricomus*. This plant always looks as if it's having a bad hair day with its tendency to have one or two petals missing or ill-

formed in some way. The bluebells were pushing up. They were mostly our wonderful native Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* rather than the hybrid with its wider leaves, flowers all round the stem and stamens showing blue rather than cream. Our native Yellow Archangel *Lamium galeobdolon* ssp. *montanum* was in glorious flower. It has green leaves with no blotches and long stolons after flowering.

Our small group had met in the car park at 10.30 a.m. as usual and greeted a new member who had asked to join us. It's always good to meet new people. It makes the day much more interesting for us to be able to share in their obvious enthusiasm. Whilst we were still lurking in the car park I was approached by a man who inquired as to who we were and on informing him we were there to look at the flowers he asked to join us. Wonderful. He was with us all day and I very much hope he has now joined the society.

When I first joined the Wild Flower Society back in 2010 I left it a whole year and a half before going to my first meeting. It was brilliant and I quickly realised I'd been missing out and booked myself on every meeting I could. I must have been mad to leave it that long. I'd like to encourage any newly joined members to try out a meeting or two this year and come see what you're missing. You'll be glad you did and of course you'll be very welcome.

SUE GRAYSTON

WARTON CRAG, CARNFORTH

23rd MAY, 2019

Warton Crag rises above Morecambe Bay and its stunning habitats include limestone pavements, grassland and ancient woodlands. Eleven members set off on a dry, but cloudier day than of late, through the woodland to reach open areas of grassland. The Horseshoe Vetch *Hippocrepis comosa* was at its best and showing the horseshoe segments of the fruit.

Then it was a hands and knees job identifying such plants as Thyme-leaved Sandwort *Arenaria serpyllifolia*, Spring Sandwort *Sabulina verna* (formerly *Minuartia verna*) and Squinancywort *Asperula cynanchica*. In the grikes on the pavement area we saw Lily-of-the-valley *Convallaria majalis* and, nearby, the tiny flowers of Changing Forget-me-not *Myosotis discolor*.

We then found a sheltered spot for lunch before our journey home. By this time the sun was coming out and as we entered an open area we spotted a Pearl-bordered Fritillary basking on a Blackberry leaf. Then there were two, then three! So it was cameras out to take a shot. At this point a member realised she had left her camera some way up the track so went back to search for it. Luckily it was still where she left it among the Ground Ivy *Glechoma hederacea*. I must thank Sue Riley for organising this meeting, handing out leaflets about the area and compiling an extensive list of plants to be seen on Warton Crag.

JULIE CLARKE

HASKAYNE CUTTING, LANCS

6th JUNE, 2019

Haskayne is a small village west of Ormskirk in Lancashire and ten members met to start our walk, initially along the canal where we soon spotted a good stand of Borage *Borago officinalis*. Further along Graeme Kay pointed out White Clover *Trifolium repens*, but growing alongside, a real contrast, was the pink form, variety *atropurpurea*. Trailing Bellflower *Campanula poscharskyana* had a good hold in many of the cracks in the canal wall. We were soon into the village where Beaked Hawk's-beard *Crepis*

vesicaria was abundant; this has slightly larger heads than its cousin Smooth Hawk's-beard *Crepis capillaris*. On into crop fields and again Graeme's keen eyes spotted an unusually large Brome which turned out to be Great Brome *Anisantha diandra*. We also saw the dainty Field Pansy *Viola arvensis* and then came across another Parnassus plant, the white form of Red Clover *Trifolium pratense* var. *leucochraceum*. The old railway line was soon reached where there were plenty of orchids for us to ponder

over, namely Southern Marsh *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*, Early Marsh *D. incarnata* ssp. *coccinea* and Bee *Ophrys apifera*. The frothy flowers of Common Meadow-rue *Thalictrum flavum* stood out and Hop Trefoil *Trifolium campestre* was skirting the path. The weather forecast had been good, but

unfortunately after finishing lunch the heavens opened and with nowhere to shelter, we all got drenched so it was decided to make our way back to our cars. We enjoyed the day and my special thanks go to Peter Gateley for organising the meeting.

JULIE CLARKE

BOOK REVIEW

Bessie Downes - Flowers of the Southport Coast.

Jemma Tynan & John Dempsey (2019). ISBN 978-1-874516-23-21

It's always a good moment when a forgotten lover of nature becomes known in modern life and even better when that person was a talented botanical artist. I'm sure many of us remember the pleasure and interest felt when Edith Holden's *Diary of an Edwardian Lady* was published in 1977 – it immediately became the birthday or Christmas present for everyone interested in natural history. The same happened in 1985 when Richard Mabey published a delightful compilation of the work produced by the ladies of the Clifford family as they recorded their finds near home on the banks of the Severn. *The Frampton Flora* had particular resonance for West Country botanists and I'm sure this new book will do the same for both residents of the Liverpool area and for plant-hunting visitors to the famous Southport dunes.

It's a slim volume (50 pages), issued this year to accompany an exhibition of watercolours by Bessie Downes (1860-1920), which will be on (free of entrance charge) at the **Atkinson Galleries, Southport PR8 1DB, until 2nd November, 2019.** The book

contains a thoughtful account of her life, well-printed illustrations of over 45 of the paintings and an essay by John Dempsey, a local ecologist, on the Flora of the Sefton Coast, which has some fascinating information on dune habitat and management, illustrated with his own on-site photos.

It's not an important botanical tome – the interest is very specifically local and the plants pictured are a mixture of wild and garden, so Lilac is next to Branched Bur-reed, and a real Christmas cyclamen is beside Sea Holly, but the quality of the paintings is really delightful, and the 'jizz' of the wild species is absolutely right, even if the company is a bit surprising!

I once botanised in some areas of these dunes and they are thrillingly full of rare plants, but this charming little book (and the story of the artist) would add a real extra pleasure to a visit. If I could go again, I'd certainly take this along as a soothing counterbalance to Stace and I wish I was going to have a chance to see the exhibition.

RO FITZGERALD

BOTANICAL LATIN QUIZ - ANSWERS

Correct pairing in red

Meadow	<i>pratense / pratensis</i>
Field	<i>arvense / arvensis</i>
Seashore	<i>littorale / littoralis</i>
Sand Dunes	<i>arenaria / dunensis</i>
Walls	<i>muralis / murale</i>
Bogs	<i>uliginosa / uliginosus</i>
Marsh	<i>palustre / palustris</i>
Mountains	<i>montana / alpinus</i>
Sea	<i>maritima / maritimus</i>
Water	<i>aquatica / aquaticus</i>
Riverside	<i>riparia / rivularis</i>
River	<i>fluviatilis / fluviatile</i>
Snow	<i>nivalis</i>
Rocks	<i>rupicola / rupestre</i>
Waste Places	<i>rudemale / ruderalis</i>
Woodland	<i>sylvatica</i>

Photo: Stephen Clarkson



Shadows searching for flowers, Mallorca
Winner of 'Human Element' section of WFS Photo Competition