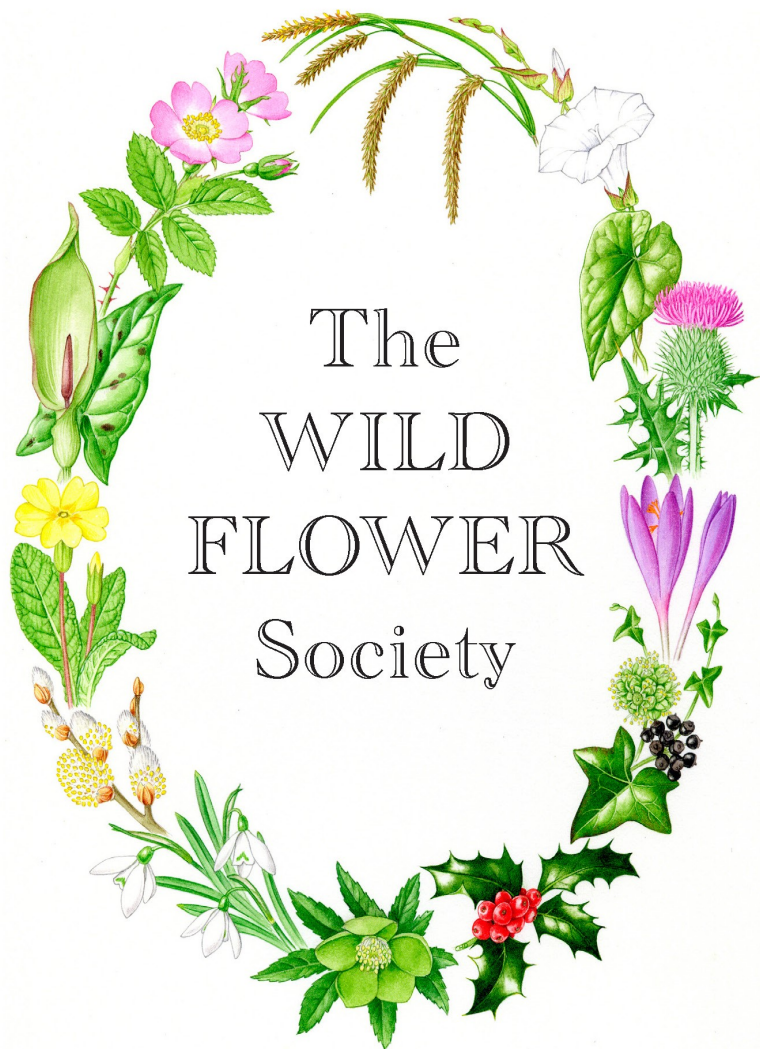


WILD FLOWER MAGAZINE



SUMMER 2023

WILD FLOWER MAGAZINE

Published four times a year by the Wild Flower Society

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SUMMER 2023

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

I would particularly like to thank Anne Kell, who, since the Autumn 2016 issue of Wild Flower Magazine, has been our editor. It seemed strange not to receive a reminder from Anne to prepare my letter for this issue. She has done a wonderful job for the Society over the last seven years. She has changed the magazine from three times a year into quarterly so that we now have one for each of the four seasons. She has enlarged the size and included a lot more colour photographs as well as some most informative articles about interesting plants, often with most useful keys for their identification.

It has been a pleasure to work with Anne and I will miss the quarterly contact. On behalf of the Society, I thank her for a job well done. I am grateful to our Chairman Peter Llewellyn for coordinating this issue of the magazine and I thank Ken Southall for taking over from Anne in the next issue. The magazine is an



important way of communicating about our activities and presents much useful information, so this continuity is most important for all of us.



I write this in the spring after a very dry February and a remarkably wet March here in the south west. Our wild flowers are confused by the strange weather patterns of late. However, this spring I have been out a lot in the woods of East Devon and the bluebells have been fantastic and probably stimulated by the weather. I hope that all of you are having a good summer with the wild flowers. After seeing the recent David Attenborough series on the Wild Isles, it makes me feel that we need to be working diligently to preserve the wild flowers that we so much love and that play such an important part in the ecosystems of our country.

GHILLEAN PRANCE

EDITORIAL

There's a well-known phrase: "Never volunteer". Being an awkward sort of person and thinking "How hard can it be?" I volunteered to edit the summer magazine when we found out that our editor, Anne Kell was resigning her position.

Anne used Microsoft Word, Publisher and Adobe pdf documents to create our magazine and although I guess many of us have some familiarity with Word and perhaps creating a .pdf file, far fewer have ever used Publisher. I certainly haven't. Apologies for the any lateness of the summer edition.

We have a quite complex task editing a botanical magazine. Our text is full of the names of plants in both Latin and English and as far as is possible we as a society have decided to follow the names set out in New Flora of the British Isles Edition 4 by Clive Stace (Stace 4). This is where the first problem starts because I thought I knew many of the common plant names in Latin and English and for the purposes of telling someone a name, I do.

That won't help for editing purposes because we must be sure that the spelling is exactly right and in the case of English names, that the hyphenation of the name conforms with our reference text. Simply telling someone that the Latin name for the little white job growing in the gutter is *Capsella bursa-pastoris* and that its English name is Shepherd's-purse, doesn't reveal where the apostrophes go or whether either word is hyphenated. So, the editor needs to

look it up.

My admiration for Anne Kell's patience now knows no bounds. Our summer edition contains branch reports and 1 km square reports all of which are full of Latin and English plant names and each name must be checked by the editor. In addition, our expert botanists in Parnassus find many plants which don't appear in Stace 4 so further work is needed.

I can picture our proof readers, red pens poised, impatiently waiting for the first versions to arrive from the printers. They will inevitably find plenty that this editor has missed and I expect the proofs to be returned to me like a badly done school project, covered in red corrections, with a "D minus, see me" comment added.

I was very sorry to see Anne resign from this post, not just because she did what I now know is a much more complex job than I imagined, but because the magazine, our main contact for most members of the Wild Flower Society, has been such a lively and absorbing read and seemed to be getting better every year.

Thank you, Anne. You did a wonderful job as editor and now I know how much patience you exercised during these unseen editorial phases.

The photos in this edition are all my own unless otherwise stated. Sorry if I didn't use yours.

PETER LLEWELLYN

NOTICES

2023 AGM and MEMBERS' WEEKEND

With this magazine you should also have received the programme for the AGM and Members' Weekend to be held in Rye, Sussex, from 1st – 5th September.

If you plan to attend, even if you have already booked a place, please can you contact Sheila Wynn (wfs.gensec@gmail.com), to provide the following: payment for the buffet lunch on Saturday if you would like to have it; which of the three groups you would like to join for Monday's Field Meeting; whether you require transport to the meetings and if you do, where you are staying; if travelling by car, whether you are willing to offer transport, how many passengers you can accommodate and where you are staying.

THE ANNUAL PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

The photographic competition has always been an integral part of the Members' Weekend although you do not have to attend the AGM to participate. Full details can be found on pages 30-31 of the 2023 Yearbook.

As a reminder the categories are: -

Habitat: A photograph of a plant or plant community within its environment or locality.

Plant Portrait: A photograph of a plant that illustrates its uniqueness while at the same time revealing something of its character.

Close-up: A photograph that reveals, in a more scientific way, the uniqueness of a plant by means of a close-up photograph.

Foreign Fields: A photograph of a plant or plant community that can *clearly be seen* to be growing in a foreign country.

Human Element: A photograph that concentrates on botanical personalities and/or their activities. Please ask any person involved for their permission before submitting the picture.

In addition, there is a 'Shoot and Show' competition for those attending the AGM. If you don't want to enter the main competition but would still like to share your photograph(s) with others, then bring your prints along to the AGM. Members attending the AGM will be asked to vote for their favourite picture. The winner will receive a prize from the organiser of the competition.

Digital (jpegs at full resolution) entries and printed entries must be submitted to and received by Ken Southall, no later than **Monday 14th August 2023**. Please refer to the 2023 Yearbook and/or the Wild Flower Society Website for full details of how to submit your entries. Ken's address is Aspen Cottage, Nettlestead, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP8 4QT; email: ken.southall@btinternet.com

COPY DATE FOR THE AUTUMN MAGAZINE: 24th JULY 2023

As you may know, from the next Wild Flower Society Autumn magazine I will be the new editor. As this will be my first edition, I have brought forward by a few days the copy date to give me a bit more time to be ready for the printer's deadline. Could I appeal to those who will be submitting 'copy' to try and make sure any plant names conform with how they appear in Stace edition 4. Also, where appropriate if a 'table' is to be used, if possible please use the 'table template' as supplied by Anne Kell earlier. I look forward to keeping up the excellent quality of the magazine as was created by Anne. Thank you, Ken Southall.

FIRST HUNT 1st MARCH 2023 DANBURY, ESSEX

Six of us met at the cricket ground in Danbury for a come and find meeting led by Sue Grayston (as Stephen Clarkson was incapacitated). We started by comparing Cherry Plum *Prunus cerasifera* (identified by its green first year twigs) with Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*. Luckily, both already had flowers. We then walked over to the churchyard where we had to decide whether the crocuses that had spread outside of the graves could be counted or not. We decided that they could be and, with the help of Stace, identified them as Early Crocus

Crocus tommasinianus. We discussed the identity of a vetch that was not yet flowering. Using Poland, we were able to identify it as Hairy Tare *Ervilia hirsuta*. We admired the snowdrops and Sue showed us a patch of the more unusual Greater Snowdrop *Galanthus elwesii*. By then it was starting to rain and as it was lunch-time anyway we sat in the church to eat our sandwiches, being careful not to leave any crumbs. After lunch we had a look in some allotments and then walked past houses to a small wood where Sue showed us a group of Summer Snowflake *Leucojum aestivum*, probably originally a garden throw-out but obviously growing well. We walked back to the main road to a local café where we enjoyed coffee and cake. It was then a short walk back to our cars. A fine end to an enjoyable day. Despite the late season due to the prolonged cold weather, we had found a good total of 39 plants in flower.

JULIA TODD



BRANCH REPORTS FOR 2022 JUNIORS

Alice Coutts	206
Rachel Coutts	206
Carolina Dent	124

Alice and Rachel both found 206 different plants, each earning a 200 Plants badge. They started the year around their home in Shetland, finding a hardy Daisy *Bellis perennis* flowering in January followed by Gorse *Ulex europaeus*, Colt's-foot *Tussilago farfara* and Lesser Celandine *Ficaria verna* in March. A new find this year was Purple Saxifrage *Saxifraga oppositifolia* in Northmavine. Later in the year on Orkney, they found Grass-of-Parnassus *Parnassia palustris*, a new plant for Rachel.

In July, Alice and Rachel went plant-hunting further from home, travelling down to Gloucestershire and then Cumbria. They even started botanising at service station stops on the way, finding Germander Speedwell *Veronica chamaedrys* at Cairn Lodge and Fen Bedstraw *Galium uliginosum* at Annandale Water. At Swift Hill in Gloucestershire, Alice found her favourite plant of the year, a beautiful display of Pyramidal Orchid *Anacamptis pyramidalis* including some white-flowered plants. Other finds there included Fairy Flax *Linum catharticum* and Viper's-bugloss *Echium vulgare*. In Cumbria, Rachel found her favourite plant of the year, Hedgerow Crane's-bill *Geranium pyrenaicum*, by a stream near Millthrop. This was followed by a walk in Howgill Fells where they found Bog

Asphodel *Narthecium ossifragum* and Bilberry *Vaccinium myrtillus*. New species found closer to home included two new species, Field Horsetail *Equisetum arvense* in Burravoe and Marsh Horsetail *Equisetum palustre* in West Sandwick, making a total of six ferns plus horsetails, as well as six grasses, a sedge and three rushes.

Carolina found 124 plants, earning a 100 Plants badge. I was pleased to see a new fern, Hart's-tongue *Asplenium scolopendrium*, and a new tree, Goat Willow *Salix caprea*, among that total. Junior members who use the Beginner's Diary may have noticed that Hart's-tongue and another fern, Bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*, have been added in the new edition for 2023.

A botanical highlight of Carolina's year was a trip to the Hartslock reserve near Reading, where she saw not only Monkey Orchid *Orchis simia*, but also the Monkey x Lady Orchid hybrid *Orchis x angusticurvis* at its only recorded UK site.

A spring walk in the Surrey Hills included lots of woodland plants including Hazel *Corylus avellana*, Wood Anemone *Anemone nemorosa* and Annual Mercury *Mercurialis annua*, and a trip to the Sussex Coast gave Carolina her first records of seaside plants including Sea Spurge *Euphorbia paralias*, Sea-Holly

Eryngium maritimum and Sea Bindweed *Calystegia soldanella*.

On a summer holiday in Cumbria she found Bilberry *Vaccinium myrtillus* and Harebell *Campanula rotundifolia*, and Wood Sage *Teucrium scorodonia* on Hadrian's Wall.

She also found new plants closer to her London home, including Red

Dead-nettle *Lamium purpureum* and Wall Speedwell *Veronica arvensis* in her garden.

I would always be happy to hear from more junior members, whether it's rare finds or a long list from a big trip, or just a few favourite plants close to home.

NICHOLA HAWKINS



Sea Bindweed
Calystegia soldanella



Red Dead-nettle
Lamium purpureum

BRANCH A, KENT

Annual	New	Total
Devina Ellis		50
Claire Horder		510
Cumulative		
Jill Abery	9	394
José Gibbs	16	467
Pam Smith	27	436
Cumulative - Valhalla		
Doug Grant	2	1895
Sue Poyser	2	1932
Susan Pittman	10	1265

Devina began in May with a visit to Devon, where she saw Red Valerian *Centranthus ruber*, both red and white flowered, on the walls of Torre Abbey, another plant of walls there being Ivy-leaved Toadflax *Cymbalaria muralis*. In August, a paddle boat trip in the Norfolk Broads provided her with sight of the pink fluffy flowers of Hemp-agrimony *Eupatorium cannabinum* lining the banks of the River Bure. An autumn trip to Mallaig on the steam-hauled Jacobite service enabled her to see Fox-and-cubs *Pilosella aurantiaca* on the station sidings. Then in pinewoods near Newtonmore she came across a white-flowered shrub subsequently identified as Red-berried Elder *Sambucus racemosa*.

Claire's substantial total of 510 includes numerous plants encountered on outings with Kent recorders, such as Broad-leaved Cudweed *Filago pyramidata* at Ranscombe. A May outing to Anglesey enabled exploration of several nature reserves, Round-leaved Wintergreen *Pyrola rotundifolia* being encountered near Newborough. Her star plants, however, were Helleborines *Epipactis*, from two trips to Northumberland, the second being to search for what had been out earlier.

Young's Helleborine *Epipactis helleborine* var. *youngiana*, at one time considered a separate species, was seen by her at Killingworth. She noted Marsh Helleborine *Epipactis palustris* at memorably-named The Snook, Lindisfarne. Dune Helleborine *Epipactis dunensis* was on heavy metal polluted soil in the Tyne Valley, presumably what has been described

as a separate variety or subspecies, occupying a distinct inland habitat rather than the usual coastal dunes; and she was thrilled to see Lindisfarne Helleborine *Epipactis sancta*, existing nowhere other than on Holy Island (hence the apposite Latin name).

As for cumulative recording, Jill added a few records from the north Cornish coast, including Lousewort *Pedicularis sylvatica* and Rock Sea-spurrey *Spergularia rupicola*. Man Orchid *Orchis anthropophora* by a path on the North Downs near Dorking was new to her list and followed the sighting of four other orchid species on one hillside.

Cumulative records from José were largely made in May, before the climate extremes of summer arrived. She botanised in Devon, which provided olfactory contrasts between sheets of Ramsons *Allium ursinum* in a wood at the edge of Dartmoor and Woodruff *Galium odoratum* in the Lydford Gorge. The latter always reminds me of an 1863 novella, 'Woodruff; or, Sweetest when crushed' - very Victorian with its double title and the commandeering of plants to deliver a moral message of the sweetness of adversity to bring out the higher order of virtues. After the summer extremes, a Scottish visit gave her Harebell *Campanula rotundifolia* in flower on 20th October at Fort George, Inverness. The phenology data in Plant Atlas 2020 show how exceptional this was, with flowering not normally extending beyond September, and the detectability of the species in consequence reducing.

Although Pam had explored at Dungeness the previous year, the 2022 visit by the WFS enabled her to add many more species to her list. Her most interesting records, however, were from Hampshire.

Martin Down National Nature Reserve had apparently benefitted from some close grazing which encouraged a carpet of short-stemmed flowers, with a mass of Early Gentian *Gentianella amarella* ssp. *anglica* spotted by her in late May on a small bank. Other Hampshire finds included Field Fleawort *Tephrosia integrifolia*, another plant of downland short turf; and, in a very different habitat, wet, acid, peaty ground at Pipers Wait, Pale Butterwort *Pinguicula lusitanica*.

Two new plants were seen by both Doug and Sue, the first being Spotted Spurge *Euphorbia maculata* between brick paving at Chatham Maritime; most of our relatively few Kent records are of this character and it appears to be spreading in urban areas. A much more local introduction seen by them was Pale Speedwell *Veronica cymbalaria*, well naturalised at Faversham Cemetery,

Kent which may have arrived with imported soil in plantings on graves. Its Mediterranean flowering period begins in December; it was early that month when Doug and Sue recorded it.

Susan went with Cornwall Wildlife Trust to Penhale Dunes in July, to an audible background of military training manoeuvres (some dunes having restricted access) and was there introduced to Babington's Leek *Allium ampeloprasum* var. *babingtonii* and a number of plants associated with the marshy dune slacks: Lesser Water-plantain *Baldellia ranunculoides*, Marsh Helleborine *Epipactis palustris*, Early Marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza incarnata* ssp. *incarnata* and Marsh Fragrant-orchid *Gymnadenia densiflora*. The slacks generally dry out in summer, although some retain standing water, and so offer variability of growing conditions as also does the degree of stability or mobility of the sand, the more open semi-fixed dunes enabling her to add Portland Spurge *Euphorbia portlandica*.

GEOFFREY KITCHENER

BRANCH A, KENT 1 KM SQUARE STUDY

José Gibbs studies two squares: TR3370 (Westbrook, Margate) and TR4069 (North Foreland) José began 2022 with good intentions and added some early records to TR4069 but circumstances conspired against later recording. Nevertheless, Winter Heliotrope *Petasites pyrenaicus* and Grey Field-speedwell *Veronica polita* were worth noting. Although Early Dog-violet *Viola reichenbachiana* and Common Dog-violet *Viola riviniana* might appear commonplace, on Thanet they are not. The former island has a long near-treeless history, and plants which one might expect to find in copses and on hedgebanks are often lacking. José added 13 plants to her list for North Foreland making a new total of 65 for 2022.

BRANCH M, SOUTH COAST, CHANNEL ISLANDS

Annual	New	Total
Karen Ford	240	240
Sue & Andy Skarstein	204	204

Cumulative - Valhalla

Nick Aston	30	1670
Richard Coomber	15	1011
Helen Dignum	124	1143
Pippa Hyde	3	1684
Sarah MacClennan	57	650
Peter Whitcomb	3	1033

Karen sent in her first diary in the annual branch. She plans to go on a BSBI Identiplant course this year. What an excellent idea. Unusual and interesting plants she discovered included Pyramidal Orchid *Anacamptis pyramidalis* on Box Hill along with the dainty Squinancywort *Asperula cynanchica*, and Stinking Chamomile *Anthemis cotula*. Living near the North Downs is a great advantage due to the wealth of species on the chalk, including Deadly Nightshade *Atropa belladonna* and Quaking-grass *Briza media*.

Her list included grasses and ferns which are hard to identify. Well done. Other good finds included the following: Flowering-rush *Butomus umbellatus*, White Helleborine *Cephalanthera damasonium*, Leopard's-bane *Doronicum pardalianches*, Deptford Pink *Dianthus armeria*, Musk Orchid *Herminium monorchis*, Marsh Club-moss *Lycopodiella inundata* and Man Orchid *Orchis anthropophora*.

What an interesting range of plants seen. Well done. Hopefully you can travel further afield next year to add more plants to your list.

Living on the south coast and near to the New Forest gained Sue & Andy most of their records. The highlight of the year was a trip to Noar Hill. Here they were shown Frog Orchids *Coeloglossum viride*, Fly Orchids *Ophrys insectifera*, and Pyramidal Orchid *Anacamptis pyramidalis*. Plants in the New Forest made up most of the total. The most interesting were Heath Spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza maculata*, Musk *Erythranthe moschata*, Bog Orchid *Hammarbya paludosa*, Pale Butterwort *Pinguicula lusitanica* and Lesser Butterfly-orchid *Platanthera bifolia*.

The best species I have left until last. On a visit to the Isle of Mull they found One-flowered Wintergreen *Moneses uniflora* and Twinflower *Linnaea borealis*. What a wonderful

first list. Excellent.

mountain flowers". I can't wait for next year's list of "goodies".

Nick's list of plants as usual contained plants from across the UK.



Twinflower
Linnaea borealis

Richard Coomber has been less mobile this year so confined most of his outings to the New Forest area. He found the wonderful Mousetail *Myosurus minimus*, not at all common and very easy to miss. In May he spotted Hairy Garlic *Allium subhirsutum* and in June Marsh Fragrant-orchid *Gymnadenia densiflora*, two lovely flowers to see. On a trip to Dorset he saw Heath Lobelia *Lobelia urens*, a beautiful and rare plant and also Spiny Oleaster *Elaeagnus pungens*, a good end to the year. He even managed to record 400 species of moth from a moth trap in his garden. Amazing!

In Teesdale he saw Alpine Bartsia *Bartsia alpina*, the stunning Shrubby Cinquefoil *Dasiphora fruticosa* and Spring Gentian *Gentiana verna*. A pavement crack yielded Small Cleavers *Galium murale*. In Cornwall he found Orange-peel Clematis *Clematis tangutica* and the wonderful Sea Daffodil *Pancratium maritimum*, while at Ainsdale he spotted Dune Helleborine *Epipactis dunensis*. Other unusual plants were Buttonweed *Cotula coronopifolia* in London and Heath-leaved St John's-wort *Hypericum coris* on the Isle of Wight. (This will have to be saved for later as this species isn't listed in Stace 4 so isn't countable outside Parnassus) His lasting memory was of the array flowering in Teesdale – "geraniums, orchids, globeflowers and other

Helen found an amazing 125 new species this year, botanising with friends, local botanical societies as well as WFS trips. On a trip to Scotland she found Alpine Lady's-mantle *Alchemilla alpina* and Mountain Everlasting *Antennaria dioica*. In January she spotted the Seaside Petunia *Calibrachoa parviflora* (not even in the RHS Encyclopaedia. Thanks to Carol Hawkins for looking it up on her computer!). As this species isn't listed in Stace 4, it will have to be saved for later as it isn't countable outside Parnassus.

At Burham, Kent, she saw Ground-pine *Ajuga chamaepitys* and at Great Yarmouth Woolly Hawkweed

Hieracium lanatum on the dunes there plus the Lesser Meadow-rue *Thalictrum minus* ssp. *arenarium* and Purple Marram X *Calammophila baltica* (*Calamagrostis epigejos* x *Ammophila arenaria*). At Wheatfen she noted Green Figwort *Scrophularia umbrosa* and Broad-leaved Ragwort *Senecio sarracenicus*.

Her biggest joys this year were seeing Late Spider-orchid *Ophrys fuciflora*, Man Orchid *Orchis anthropophora*, Fly Orchid *Ophrys insectifera* and Lizard Orchid *Himantoglossum hircinium*. Another excellent effort.

Pippa was lucky to find two of her flowers while doing the Winter Months Hunt, Virginia Stock *Malcolmia maritima* and Creeping Bellflower *Campanula rapunculoides* two unusual species. In the Summer she saw Sweet Scabious *Scabiosa atropurpurea*, a really pretty plant.

Sarah sent in an interesting list this year. A highlight being a trip to Scotland in May. Earlier in the year she found the pretty Moschatel *Adoxa moschatellina*. She also recorded the uncommon Hairy Rock-cress *Arabis hirsuta* and Cabbage *Brassica oleracea* plus Parsley Fern *Cryptogramma crispa*, a mountain fern growing on scree slopes. An excellent find.

More unusual species followed: Purple Milk-vetch *Astragalus danicus*, Whorled Caraway *Trocdaris verticillata*, and Petty Whin *Genista anglica*, which has drastically declined over the last few years.

It's always nice to see Ivy Broomrape *Orobanche hederæ* a plant mostly Western in distribution, sticking its head out above the ivy, Other exciting plants were Long-stalked Crane's-bill *Geranium columbinum*, Bogbean *Menyanthes trifoliata*, Marsh Violet *Viola palustris* and Shepherd's Cress *Teesdalia nudicalis*. This list only gets better!

Her star finds had to be the Scottish specialities of Twinflower *Linnaea borealis* and One-flowered Wintergreen *Moneses uniflora*. Your bucket list of plants still to see is really filling up this year. Very well done.

Peter recorded three new plants this year, getting side-tracked by bird watching and butterfly recording. In Northumberland he spotted Golden Alison *Aurinia saxatilis*, and Aubretia *Aubrieta deltoidea*. While in Donegal he saw Prickly Heath *Gaultheria mucronata*.

I hope while in Northumberland you had time to sail around the Farne Islands, an unforgettable trip.

Many thanks to all those who sent in their records. It evokes many memories of when and where I saw these plants. I'm looking forward to the 2023 lists later this year.

GARETH BURSNALL

BRANCH N1, YORKSHIRE

Cumulative - Valhalla	New	Total
Anthony & Rita Grainger	9	1754
Carmen Horner	13	1900
Kerry Morrison	23	644
Susan Simcock	133	1294
Thomas Simcock	125	1309
Mary Sorsby	49	928

Anthony and Rita had a good start to the year with the WFS field trip to Southport in March where they saw Early Sand-grass *Mibora minima* and then on to the Brecklands where they saw the three rare Breckland Speedwells: Breckland Speedwell *Veronica praecox*, Fingered Speedwell *Veronica triphyllos* and Spring Speedwell *Veronica verna*.

On a visit to Malham in May they found Bog-rosemary *Andromeda polifolia* which had eluded them for some time. Later in the year they saw the two Thorn-apples, Thorn-apple *Datura stramonium* and Longspine Thorn-apple *Datura ferox*, which according to Stace is mainly a wool-alien growing on tips but was found on an area of disturbed and relandscaped land along with Jerusalem Artichoke *Helianthus tuberosus*. An interesting year's botanising for them.

Carmen has also had an interesting year and was pleased with the plants she found on a visit to the Aviemore area with friends. These included two very rare sedges, String Sedge *Carex chordorrhiza* and Hare's-foot Sedge *Carex lachenalii*, Oysterplant, *Mertensia maritima* and two Wintergreens, One-flowered Wintergreen *Monenses uniflora* and

Intermediate Wintergreen *Pyrola media*. Both Spanish Gorse *Genista hispanica* in Ilkley and Spanish Broom *Spartium junceum* were



Spanish Broom
Spartium junceum

coincidental finds at different times of the year.

Kerry has had a difficult year with family matters but managed to attend some very interesting meetings of the Harrogate and District Naturalists' Society.

A field trip to Grass Wood near Grassington in North Yorkshire brought many lovely woodland species including the hybrid of Cowslip and Primrose *Primula x polyantha*, Lily-of-the-valley

Convallaria majalis, Solomon's-seal
Polygonatum multiflorum and Rock
Whitebeam *Sorbus rupicola*.

On another field outing to the Nidd
Gorge with Kevin Walker yielded
Rough Horsetail *Equisetum*
hyemale at its only site in the
area and another rarity here:
Wood Barley *Hordelymus*
europaeus.

Kerry did manage to get to some
WFS field trips and helped with
the one to Birk Craggs, outside
the Harlow Carr RHS Garden,
earlier in the year where she saw
Greater Cuckooflower
Cardamine raphanifolia.

Susan and Tom have enjoyed
lots of field meetings this year.
On a visit to Dunsop Bridge in
the Forest of Bowland with the
Bradford Botany Group they saw
Cranberry *Vaccinium oxycoccos* and
Ivy-leaved Bellflower *Wahlenbergia*
hederacea. They went to the beautiful
Brockadale Reserve with the
Yorkshire Naturalists where Sand
Leek, *Allium scorodoprasum* and
Mistletoe *Viscum album* were some
of the highlights of the day. They
attended several WFS field meetings
with one of the most memorable ones
being to the Moray area with Ian
Green where they saw Twinflower
Linnaea borealis and One-flowered
Wintergreen *Moneses uniflora* in the
beautiful Roseisle Forest. There
were several new finds on the South
Gare which included the two
Petrorhagias: Proliferous Pink
Petrorhagia prolifera and Tunicflower
Petrorhagia saxifraga, Lesser
Centaury *Centaureum pulchellum* and
Orange Bladder-senna *Colutea* x

media. Nearer home they also found
the Longspine Thorn-apple *Datura*
ferox and the Jerusalem Artichoke,
Helianthus tuberosus. A successful
year's botanising.



Greater Cuckooflower
Cardamine raphanifolia
and Black-veined White butterfly

Mary continues to travel around the
country visiting beautiful flower
locations and seems to have had an
"Orchid Year". In June she saw Late
Spider-orchid *Ophrys fuciflora* on the
WFS meeting in Kent and many
others on a Naturetrek trip to the
Chilterns which included Monkey
Orchid *Orchis simia*, Lady Orchid
Orchis purpurea and Military Orchid
Orchis militaris. Her star find on this
field trip was Field Fleawort
Tephrosia integrifolia. A Rambler's
Holiday to Shetland in September
was so windy that trying to stay
upright on the cliff tops meant she
didn't see many flowers. Mary
managed to get a place on two of the
WFS field trips at short notice so it
obviously pays to get your name on
the waiting list. She is now looking
forward to this year's programme.

BRANCH N1, YORKSHIRE 1 KM SQUARE STUDY

Name	Branch	Monad	Location	New	Total 2021
Anthony & Rita Grainger	N1	SE 2338	Horsforth, Leeds	16	293
Anthony & Rita Grainger	N1	SE 2339	Horsforth, Leeds	13	255
Anthony & Rita Grainger	N1	SE 2438	Horsforth, Leeds	25	222

Anthony & Rita visited their monads at different times of the year in order to see new plants.

In SE 2338, which is mainly woodland and meadows, they saw Field Scabious *Knautia arvensis*, Kidney Vetch *Anthyllis vulneraria* and Greater Knapweed *Centaurea scabiosa* on a patch of wasteland and Hare's-foot Clover *Trifolium arvense*.

SE 2339 has a large pond where there was Lesser Bulrush, *Typha angustifolia* and an abundance of Purple-loosestrife *Lythrum salicaria*.

Other finds by the pond were Jointed Rush *Juncus articulatus* and Red Bartsia *Odontites vernus*.

In SE 2438 the interesting finds were Water Dock *Rumex hydrolapathum* and Ragged Robin *Silene flos-cuculi* by the pond. Small-flowered Crane's-bill *Geranium pusillum* and Green Field-speedwell *Veronica agrestis* were also nice finds in this monad.

JUDITH COX

BRANCH N2, NORTH EAST

Annual	New	Total
Judith Line		274
Cumulative - Valhalla		
Kevin Storey	18	360
Richard Friend	70	694
Mel Rocket	95	523

Kevin Storey

I have come to believe that it is the flowers that find us, not the other way around. They catch our eye with colour and with movement wave us over. That was why I bent to look at a little vetch on the verge of a 'Park and Ride', which turned out to be Smooth Tare *Ervum tetraspermum*, a new hectad record for VC66. Also, why I just had to leave the path above Lake Derwentwater for Heath Spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza maculata* ssp. *ericetorum*. Finally, who would not be uplifted by the intricate pink petals of Ragged-Robin *Silene flos-cuculi* shaking in a light breeze. Certainly not I.

Richard Friend

A great summer working in North Wales allowed time to visit SSSIs, NNRs, SACs and other acronyms of botanical interest. The RSPB reserve at South Stack on Anglesey was a favourite with the endemic *Tephrosia integrifolia* ssp.



maritima Field Fleawort cooperatively in full flower although pesky Spotted Rock-rose *Tuberaria guttata* remained elusive on two visits. I

consoled myself on both occasions with the excellent ice cream in the visitor centre. The less frequently visited Cors Geirch, a calcareous fen SAC on the Llyn peninsula, revealed a range of species new to me. These included Lesser Tussock-sedge *Carex diandra* and Lesser Water-plantain *Baldellia ranunculoides*. However, no ice cream vendors in the vicinity.

Judith Line

I moved into Shilbottle (near Alnwick, Northumberland) in 2015, still closely connected to the churchyard work I was doing in Northants, so did no surveying in the north for three years, apart from keeping an eye on the local churchyard. Covid lockdown gave me the opportunity I needed to survey all the road verges leading in and out of Shilbottle while there was no traffic. The following year I started on some of the field paths. Now I have at last returned to the work I love, devising and implementing a management plan for a churchyard to make what is quite a large area, and the only really green space here, into a place that welcomes wildlife and people, while respecting the permanent residents. Working and walking my local area has always been important to me, because I like to chart the changes and check that all is well. That the primroses and snowdrops arrive in their season is hugely important to me.

Not far out of the village we have a beautiful patch of Wood Anemone *Anemone nemorosa* and a wonderful Primrose *Primula vulgaris* bank, right on a tricky bend in a B road. Common Valerian *Valeriana officinalis* is very evident in some of

the ditches, and Crosswort *Cruciata laevipes*, Red Campion *Silene dioica* and Greater Stitchwort *Stellaria holostea* are common in hedgerows. Water Avens *Geum rivale* grows abundantly in one wet meadow as well as on one wet roadside; Gorse



Greater Stitchwort
Stellaria holostea

Ulex europaeus and Gooseberry *Ribes uva-crispa* are common in the hedgerows. One rather rough meadow boasts Yellow-rattle *Rhinanthus minor*. All of this is in great contrast to Northants, where Water Avens *Geum rivale* is officially extinct now and Gorse *Ulex europaeus* has almost disappeared as the last remnants of sandy heath struggle for survival.

Here, I see more wild flowers close at hand, and liaising with the county council, who mow the grass in this closed churchyard, I find we are on the same wavelength. Some of their workers know this churchyard and understand what they see, which is very encouraging. The contractors

who mowed the verges in Northants were not always so understanding.

Members of the Local Wildlife Group also know this churchyard and have been supportive. I hope to surprise the county recorder as new species move into the churchyard where storm Arwen blew down a whole grove of trees. Already Hemp Agrimony *Eupatorium cannabinum* has appeared in these first few months, and the work of the Green Team is becoming known. The Pignut *Conopodium majus* will get a chance to flower this year; Primroses *Primula vulgaris* and Snowdrops *Galanthus* spp. have already re-appeared in cleared areas. I have led two workshops here and will run another in May, to encourage both our own residents and the managers of other local churchyards.

All of this, of course, means that I find little time to get around the county looking at verges and generally re-acquainting myself with the places where botany began for me too many years ago to count, but if spreading the word locally means that more people understand and enjoy what they see, then my work will be worthwhile.

Mel Rocket

Most of Mel's new records this year came from an interesting series of walks in Upper Teesdale led by Dr Margaret Bradshaw.

LIZZIE MADDISON

BRANCH N3, NORTH WEST

Cumulative - Valhalla	New	Total
Barbara Allen	28	1379
Susan Bowden	0	952
Emma Graney	164	226
Pauline Grimshaw	0	1410
David Morgan	49	981
Sue Riley	20	1187
Dorothy Ross	13	974

In July Barbara attended Peter Jepson's meeting in Darwen. He took the group through Sunnyhurst Wood and onto the moors above. As a result of dry weather, the reservoir was very low and dried up in some places and here we spotted Narrow Small-reed *Calamagrostis stricta* and Small Cudweed *Logfia minima*. Peter was very pleased to find the latter as it was new to the area. A good find growing on the new sea defences at Hoylake, Wirral was Hoary Stock *Matthiola incana* and by the river at Croxton Country Park was Greater Honeywort *Cerinthe major*.



Mountain Avens
Dryas octopetala

Emma is a relatively new member and enjoys her plant hunting. She visited Hampshire and Sussex. Dark Mullein *Verbascum nigrum* was seen at Tortington, Sussex, and at Prinstead coastal path in Hampshire Marsh-mallow *Althaea officinalis* was spotted. Nearer home, on Southport beach, was Lesser Sea-spurrey *Spergularia marina*, which usually has sepals longer than the petals. Both Gypsywort *Lycopus europaeus* and Skullcap *Scutellaria galericulata* were seen by the canal at St. Helens. A garden I must visit soon is the RHS

Bridgewater and here she found Hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium*.

Dave and his wife visited Scotland again, this year making for Barra and the Uists. Unfortunately the ferry was cancelled twice so they decided to stay on the mainland and drive to Assynt in the North. The scenery was wonderful with plants to match. Dwarf Cornel *Cornus suecica*, Trailing Azalea *Kalmia procumbens* and Mountain Avens *Dryas octopetala* were among his finds. Nearer home at Marple he spotted Purple Toothwort *Lathraea clandestina*.

On an early visit to Southport, Sue recorded Early Sand-grass *Mibora minima* at the edge of Marine Lake. This was first spotted some years ago by David Earl as a result of his dog looking for his ball! Returning from Southport she stopped for Osoberry *Oemleria cerasiformis* which was growing in a hedge at Longton, Preston.

The Harrogate WFS meeting gave her Yellow Anemone *Anemone ranunculoides* and Caucasian Penny-cress *Pachyphragma macrophyllum* and recording in her 1 km square for Lancashire she spotted Hidcote Comfrey *Symphytum x hidcotense*.

Her visit to Norfolk was disappointing as everywhere was brown and dried up. Then a golden wedding treat to the Lake District was the opposite. All green, but rain, so we didn't move away from civilization and a warm cafe. Surprisingly all Dorothy's 13 new plants were recorded on Peter Jepson's Darwen meeting or within a mile of her home. Two of her finds were *Alchemilla* species, namely



Bee Orchid
Ophrys apifera

Starry Lady's-mantle *Alchemilla acutiloba* and Large-toothed Lady's-mantle *Alchemilla subcrenata*.

It was good to find Upland Enchanter's-nightshade *Circaea x intermedia*, which was growing with one of its parents.

JULIE CLARKE

BRANCH N1, NORTH WEST 1 KM SQUARE STUDIES

				Yr	New	Total
Barbara Allen	North West	SJ5391	St Helens	3	18	289
Judith Cox	North West	NY0843	Allonby	1	228	228
Sheilla Wynn	North West	SD7444	West Bradford	3	2	235

Barbara has put a 6-figure grid reference beside her find of Hemlock *Conium maculatum*. Perhaps this umbellifer is uncommon in her monad but beware, it is poisonous, look for the red spots on the stem. Smooth Tare *Ervum tetraspermum* was a good find as was Bee Orchid *Ophrys apifera* growing in a very precarious position at the entrance to a car park.

Judith's monad is around the village of Allonby on the Cumbrian coast, famous for its sandy beaches, ice cream, sunsets and views. Can't be bad!! She has a bumper bundle in her first year. Hoary Mugwort *Artemisia stelleriana* was seen flowering on The Green whilst in Moss Lane she found Meadow-foam *Limnanthes douglasii*. Onto the shore now where she found Isle of Man Cabbage *Coincya monensis* ssp. *monensis* and into the dunes for Meadow



Cone Flower
Rudbeckia laciniata

Saxifrage *Saxifraga granulata*.
Continuing to find different habitats
Judith came across Flowering-rush



Slender Borage
Borago pygmaea

Butomus umbellatus in a ditch.

Sheila added two plants to her monad this year, namely Coneflower *Rudbeckia laciniata* growing on long abandoned gardens and Hemlock *Conium maculatum* as a garden weed. I am sure she will be weeding that out.

I hope more members will be sending me 1 km monads of their local area during 2023. It is very rewarding, with the added bonus that no car is needed. I record monads for our local Natural History Society and last year found Slender Borage *Borago pygmaea*. It is still there but how it arrived I do not know, and I wouldn't have spotted it if I had been driving.

JULIE CLARKE

BRANCH O, THAMES and CHILTERNs

Annual	New	Total
Angus Bentall		271-2=269
Mary Bentall		301-2=299
Cumulative - Valhalla		
Susan Grimshaw	3	1198
Roger Heath-Brown	22	1964
Sue Kightly	6	1950
Barbara Spence	85	1078
Diana Stroud	6	1972
Christina White	12	251

There is so much I could say about Angus' diary! It has a clear Cotswold feel to it with many typical plants, both common and rare. He recorded Gold-of-pleasure *Camelina sativa* and Cornelian-cherry *Cornus mas*, both of which I've never seen on members' lists before. I liked his Thorn-apple *Datura stramonium* "In an abandoned chicken run", always a dramatic plant to see. I was also surprised at the number of plants he saw in mid-February during a trip to the south Devon coast – I'd forgotten just how much milder the winters are there!

Mary's diary has a strong overlap with Angus' of course, and includes the same highlights, like the Cotswold speciality Downy Woundwort *Stachys germanica*. However, she also saw Prickly Poppy *Roemeria argemone* on a pathside near home.

Susan's botanising has been restricted to walking distance from home, but in fact that includes a surprising variety of habitats. Two of her new species came from a patch of disturbed ground on a field edge.

Here she found Common Fiddleneck *Amsinckia micrantha*, and, a few days later, Fig-leaved Goosefoot *Chenopodium ficifolium*. Her third addition was Hairy Finger-grass *Digitaria sanguinalis*, growing in a pavement nick. As is often the case, having spotted it once, she then found it all over the village!

I come next in alphabetical order. My year included a 7 week trip around Scotland, postponed for two years because of Covid. We got as far as Skye, Orkney & Shetland, but inevitably the timing was wrong for



some of the plants I had hoped for. However, I was very happy to see Purple Oxytropis *Oxytropis halleri*, a metre down from the top of a precarious sea cliff, some ancient looking bushes of Downy Currant *Ribes spicatum*, at a remote point on Skye, and the exquisite Scottish Primrose *Primula scotica* on Orkney.

Sue did her botanising with Diana Stroud and has a similar list. However Narrow-leaved Ragwort *Senecio inaequidens* was new to her – though I expect she will be seeing more and more of it as it continues its spread across the country. Another new sighting local to her was Bilbao's Fleabane *Erigeron floribundus*, also increasing its range.

Barbara has done a good amount of travelling, and has records from Hampshire, Lancashire, Durham, Suffolk and London, as well as from the Branch O region. Congratulations to her for passing the 1000 mark! She has too many favourites for me to mention them all. There are quite a few introduced species on her list, including Pasta Wheat *Triticum durum* and Rye *Secale cereale*. Amongst the natives though, I would highlight Globeflower *Trollius europaeus* in Cumbria, Shrubby Cinquefoil *Dasiphora fruticosa*, from Upper Teesdale, and Marsh Gentian *Gentiana pneumonanthe* in Hampshire.

Diana and Sue went over some of the ground from the 2021 Members' weekend in South Wales, finding Tuberous Thistle *Cirsium tuberosum*, and Sea Radish *Raphanus raphanistrum* ssp. *maritimus*. She



Large Bitter-cress *Cardamine amara*

was also delighted to track down Golden Alison *Aurinia saxatilis*. Christina's season was curtailed firstly by the summer heat and then by illness. However, she was pleased to find Danish Scurvygrass *Cochlearia danica*, not by a major road where one might expect to see it, but beside a path in a quiet village

I think her record of Large Bitter-cress *Cardamine amara* also deserves special mention. It's a plant I struggle to find. Christina also recorded two monads, which I will describe elsewhere.

In addition to hearing from those with plant records to report it was good to hear from various other members during the course of the past year – many thanks for writing in!

Do keep in touch everyone, and here's hoping for some fine flowers in the coming year.

ROGER HEATH-BROWN

BRANCH O, 1 KM SQUARE STUDY

My own monad list is from SP5801, which includes the village of Garsington in Oxfordshire. The square has quiet roads and footpaths, a churchyard and old stone buildings, a pond and stream, and some rather dull arable and grazing land.

I recorded 229 species in total, the highlight undoubtedly being Mousetail *Myosurus minimus*, still hanging on by a muddy streamside where the cattle come to drink. Other species from the county Rare Plants Register were Dwarf Spurge *Euphorbia exigua* and Common Cudweed *Filago germanica*. There are some embarrassing omissions, so maybe I can add more to the list in 2023!

Christina White surveyed two monads, SP7253 and SP9466. The first of these is around the village of Blisworth in Northamptonshire. Its most notable feature is the Grand Union Canal, and the Blisworth

Tunnel, but there are allotments, quiet lanes, and arable fields as well.

She has a good total of 127 species. From her list I would highlight Large Bitter-cress *Cardamine amara*, Orange Balsam *Impatiens capensis* and Yellow Iris *Iris pseudacorus* as most typical of the canal side.

Christina's second monad is around her home in Rushden, Northants. It is largely suburban, but edges onto arable fields. Her total of 84 includes Traveller's-joy *Clematis vitalba*, from a water tower, and Sticky Groundsel *Senecio viscosus*, Common Mallow *Malva sylvestris* and Dwarf Mallow *Malva neglecta* from suburban streets.

ROGER HEATH-BROWN

BRANCH P, SEVERN VALLEY MID and SOUTH WALES

This branch has more than 80 members, scattered over a large part of south-west Britain, and they have a very wide range of life patterns and occupations. I have long abandoned any attempt to present the annual report in a conventional form

but try to draw in any member kind enough to contact me. News comes in many forms, including of course Record Books or spreadsheets, and I include as much as possible of their interesting correspondence which is often accompanied by evocative photographs.

Members names are in alphabetical order (by surname) and diary or cumulative list totals are given where available. 2022 brought several new members into the branch who botanised with great energy. I hope this year will be rewarding for them and for all the established members. A mild year with reasonable rations of both sun and rain must be hoped for!

Victoria Amphlett plans to list whatever she can see on walks around Wiveliscombe in Somerset, and in surrounding countryside. She reported an encouraging start to the year seeing a few clumps of Primroses out in very early January.

Although Heather Colls says she is 'not walking well enough' for field botany, she has been very busy working with the Monmouthshire BSBI Recorder, adding information to the county Rare Plants Register and (admirably!) 'sorting out the confusing world of *Hieracium* names'. She gave me a warm fuzzy moment by deciding that although she qualifies for Parnassus, she prefers to keep her life list in the familiar context of branch P, where she hopes some kind member will help her locate Tree Spinach *Chenopodium giganteum*. Any clues sent to me will be passed to Heather at once!

Monica Davis sent in a list of 65 plants, saying she was surprised by how many interesting records she had made. I know that feeling – that summer was so long ago that finds are almost forgotten! There had been some notable outings though. A WFS meeting at Slimbridge gave such rarities as Grass-poly *Lythrum hyssopifolia* and the lovely Golden

Dock *Rumex maritimus*, both needing the winter-wet habitat which also supports the wildfowl. A lucky sighting here was the unusual 'Wasp' form of Bee Orchid *Ophrys apifera* – it no longer has a variety name but is fascinating to see. Monica always botanises widely in her home county of Gloucestershire and this year found some good farmland plants including Shepherd's-needle *Scandix pecten-veneris* and the gorgeous Crimson Clover *Trifolium incarnatum* spp. *incarnatum* which is introduced with grass seed mixes and is being quite widely reported.

Judy and Richard Gosnell found that the drought had a severe effect on the beautiful slightly damp flowery meadows which they visit locally. Apparently Great Burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis* and Sneezewort *Achillea ptarmica* both flowered poorly, though they noticed that rougher ruderal species such as Bristly Oxtongue *Helminthotheca echioides* and Wild Carrot *Daucus carota* thrived on dry roadsides and roundabouts. They wonder what 2023 will bring.

Every year I want to write the same report for Ruth Harding, as she really is a branch secretary's ideal member! Her diaries are beautifully presented and she works in habitat conservation which is praiseworthy anyway, and that means she visits excellent places and sees interesting plants. In 2022 her total was 238, after taking part in BSBI activities and part of the Plantlife Orchid Count. Ruth also gives time to difficult groups – this year she recorded 12 sedges (including some of the difficult 'yellows'; 5 *Dactylorhiza* species; 6 willowherbs and 6 rushes. Her most

outstanding moment was finding 7 flowering spikes of the extremely rare

Fen Orchid *Liparis loeselii* in a dune slack where it had not been seen since 2002, but she also recorded something which so far has always escaped me, Narrow-leaved Ragwort *Senecio inaequidens*. I was told about these 'other' alien Ragworts by Paul Green when he was working in Cardiff so possibly pavements and car parks in South Wales are good places to spot them - Ruth's site was of this kind. As yet I've been unable to make Minehead, across the channel, produce anything but Oxford Ragwort *Senecio squalidus* but Ruth's find will make me keep trying!

Anne Hercock recommends the 10km Square study for seeing 'commonly occurring plants in expected places' and enjoying both their familiarity and 'perhaps noticing another aspect of their structure' as well. She also had a real thrill in spotting Grass Vetchling *Lathyrus nissolia* on a former industrial site near the Severn at Lydney. We all know the luck involved in finding a surprise population of this charming flower – unless the brilliant colour of a flower catches a casual glance, the plant is invisible among grasses. The find also led to meeting another local wild flower fancier, so altogether a happy occasion.

Steven Law is Gloucestershire based but also botanised on the Northumberland coast this year, seeing the rare and obscure Early Orache *Atriplex praecox* in a site originally found by Professor John Richards of Dandelion fame who received our President's Award in

2022. Steven is pushing on with grasses and will hopefully have another rewarding year with them, though the identification of fungi at microscopic level is taking a lot of his time! He also spotted a quaint oddity which is a favourite of mine – Thick-leaved Stonecrop *Sedum dasyphyllum* is an occasional garden escape and was seen on a wall in a Cotswold village. His total was 170.

In the first half of the year Steve Little shared a bold plan with his great botanising friend David Albon to identify the 'dozen or so species' of Cotoneaster on a disused railway line in Cheltenham. This is (to me anyway) a most intimidating genus, and although the expert Jeanette Fryer was already helping, the identification process still has a long way to go. Then as we all know from the last magazine, there came the shock and distress of David's extremely sad death which obviously pushed botany aside. I'm sure we all wish Steve a much, much easier year in 2023, and strength to continue with this very worthwhile project.

Georgina Milway lives on the borders of Gloucestershire and Worcestershire and is within reach of some excellent botanising areas and many of her special finds come from the Cotswolds. She also visited Norfolk and Derbyshire which added well to her range of species. A special treat was one of the few open days for the super-rare Adder's-tongue Spearwort *Ranunculus ophioglossifolius* which was surviving the drought in its very specialised muddy habitat on one of the old Gloucestershire commons. This careful botanist spotted both

Small-flowered Crane's-bill *Geranium pusillum*, which can be elusive, and Narrow-leaved Water-plantain *Alismalanceolatum* which can so easily be overlooked for its commoner relative. Her diary totalled 344 clear entries giving brief but credible habitat details.

Andrew Phillips botanised mostly in his home county of Glamorgan, sometimes with the Glamorgan Botany Group which has the splendid advantage of being able to call on someone as distinguished as Tim Rich to confirm unusual records, as well as giving their own online identification help. Andrew sent me an excellently well-filled diary with a total of 558 and including some really interesting plants. A holiday week in the New Forest with time at Exbury Gardens and visiting Danebury Hill Fort added some special plants, including Lesser Water-plantain *Baldellia ranunculoides* near Brockenhurst, but finding Sea-heath *Frankenia laevis* near Pothcawl, at home in Wales, sounds like a great moment. This was a life first for Andrew and in a photograph from his phone it looked perfect – in full flower with the leaves reddened by the hot summer. I was most interested too by a record of Bermuda-grass *Cynodon dactylon* from relict dunes near Swansea. This alien grass is rarely naturalised in Britain though one of the more historic populations is at Minehead on the Somerset coast on the opposite side of the Bristol Channel in similar habitat. The introductions could have similar stories on these coasts with almost millenia of busy foreign trade.

Holly Sayer is quite a new member,

partner in her own agroecology business in West Wales. She contributes to the Ceredigion Rare

Plants Register and her work involves surveying various habitats including saltmarsh. However as all her contracts are not primarily botany-based she tells me that has joined the Society hoping to meet more experienced botanists and improve her ID skills. She is already not doing badly though, sending me beautiful photographs of Yellow Water-lily *Nuphar lutea*, Water Lobelia *Lobelia dortmanna* and some of a huge population of 40 Broad-leaved Helleborine *Epipactis helleborine*!

Pat Steele had a splendid botany year, cycling on the Somerset Levels and visiting county hot spots such as Cheddar Gorge where she was thrilled to see the actual County Flower, the precious Cheddar Pink *Dianthus gratianopolitanus*. She is investigating the Levels plants including the aquatics in the rhynes, and on drier land saw a wonderful show of Green-winged Orchid *Anacamptis morio* with Cowslips *Primula veris* in the Babcary Meadows reserve. She hopes to use some of the WFS identification guides as aids when she leads U3A walks – a nice compliment to the Society!

Janet Vernon had two 'mini-breaks' in Anglesey and was delighted by lovely displays of a Sea-lavender on a saltmarsh, being able to add a Glasswort species to a meal (this genus is now sold in the poshest fish shops as 'Samphire') and finding a really good range of brackish and shoreline species. Like me Janet appreciates Strawberry

Clover *Trifolium fragiferum* though she thinks the colour more 'pale raspberry', and she admired the subtle late-summer colours of Grass-leaved Orache *Atriplex littoralis* and Frosted Orache *Atriplex laciniata*. In her home patch she found Dark Mullein *Verbascum nigrum* for the first time with its purple stamens like 'minute psychedelic caterpillars'!

Andrew Williams has made a keen start. He began looking at wild plants during compulsory walks while convalescing from a serious accident, and I'm delighted with the way this first casual interest is developing so that he was able to send me a Beginners Diary with 68 nice plants seen in 2022. He has some previous experience with upland plants in the Brecon Beacons, where he was a mountain leader but he now works in 'the dreary confines of the Port Talbot steelworks'. However, he finds all sorts of good in this unpromising setting, including 'spectacular displays of Viper's-bugloss *Echium*



Viper s-bugloss *Echium vulgare*

vulgare and Buddleia *Buddleja davidii* attracting butterflies. He also visits Marloes in Pembrokeshire which he calls 'a botanist's heaven' and his diary reflects this. I hope this year will encourage his enthusiasm.

Pauline Wilson and her husband Richard (a Cotswold warden) are involved in a multitude of plant recording and conservation activities and Pauline leads U3A meetings which spread interest in botany. They led a WFS meeting at Barnsley Warren in June (after joining Richard and Judy Gosnell to lead a Wiltshire meeting the day before). Results from The Warren were most exciting as the mysterious semi-parasite Bastard-toadflax *Thesium humifusum* (actually an enchanting little flower) was refound, adding a new plant to Pauline's list as well as confirming its survival in the SSSI/Wildlife Trust site.

Just out on the road verge Clare and Mark Kitchen then made a stunning discovery of the very rare sedge Downy-fruited Sedge *Carex filiformis (tomentosa)*. This was formerly a speciality of this area but council herbicide management in the 1950s seemed to exterminate it from road verges, so its re-discovery was a memorable achievement for this anyway enjoyable meeting. Pauline's cumulative total is now 1082.

When Aaron Woods moved to Worcestershire some years ago, putting us in touch again through Branch P after quite a time, he told me how excited he was about beginning to

record in a completely new patch, some of it his own land. He has indeed been most active within the county and its borders. The presence of three hawkweeds (new to him) and a Mouse-ear-hawkweed identified to subspecies on his 2022 list shows at once how seriously he takes his botany. He has a great interest in historic records and challenging himself to re-find significant populations of uncommon plants.



Strawberry Clover *Trifolium fragiferum*

Among his finds was Narrow-leaved Pepperwort *Lepidium ruderale*, which can be very elusive and is easily overlooked unless in full flower. However, two plants which he told me he was especially pleased with gave me a real shock. Strawberry Clover *Trifolium fragiferum* was the first surprise, being largely a coastal species, until I realised that I have found it inland in Somerset, but when Aaron said how pleased he was to find a plant of Slender Hare's-ear

Bupleurum tenuissimum on one of the commons near Malvern, while chasing an old record for Autumn Lady's-tresses *Spiranthes spiralis*, I was really taken aback. The rare and inconspicuous Hare's-ear is a speciality of the clay river banks and tracks of parts of the Somerset coast, and it had never occurred to me that it might be found away from this specialised sub-maritime habitat. However, it is indeed known here,

though undoubtedly hard to find, so this record is an achievement for Aaron and expands my plant distribution education. At a more visible level he saw Greater Butterfly-orchid *Platanthera chlorantha* at three sites. His overall accumulated list is now 1051, and he records most common plants every year as well as listing new additions and some 'not in Stace' finds – we share a liking for things like escaped garden daffodils.

I look forward to more varied and delightful reports next winter –

please keep them coming!

RO FITZGERALD

BRANCH T, SOUTH WEST

Annual	New	Total
Clare Bowley		171
Ed Dolphin		418
Suzanne Jones	22	352
Sally Maller	76	589
Chrissy Marshall	40	195
Cumulative - Valhalla		
Lesley Philpott		1026

Clare's first diary contained 171 species, a really good starting point, especially as she began recording quite late in the season and lost time to a Covid infection. She didn't neglect tree species, often forgotten by people at the start of their time with the WFS, but which are a useful source of records.

Neither did she ignore urban areas - another good source of species and which have their own distinct flora, such as Oxford Ragwort *Senecio squalidus* and the increasingly common Mexican Fleabane *Erigeron karvinskianus*, both of which she found. In her travels around the South-West in search of plants she visited Dawlish Warren, a fantastic spot that is much loved by botanists, where she saw, amongst many other things, Autumn Lady's-tresses *Spiranthes spiralis*. Elsewhere she found Canadian Fleabane *Erigeron canadensis*, the only species of a tricky group of four in the Diary - I was able to point her at a good article in a recent edition of BSBI News that looks at them in more detail and will hopefully help her tell them apart. I made a few other suggestions for her for 2023, such as looking out for

Perennial Sow-thistle *Sonchus arvensis*, the third of the common Sow-thistle species which she has yet to see, and also suggesting she keep an eye open for the second Polypody species frequent in this part of the world, Intermediate Polypody *Polypodium interjectum*, to go with her record of Polypody *Polypodium vulgare*.

Ed is continuing his efforts to record the flora in and around Sidmouth. He sent me his records for 2022, broken down by 1km squares, which he extracted from iNaturalist, the tool that he uses to keep a record of his finds (and which seems to be coming increasingly popular). His total species count is now 418, although given the nature of his recording work he didn't see all those species this year. There is a small patch of heathland near to Sidmouth on which he found Dodder *Cuscuta epithymum*, as well as a nice variety of the species to be expected in such a habitat. He is fortunate to have several sites for the lovely Yellow-wort *Blackstonia perfoliata* near him, which hence appeared twice in his records. The non-native Moth Mullein *Verbascum blattaria* has a limited distribution in Devon, so Ed

was fortunate to find a plant on the outskirts of Sidmouth. Salsify *Tragopogon porrifolius*, although also an introduced species, is a very attractive flower which appeared on a local nature reserve in the town. A less welcome non-native on his list was Japanese Knotweed *Reynoutria japonica*.

Suzanne found a good mixture of the commoner species in 2022, filling gaps in her overall list, plus some really nice examples of the rather rarer and special species. She added 22 plants to her cumulative diary taking her up to 352. She had some productive trips away, and I was able to help her identify the Purple Viper's-bugloss *Echium plantagineum* that she found on Jersey. Other attractive plants she was able to see included Sea Kale *Crambe maritima*, Yellow Horned-poppy *Glaucium flavum* and Grass Vetchling *Lathyrus nissolia*.

Sally had an amazing year, visiting some wonderful places and bringing her diary up to 589 species in all, 76 of which are new to her all-time recording with the WFS. It's difficult to pull out any highlights with such a wide variety of plants, but locally she was able to see Maidenhair Fern *Adiantum capillus-veneris* at what seems to be a genuinely native site at Jennycliff on the outskirts of Plymouth.

On the same trip she saw the Dwarf Elder *Sambucus ebulus* which grows nearby. She also saw all the other Plymouth specialities such as Field Eryngo *Eryngium campestre* at Billacombe and Plymouth Thistle *Carduus pycnocephalus* which now is thriving on Plymouth Hoe. There are

a number of species that she has seen before her time with the WFS, but has yet to add to her diary, and I was able to suggest some nearby sites to help her see them again.

Chrissy's mobility is a little limited at the moment but sticking to level ground led to her finding some unexpected delights, such as Monk's-hood *Aconitum napellus* and Crosswort *Cruciata laevipes*.

A trip to Shropshire gave her Water-plantain *Alisma plantago-aquatica* and Harebell *Campanula rotundifolia*. She saw a profusion of orchids at an Open Meadows event at Pudsham on Dartmoor, including for the first time Common Twayblade *Neottia ovata*. I was very pleased to be able to confirm records of Intermediate Polypody *Polypodium interjectum* and Southern Polypody *Polypodium cambricum* for her, and she has been making great progress with her fern identification. Her diary for 2022 contained 195 species, 40 of them being in addition to those seen in 2021. She slipped back a bit with grasses, sedges and rushes, but hopefully she can pick those back up again in 2023. I have suggested she has a closer look at Willowherb species to see if she can expand on the number she is confident in recognising.

Sadly, Lesley was unable to add any new species this year, but still enjoyed a trip to the New Forest.

TIM PURCHES

BRANCH U, MIDLANDS

Annual	New	Total
Karen Fry		189
Martin Godfrey		690
Nicki Mottram		625
Sue and David Rogerson		87
Irene Wilkinson		352
Cumulative - Valhalla		
Patricia Cox	1	529
Jackie Ellis	35	1010
David and Sue Emley	4	1062
Jackie Hardy	42	1082
Judith Lee	122	656
Richard Pykett	19	865
Marjorie Shepherd	1	956
Mary and Claire Smith	19	1547
John and Monika Walton	78	1339

Despite the summer temperatures our branch members stoically carried on and made some excellent records. Most of us benefited from the reduction of levels in the reservoirs with more observations of Mudwort *Limosella aquatica* and Shoreweed *Littorella uniflora* than usual.

Karen has been helping her county wildlife trust to update their records of urban flora. This has given her a good first diary full of local plants. Some may query whether Bugloss *Lycopsis arvensis* in Sainsbury's car park can be called local but city-dwellers do get these little surprises! Knotted Clover *Trifolium striatum*, not only on a school playing field but on the edge of grassland along Karen's road, was not something we would normally expect to see. Her own choice of plant finds for the year

include Deadly Nightshade *Atropa belladonna* and Thorn-apple *Datura stramonium*. She enjoys her membership of the WFS finding the Facebook group interesting and helpful and has thrown herself into recording in the diary throughout the year and doing the Winter Months Hunt in addition during the colder months. No doubt next year we will see a healthy increase in the number of plants recorded.

We received a very great rarity in Martin's diary, a list of 12 different Willows *Salix* spp! Over half were in his home county and only one, Green-leaved Willow *Salix x rubra*, was a hybrid. So obviously we should all stop being afraid of them and give them a go. Martin was, quite rightly, very pleased with his Scottish finds. He highlighted Least Water-lily *Nuphar pumila* and Small Cow-wheat

Melampyrum sylvaticum as special, and we agree, but his absolute favourite was Twinflower *Linnaea borealis*. He notes that it was a big colony in full flower so quite a sight to see. Martin also enjoyed the WFS meeting at Slimbridge where our choice of plant was Grass-poly *Lythrum hyssopifolia*. Here, Wasp Orchid was of great interest and new to Martin, but as it is only a 'var' of Bee Orchid *Ophrys apifera* he was unable to include it in his numbers. One to save for Parnassus.

Nicki puts in a lot of work investigating good botanical sites to visit and plans holidays and family trips to great advantage. This organised approach succeeded with Spring Squill *Scilla verna* in Cornwall in April through to Lesser Skullcap *Scutellaria minor* in the New Forest in September. She also discovered the joy of botanising on reservoirs which included a good record at Daventry of Orange Foxtail *Alopecurus aequalis*. This loves drying mud and is identified by its orange anthers. A number of Nicki's interesting records came from Kent. Sand Catchfly *Silene conica* is declining rapidly and few of us will have the opportunity to see it. Hopefully, the very hot summer of 2022 will have encouraged it to set more seed and germinate more profusely. Likewise, Hairy Vetchling *Lathyrus hirsutus* is now seldom seen. With the exception of one site in Essex it has only ever been considered as a casual, but even those modest occurrences are now declining.

Trips further afield this year have given Sue and David Rodgers a good variety of plants. It is always

pleasing to see a few grasses, sedges and horsetails taking their place in early diaries. Wood Horsetail *Equisetum sylvaticum*, seen in Cumbria, is one of the prettier examples of the latter. The lovely Globeflower *Trollius europaeus* was also seen on the same trip. At the other end of the country, on Lundy, they saw English Stonecrop *Sedum anglicum*. Sue and David's coastal record is reliable as this species is much confused with White Stonecrop *Sedum album* in our area. They also daringly slipped in two Daffodils - not many people go there! In March they saw the true 'wild' Daffodil *Narcissus pseudonarcissus* in its well-known position along the Cromford Canal and in May they saw Pheasant's-eye Daffodil *Narcissus poeticus* in Durham. This is familiar to most of us from the garden with its short, red-rimmed corona.

Irene had a good selection of sedges and grasses this year. The former were given a boost by a visit to Dartmoor where she was also fortunate to find Ivy-leaved Bellflower *Wahlenbergia hederacea*. This pretty plant frequently hides well beneath other wet vegetation and involves much grubbing about hoping the pale green of the leaves will stand out from the darker moorland plants. We were pleased to see Irene's entry for Hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*. Most people, including nurserymen and garden centres, seem unable to distinguish this from Beech *Fagus sylvatica*, but in the glorious autumn we had in 2022 the difference in leaf colour was astounding. But Hornbeam compensates for its dingy brown autumnal tints with its gloriously shaped fruits. A good

record was Round-leaved Crowfoot *Ranunculus omiophyllus* found on the moors, a Crowfoot easier to recognise than most but choosy as to its habitat.

A little gentle weeding in the garden gave Patricia a new addition for her diary, although it was touch and go as she already had her hand on it, ready to give a hefty pull, when she realised that the lower leaves were an interesting shape. She patiently allowed it to flower so she could confirm that it was indeed Wall Lettuce *Mycelis muralis*. It is very distinctive, even from a distance, although it is difficult to say exactly why. It may be the conspicuously clasping upper leaves or the plant's reddish tinge which makes it appear very dark. The latter feature is exacerbated by the fact that it is frequently found in woodland. Rose's Wild Flower Key emphasises that its lower leaves are lyre-shaped, but when did you last see a lyre for comparison?

A helpful warden on Holy Island, Anglesey, pointed Jackie Ellis in the right direction for Field Fleawort *Tephrosia integrifolia* ssp. *maritima*. She was very excited to actually find such a rare plant. Equally pleasing was to tick two plants off her wish-list. Walking a path, taken many times before, across Harlech Golf Links she saw a solitary plant of Lesser Butterfly-orchid *Platanthera bifolia*. This species must be very temperamental as current BSBI records confirm Jackie's observation, indicating it as not being seen in this area since 1991. Her second success was Dropwort *Filipendula vulgaris* in Wiltshire. She comments on what a

pretty flower it is. She also lists Buckwheat *Fagopyrum esculentum* in garden gravel in her home town. We are seeing this reported far more now, frequently in association with the feeding of wild birds.

Dave and Sue Emley sent in four new records for their diary, complete with photos. Of particular interest was Lesser Bladderwort *Utricularia minor*, in our limited experience difficult to find, difficult to see and usually inaccessible. Common Millet *Panicum miliaceum* was less of a surprise as it responded well to the hot summer and germinated more freely than usual in our area. We have no idea how Dave and Sue managed to get a photo of Mossy Stonecrop *Crassula tillaea* as it was in a corner of a car park with two vehicles on top of it! Nevertheless, the typical very red coloration of the tiny, succulent leaves showed up well. Their final find was Chalk Knapweed *Centaurea debauxii* in Dorset where they were fortunate to have Common Knapweed *Centaurea nigra* nearby for comparison. We loved their confession of having unsuccessfully searched for Herbaris *Paris quadrifolia* for some considerable time before it finally turned up when they were forced to retrace their steps to search for an errant walking stick!

The year got off to a good start for Jackie Hardy as she was able to record seeing approximately 200 plants of Green Hellebore *Helleborus viridis* at Bannam's Wood. Too often Jackie has had to report losses in the form of plants being dug up - see her 1 Km square report for example - so it is good to hear about an

abundance instead. An impressive find was Smooth Cat's-ear *Hypochaeris glabra*. This is not an easy plant to key out, requiring a steady hand and good eyesight so we are grateful to Jackie for providing a referee for the species. At the same site on the same day, she also recorded Red-tipped Cudweed *Filago lutescens*, carefully noting that the hairs are indeed yellowish and not the white of Common Cudweed *Filago germanica*. It's possible the former just might be making a bit of a comeback. Finally, we must mention Spreading Meadow-grass *Poa humilis*. This totally defeats us and we have never recorded it! So congratulations to Jackie.

Judith had a very varied range of plants this year. She usually attends at least one botanical course and in 2022 she went to Preston Montford and visited Sweeney Fen. As well as a number of sedges she was also shown Marsh Hawk's-beard *Crepis paludosa*. It is good to have a reliable mentor for these difficult groups. A trip nearer home with the Derby Flora Group to Matlock Bath was worthwhile as she saw Rock Whitebeam *Sorbus rupicola* and Moonwort *Botrychium lunaria*. The former is another plant needing confirmation by someone experienced, and the latter was a joy being robust and abundant. Over 30 plants were counted in the one small area. Judith probably has a first for the Midlands Branch with Scarlet Flax *Linum grandiflorum*, seen in a field locally by the railway line. Known for some time as a constituent of wild meadow seed mixtures, it is now being sold on its own with an enticing brightly coloured picture on the

packet so we may be seeing it more and more.

In common with other diarists Richard rejoices in finding genuinely 'wild' plants rather than the garden escapes that are frequently the lot of city dwellers. So, a seaside walk at Conwy and finding both Common Sea-lavender *Limonium vulgare* and Sea-purslane *Atriplex portulacoides* for himself was a real pleasure. However, we were won over by a splendid photograph of an urban find. This was Yellow Figwort *Scrophularia vernalis*. It was prominently displaying itself, in full flower, on a rubbish heap at local allotments. Its hairiness was very apparent in the decent sunshine of a warm April day. We were pleased to point Richard in the direction of a reservoir with an accessible draw down zone where two notable finds were Golden Dock *Rumex maritimus* and Marsh Dock *Rumex palustris*. Richard has seen many references to Niger *Guizotia abyssinica* seeding itself but here, for the first time, he saw it growing quite plentifully.

The kindness of a friend gave Marjorie a new plant for this year. Her friend took her on a short walk from her house to the car park of the local shopping centre. There they were able to see Apple-of-Peru *Nicandra physalodes* nicely settled between the car park and the pavement. Luckily it had a flower so it was no problem to identify. A possible bird seed hotspot worth keeping an eye on.

Early in the year we challenged ourselves to find Fine-leaved Sandwort *Sabulina tenuifolia* at a site where it was originally seen in the

1950's by Miss Hollick but never officially confirmed since. Kathleen Hollick was the very first VC recorder for Derbyshire, where she remained in post for 36 years. A hard act to follow.

To our delight we successfully found it. Ironically, it was only a few feet off the main footpath through Dovedale, passed by millions of visitors but obviously no botanists! On a week's holiday in North Norfolk we were thrilled to see Marsh Helleborine *Epipactis palustris*. Previously only spotted on walking holidays in the Alps, we had given up hope of getting it for the diary so a wonderful surprise. On a short local walk from our holiday cottage we came across a lengthy stand of what was obviously a naturalised garden plant. It keyed through as Pontic Blue-sowthistle *Cicerbita bourgaei*. No, we'd never heard of it either. But we eventually found a record for it at this site from 1969. A local dog-walker confirmed that it had been there for ears and years" so it went on our list.



Marsh Helleborine *Epipactis palustris*



Hoary Rock-rose
Helianthemum
oelandicum

We could fill a whole report with a list of all the superb plants that John and Monika saw on a trip to the Burren. But we will mention only Hoary Rock-rose *Helianthemum oelandicum* as they must be congratulated on also seeing White Rock-rose *Helianthemum apenninum* and the hybrid of the Common and White Rock-rose *Helianthemum x sulphureum* in Gloucestershire. Two interesting records came from their own county of Warwickshire; Rough Clover *Trifolium scabrum* and Four-leaved Allseed *Polycarpon tetraphyllum*. They are both small annuals with whitish flowers and a predilection for a coastal environment. There the resemblance ends as the usual Clover arrangement of three leaflets is easily distinguished from Four-leaved Allseed, the clue is in the name! But be aware that the whorl of four leaves is actually two pairs so the leaf size may differ between the pairs. Will climate change help or hinder the spread of these opportunistic plants we wonder?

MARY AND CLAIRE SMITH

BRANCH V, GREATER LONDON

Annual	New	Total
Terry Pyle		72
Cumulative - Valhalla		
Clare Million	68	617
Jane Lowe	201	1168
Robin Blades	13	1291

Terry joined WFS in June and completed a WFS Beginner's Diary. His local area is within metropolitan Kent and his records are from sites that I know quite well, so I particularly enjoyed checking his diary. Many of the common species are from a local nature reserve, Jubilee Country Park, where he needed to write in Corky-fruited Water-dropwort *Oenanthe pimpinelloides*, a plant which has been spreading around nature reserves in that area probably via mowing machinery. From Charles Darwin's famous Downe Bank, Terry records chalk-loving plants Field Scabious *Knautia arvensis* and Common Bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* along with a number of orchid species for which the site is well known. At Keston Common he had the contrasting habitat of an acid bog with Cross-leaved Heath *Erica tetralix*. Terry has taken great care with his entries and added observations and I'm pleased to hear that he has downloaded the full diary list for recording in 2023.

Clare's new species were mainly from LNHS (London Natural History Society) and SBS (Surrey Botanical Society) meetings. A trip to Hamlands nature reserve within the London Borough of Richmond was a particular highlight. There she was

shown Sand Leek *Allium scorodoprasum* whose showy flowers were in contrast with the sombre inflorescences of Wild Onion *Allium vineale*. Hoary Cinquefoil *Potentilla argentea*, Yellow Vetchling *Lathyrus aphaca* and Warty-cabbage *Bunias orientalis*, the latter complete with warty fruits, all added to the day's excitement. The dry summer weather meant that Clare's first sighting of Lesser Centaury *Centaureum pulchellum* on an SBS meeting was of a particularly tiny specimen, but she was especially pleased to find it herself a week later on the North Downs. In North Wales, Rock Spurrey *Spergularia rupicola* was another new self-discovered plant for Clare. Her total from last year was 549 and not 551 as I wrongly reported.

Jane Lowe joined a lot of WFS meetings, and I was pleased to meet her on the Kent weekend that Owen Leyshon and I led in June and from which Jane added Red Hemp-nettle *Galeopsis angustifolia* and Late Spider-Orchid *Ophrys fuciflora*. One of Jane's highlights of the year was seeing Oysterplant *Mertensia maritima*. This was an optional addition to the Morayshire meeting which she and those who joined her, agreed, was well worth the extra 30-

mile drive and coastal walk to find it. Irish Eyebright *Euphrasia salisburgensis* and Mountain Avens *Dryas octopetala* were star finds on a holiday to the Burren, whilst Flixweed *Descurainia sophia* and Oriental Poppy *Papaver setiferum* were pretty impressive street weeds on her local London patch.

Robin was present at the Members' Weekend, where he saw Inland Club-rush *Bolboschoenus laticarpus* in Orchard Pond at Preston Montford. Charles Sinker first recorded it there in 1957 as Sea Club-rush *Bolboschoenus maritimus*. With its long-stalked fruits, it is now recognised as a different species. Just across the Welsh border, Robin was impressed by the aquatics in the Montgomery Canal and particularly

by Long-stalked Pondweed *Potamogeton praelongus*. Much closer to home he decided to wait no longer for flowers on Floating Pennywort *Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*, an aggressive alien, for which he has been submitting records to BSBI since 1998. On a trip to the Peak District, Robin added Crested Hair-grass *Koeleria macrantha* from a spot named Bellamy's Bank, after the late David Bellamy who was WFS president in the 1990s. In the same area Robin added local specialities Stone Bramble *Rubus saxatilis* and Mountain Currant *Ribes alpinum*.

SUE BUCKINGHAM

BRANCH W, SCOTLAND and IRELAND

I am sometimes afraid that my home in Somerset being so far from Scotland makes members feel that the distance is too great to contact me.

The branch has more than 40 members and in some years, few get in touch. This does mean of course that I am extra pleased when I do get news and much appreciate the effort made by these members and for 2022 six submissions felt like quite a bumper harvest!

I always enjoy Hilary Blyth's regular diaries because they give such a

clear picture of her surroundings. She records her home plants in Stirlingshire, and also at Scotnish in Argyll. She keeps a close eye on what is growing in both patches and reports on losses and gains so I feel that I know the plants myself.

In 2022 a small population of the lovely Greater Butterfly-orchid *Platanthera chlorantha*, which had been threatened by bulldozers, proved to be in a corner they can't reach and Hilary reports that not only can she 'stop fretting' but that the population exploded to 'more than she could count'.

A new and distinguished plant found at Scotnish was Narrow-leaved Helleborine *Cephalanthera longifolia*, while at home near Denny Betony *Betonica officinalis* was a welcome addition and a new path is producing all kinds of interesting ruderals. Other records of widespread plants make me feel homesick for Scottish habitats – hearing of the graceful Wood Horsetail *Equisetum sylvaticum* makes me long to see it again. Hilary recorded 197 species.

Roger Connard moved a few years ago from Cumbria to the Isle of Bute and has formed the most energetic relationship with his new patch, botanising widely and creating a series of walks for visitors who can access these online at www.isleofbutewildflowerwalks.co.uk. The flowers to be seen on each walk are obviously an important feature and Roger gets more than three cheers from me when he tells me that his interest is 'usually in the more common species ... the ones we can see as we go about our lives'. The walks must then be wonderfully educative and should convert many to appreciating wild plants. He also reported several unusual finds to me as last year by chance he saw several plants which are rarer on the Isle of Bute than nationally. My personal favourite of these is Yellow Bartsia *Parentucellia viscosa* which has a recurring population in a damp pony pasture. Roger thanks Angus Hannah for the tip to look here (and praises his recently published *Isle of Bute Flora*). Seeing this plant is always a thrill – its green/yellow colouring is supremely elegant. Another treat for me was a photograph of a Goat's-beard

Tragopogon pratensis seed head – this plant is really rare on the island and Roger was also delighted to see it as 'its puffball' is always for him 'an architectural wonder'. I hope some members may follow Roger's walks when on holiday on this magical island.

I so look forward (every year) to a letter from Helen Jackson. She was branch secretary for many years before me and I greatly admire her botanical knowledge, but as well as these points she has the most beautiful handwriting, each letter is a work of art and we share very similar tastes in postcards. For real postcard fanciers the acceptable parameters are very strictly drawn, but Helen's choices are always both rare and perfect! In 2022 the early part of her year was quiet after ill-health but she was able to help her recovery by visits with her sister to easily accessible places, parts of the East Lothian coast and riverside and roadside sites, somehow managing to do the Spring and Autumn Hunts. After being kept indoors even common spring flowers were a delight and she mentions enjoying Winter Heliotrope *Petasites pyrenaicus* [*fragrans*] and Alexanders *Smyrniolus olusatrum* both of which we are apt to dismiss as noxious weeds in South Britain though of course the former delivers delicious scent in the dead of winter and the leaf stalks of the latter make a perfectly acceptable Lenten vegetable! And as Helen writes "nothing can beat a sunny patch of Colt's-foot in the spring". Her autumn finds were 'mostly ruderals' with Annual Wall-rocket *Diplotaxis muralis* being a favourite. Visiting a site for

this also produced a new plant for Helen's cumulative list – something which is not easy for such an experienced botanist. In the middle of the Wall-rocket was a 'big yellow blob' which turned out to be African Marigold *Tagetes erecta*, a totally self-sown garden plant!

Joy Lyon managed to join BSBI meetings in Lothian and elsewhere, WFS meetings and Naturetrek trips. She visited Ben Lawers and the Burren so her list was full of interesting records. Near home, in Holyrood Park, she saw the tiny fern Forked Spleenwort *Asplenium septentrionale* which is so good at hiding itself, while off the coast of the Burren she saw Wild Leek *Allium ampeloprasum* var. *babingtonii* which is abundant on the Aran island Inishmore, its big clumsy heads of bulbils lining the amazing stone walls round the tiny rocky fields. Monks lived on these islands – the only woman allowed was St Gobnet because she kept bees for a monastery! The Leeks are thought to be a relic of monastic gardens. Joy also recorded Crimson Clover *Trifolium incarnatum* ssp. *Incarnatum*, which interests me because it seems to be turning up widely from imported grass seed mixes. I love its beauty and wonder if it will persist if we really do get unusually warm summers. Joy also sent me a most comforting thought while I struggle with a slow-mending knee replacement, saying "botanical activities are a thread of continuity", which makes me feel that seeing the weeds in my garden as I learn to walk again will eventually draw me back to real botany!

Audrey Turner has been keeping lists

online since 2014 and is in the process of re-organising her multitude of records, but she was able to tell me about two really thrilling sightings. A local botanist had found Yellow Bird's-nest *Hypopitys monotropa* and shared the find with a



few honoured friends. It was the first time this fascinating plant had been seen in VC96 Easternness since 1875 and indeed it is the first record north of central Scotland since 1999! The other find was of her own spotting – visiting a good butterfly site near Grantown-on-Spey she found an oddity which seemed to be Snow-white Wood-rush *Luzula nivea*. Ian Green confirmed this. It's a new species for VC95 Moray and for the Cairngorms National Park. Stace classes it as 'scarcely naturalised' though grown as an ornamental, so Audrey's find was really unusual.

Alison Wilson had to leave botany aside in 2022 but bothered to get in touch with me, saying she hoped to motivate herself for plant hunting in 2023. I thank her for keeping in contact and wish her, like all members, a pleasant and rewarding year.

RO FITZGERALD

PARNASSUS 1

Parnassus 1	New	Total
Julie Clarke	6	4217
Jesse Tregale	12	3742
Alan Leslie	14	3369
Chris Pogson	0	3360
Carol Hawkins	15	3330
Stephen Clarkson	62	3200
Ted Pratt	2	3177
Graeme Kay	0	3041
Marion Chappell	14	3034
John Hawksford	2	3010
Ron Parker	11	2921
Paul Harmes	43	2839
Judith Cox	49	2797
Jan Armishaw	102	2710
Gareth Bursnall	69	2678
Heather Colls	5	2672
Rodney Burton	21	2606
Priscilla Nobbs	72	2577
Sheila Wynn	38	2543

Returning to the role of secretary for this Branch has been a real pleasure, as one cannot help but be enthused by the industry, enterprise and determination expressed by all its members. The range of plants recorded and the time and trouble given to tracking them down, sometimes despite considerable hurdles, is remarkable. Perhaps more than anything else it is the pleasure and satisfaction evident in many of the emails accompanying the lists which is uplifting, be it two or a hundred new entries that are being reported.

There can be no doubt that Julie Clarke remains the Branch champion, one of only two members ever to list more than 4000 plants. Even she

reports that it is getting harder now to add new ones, but 2022 produced some choice entries. These included a native Upright Forget-me-not, *Myosotis stricta*, not known to occur in Britain until recently, seen on sand dunes at Sandscale Hawes in Cumbria, as well as a rare hybrid rush, *Juncus x lancastriensis* nothovar. *fyldensis*, at Lytham St Annes in Lancashire. These were planned additions, but Chinese Mustard *Brassica juncea* was a chance find as a street weed in Bare, Lancashire, found on the Autumn Hunt.

Jesse Tregale leads the rest of the pack in the 3000 club and lists one particularly nice hybrid grass, a cross between Red Fescue *Festuca rubra*

and Squirreltail Fescue *Vulpia bromoides* which was recorded at Bolton Wood Quarry in Yorkshire; this was found by Mike Wilcox at a site in which they had searched for it several times before without success: persistence can sometimes pay off and with hybrids it is often a case of the more you look the more you will find. Jesse also has a keen eye for escaped cultivars and his *Narcissus* 'Bath's Flame' was from Northcliffe Woods (Yorkshire) and was named by Mick Crawley from an image taken in 2016, whilst the very distinctive *Narcissus* 'Rip van Winkle' was a 2022 find on a roadside at Sulby on the Isle of Man. There was one Irish record in his list, Irish Whitebeam *Sorbus hibernica*, which he saw on a woodland edge at Lisdrumgran in Co. Leitrim.

My own year was almost entirely centred on Cambridgeshire which continues to be a productive source of mostly alien records. A small population of a hybrid *Symphytum x ferrariense* between Common Comfrey *Symphytum officinale* and White Comfrey *Symphytum orientale* found by the Cam in part of Cambridge city was a highlight, closely followed by the realisation that a *Physalis* growing out of a roadside gulley outside Peterhouse College was not the more familiar Cape-gooseberry *Physalis peruviana* but the smaller-flowered Downy Ground-cherry *Physalis pubescens*. Persistence paid off for me too, in that last year a bird-sown pear on the Royston bypass, which I had first seen as a young plant in 2015, had now flowered and fruited (and developed wickedly spiny shoots) and proved to be the south-east

European *Pyrus elaeagnifolia*.

Chris Pogson (now resident in France) reported no additions, but Carol Hawkins had a dozen new finds, her favourite being a large population of Forked Catchfly *Silene dichotoma* in a field at Thetford (Norfolk); she kindly tipped me off about this so I was able to get over to see this as well. Other chance finds included three Australian Harebell *Isotoma axillaris* self-sown on a roadside in Wymondham (Norfolk), probably derived from a previous year's hanging basket, *Salvia x jamensis* 'Hot Lips' self-sown in a car park at East Dereham (Norfolk), and Moroccan Stork's-bill *Erodium trifolium* naturalised for some years along part of Coldham's Lane in Cambridge.

Stephen Clarkson surprised himself with the size of his list, but tracking the extent of his trips around the country I think he deserved it! He recorded another *Festuca/Vulpia* hybrid, this time the cross between Red Fescue *Festuca rubra* and Dune Fescue *Vulpia fasciculata*, which came from Findhorn (Moray), whilst he was asked to go and investigate an orchid in East Anglia which turned out to be Small-flowered Tongue-orchid *Serapias parviflora*. Its origin there is a mystery, but it may be that *Serapias* species are going to become more familiar to all of us as reports of them in southern England are increasing. His sizeable list of dandelions (*Taraxacum* spp.) was almost all from Norfolk and vouched for on field meetings by Alex Prendergast. This is one of the best ways to get familiar with this difficult group and members recording them

need to ensure that records are backed up by such expert verification.

Ted Pratt may only have been able to add two to his list in 2022, but they were good ones! *Salvia hispanica* seed is sold as 'Chia' in shops for culinary use and for a few years now plants have been cropping up on roadsides from discarded or spilled seed, often not reaching flowering before being taken by the frosts. Ted found this on a roadside in Swanage (Dorset), and in the same town a road gutter had self-sown Throatwort *Trachelium caeruleum*, now quite popular as a cut flower and persisting and self-sowing in places where the weather is mild or where it has some protection.

Marion Chappell was especially taken with her unexpected record of the pretty blue-flowered Slender Borage *Borago pygmaea* on a roadside bank in Silverdale (Lancashire), and I was pleased to see her record for an alien form of Parsnip, Eastern Parsnip *Pastinaca sativa* ssp. *urens*, from a roadside verge in Manchester, as I spent some time a year or two ago on tracking its spread around the East Anglian coast and up the A14 to and beyond Cambridge. She also had Spiny Cocklebur *Xanthium spinosum* as a probable bird-seed alien at Thursaston (Cheshire) as well as recording the very local native *Alchemilla subcrenata* in a field by Earnshaw Reservoir in Lancashire.

Graeme Kay was unable to add to his total last year, but John Hawksford bagged a brace of alien additions. One of these was the fairly recently detected introduction *Cardamine occulta* which he saw as a garden

weed in Marple (Cheshire) and which is increasingly reported elsewhere as a nursery and garden weed. His other record was of a convincingly self-sown Japanese Anemone *Anemone x hybrida*, which came from the interface of a wall and the pavement in Whaley Bridge (Derbyshire).

Ron Parker heads the list of those moving to within striking distance of the 3000 mark. All his new records came from a WFS meeting, attended by several other Parnassians, which visited some profitable sites at Great Yarmouth on the Norfolk coast. Notable amongst their records were a distinctive dune variant of Lesser Meadow-rue, *Thalictrum minus* ssp. *arenarium*, which has glaucous leaves with glands on the underside, abundantly naturalised Woolly Hawkweed *Hieracium lanatum* in a site from which it was first reported in 1980 and the intergeneric grass hybrid X *Calammophila baltica* var. *baltica*, a cross between Marram *Ammophila arenaria* and Wood Small-reed *Calamagrostis epigejos*. The spelling and presentation of the botanical name for this grass seemed to suffer from a campaign of Chinese whispering amongst those present as it appeared on lists in half a dozen different variants!

Paul Harmes added in a few retrospective records that had slipped his formal recording net from previous years including the very unusual greenish, yellow-flowered form of Fly Orchid, *Ophrys insectifera* var. *ochroleuca*, which he saw on Yockletts Bank (Kent) in 2021. I was also envious of his 2022 record of the attractive annual *Nicotiana mutabilis* from a pavement crack in Eastbourne

(East Sussex). He had a successful visit to Cambridgeshire in June when I was able to show him a bit of a hybrid-fest which included another hybrid grass, Creeping Bent *Agrostis stolonifera* crossed with Water Bent *Polypogon viridis*, X *Agropogon robinsonii* found on waste ground at Cottenham and the hybrids of Hoary Willowherb *Epilobium parviflorum* and Great Willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum* with a variant of Square-stalked Willowherb, *Epilobium tetragonum* ssp. *tournefortii*, the first at Royston, the latter at Hardwick.

Judith Cox had a very rewarding visit to stay with Stella Taylor in Norfolk in June which enabled her to see various East Anglian rarities, including the now very scarce, yellow-flowered form of Early Marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza incarnata* ssp. *Ochroleuca* in Market Weston Fen. Although it's not an East Anglian speciality I was also pleased to see her record of Asarabacca *Asarum europaeum* at Wymondham as this little plant has fascinated me since my earliest days keeping botanical records in the 1960s. Nearer home in Yorkshire Judith was fortunate to have seen a very unusual alien in the shape of Arrowleaf Clover *Trifolium vesiculosum*, which was found by the North-east Yorkshire Botany Group in Wykeham Forest and subsequently identified by the local BSBI Recorder. Her new cumulative total corrects an error in the last Branch report.

Jan Armishaw was the only member of the Branch to crack the three figure barrier for new entries, so inevitably there is much to choose from her travels all over the country. Masterwort, *Imperatoria ostruthium*,

was a long sought after plant which she finally tracked down to a site near Bury in Lancashire, whilst a trip to the Isles of Scilly produced a record for the startling Red Angel's Trumpet *Brugmansia sanguinea*, at the edge of woodland on St Marys – I wonder if it survived this last winter? Other enviable records included *Artemisia x wurzellii*, a cross between Common and Chinese Mugworts *Artemisia vulgaris* and *Artemisia verlotiorum*, which came from waste ground in London at Spa Fields, Islington, the same site also yielding Avocado, *Persea americana* and Tree Tobacco, *Nicotiana glauca*, these all



vouched for by the leader of the meeting Mark Spencer. Gareth Bursnall is another well-travelled recorder and was especially pleased with what was for him a new hybrid fern *Dryopteris x complexa*, a cross between *Male-fern Dryopteris filix-mas* and Golden-scaled Male-fern *Dryopteris affinis*, which came from woodland at Ironbridge (Shropshire), whilst a visit to Slimbridge (Gloucestershire) gave him Grass-poly *Lythrum hyssopifolia*

in one of its largest populations in the country, as well as Stiff Saltmarsh-grass, *Puccinellia rupestris*. Sea-lavenders represent quite a challenge these days, not helped by the divergence of opinions as to how many taxa to recognise and at what rank, but Gareth managed to add to his tally with *Limonium sanctamargaritense*, which he saw in its *locus classicus* of St Margaret's Bay in Kent.

Heather Colls was restricted to her home area in Monmouthshire but still managed some good alien records, which included Smooth Finger-grass *Digitaria ischaemum* in a surgery car park in Abergavenny, Prostrate Rock-cress *Arabis procurrens* on a wall in Llandogo and a solitary self-sown plant of Eastern Sowbread *Cyclamen coum* which had escaped into a pasture field from a nearby garden in Abergavenny. Like many of you (myself included) she has been investigating churchyards for snowdrops and found *Galanthus x valentinei* which is a cross between Snowdrop *Galanthus nivalis* x Pleated Snowdrop *Galanthus plicatus* in Dixon churchyard, and assures me that she intends to make more use of the BSBI's *Hybrid Flora of the British Isles* in trying to unearth more hybrids in her local patch.

My predecessor as Branch Secretary Rodney Burton was a model member in getting his list to me on 31st December! Undoubtedly his most remarkable record is for a new alien Mugwort *Artemisia austroyunnanensis*, a Chinese species which had somehow found its way to a site

at the edge of a car park on Dartford Marshes (West Kent). He has written this up recently in *BSBI News*. It resembles a Mugwort *Artemisia vulgaris* on steroids, but unfortunately the site has now been tarmacked and the plants have already been lost. Other alien records in his list included a variant of Four-leaved Allseed, *Polycarpon tetraphyllum* var. *diphyllum*, which may be the prevalent variant currently expanding over many parts of the country, his record coming from the Surrey Docks, whilst his best new native must surely have been Perennial Knawel, *Scleranthus perennis* ssp. *prostratus*, which was a trophy from a WFS meeting at Santon Warren in West Suffolk.

Our two new members this year Priscilla Nobbs and Sheila Wynn both presented burgeoning lists. Priscilla was especially pleased with Spreading Bellflower *Campanula patula*, seen on the border of a copse at Cressing Temple Barns in Essex,



Perennial Knawel
Scleranthus perennis ssp. *prostratus*

as well as the Small-flowered Winter-cress *Barbarea stricta* which was an unexpected pleasure on a meeting by the River Waveney near Beccles in Suffolk. I was also pleased to see her record from Beccles Marshes for a variant of Hedge Bindweed, *Calystegia sepium* ssp. *roseata* which has pink flowers and hairy shoots. It is perhaps an overlooked taxon more widely, as has proved to be the case recently in the Cambridgeshire fenland.

Sheila has one of the first records I have seen for a newly described species of Lady's-mantle, the rather inelegantly named False-toothed Lady's-mantle *Alchemilla falsadenta*, that she and Peter Jepson spent a day searching for in



Spreading Bellflower
Campanula patula

Grass Wood (Yorkshire) and which commendably they got checked out by the author of the new BSBI Handbook, Mark Lynes. She also put an effort into finding a few more local

Yorkshire specialities that had not come her way previously, including English Sandwort *Arenaria norvegica* ssp. *anglica*, on the lower slopes of Ingleborough and Burnt Orchid *Neotinea ustulata* in Wensleydale.

I have no doubt that most of you will have more tales to tell and wonderful records to report on after the current season and I shall look forward to reading all about them!

ALAN LESLIE



Burnt Orchid *Neotinea ustulata*

PARNASSUS 2

	New	Cumulative
Dorothy Bullock	3	2050
Everard Ellis	0	2189
Ro Fitzgerald	0	2084
Peter Jepson	6	2205
Geoffrey Kitchener	4	2277
John Martin	44	2259
Dawn Nelson	0	2246
Ted Phenna	11	2049
Janice Reynolds	28	2421

It is, seemingly, continuously blustery and wet here in Sussex, at the turn of the new year, 2023, as I sit down to go through your diaries, which, I am pleased to say, invoke the memories of that long hot spring and summer of 2022. Apparently, the hottest on record!

This year, Dorothy tended to remain 'local' for most of the time, except an early visit to Bridlington in East Yorkshire, in May. Here she found Treacle-mustard *Erysimum cheiranthoides* as a casual weed in South Cliffe Gardens. Closer to home she found the pink-flowered form of Purple Toadflax *Linaria purpurea* 'Canon Went', as a gutter weed, and two separate discoveries of *Phacelia*,

Phacelia tanacetifolia, one as another gutter weed, and one in a 'weedy front garden'.

Peter managed to get more botanising in this year, despite his involvement with a Moorland Project, locally. A visit to Raven Scar, Ingleborough, in April, produced two Dandelions, *Taraxacum fulviforme* and *Taraxacum lacistophyllum*, both confirmed by his companion on the day, Brian Burrow. A second excursion into Yorkshire, with our society's Hon. Gen Sec, Sheila Wynn, produced False-toothed Lady's-mantle *Alchemilla falsadenta* near Bastow Wood, Grassington, confirmed by Mark Lynes.



Phacelia *Phacelia tanacetifolia*

Geoffrey only recorded four new plants during this season, but, given that he all but completed the Kent Rare Plant Register, as well as dealing with all the VC15 & 16 records, that's no mean feat. I'll begin with the rather stunning, and infrequently occurring, 'Red-lipped' Common Spotted-orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* var. *rhodochila*. This he found at the Swanscombe Peninsula SSSI. The pavements of Sevenoaks revealed the Fern-leaved Beggarticks *Bidens ferulifolia* as an escape from community planting. Finally, in a wood, in South Darenth, he added Quince *Cydonia oblonga*, not obviously planted.

A busy year has been had by John. Not only has he visited the Isles of Scilly a couple of times, Scotland and Norfolk, he has made time to become the BSBI County Co-recorder for Shropshire. Phew!

From Glen Catacol, Arran, he adds the three Whitebeams: Arran Service-tree *Sorbus pseudofennica*, Arran Whitebeam *Sorbus arrenensis* and False Rowan *Sorbus pseudomeinichii*. From Gloucestershire he has Lesser Celandine, *Ficaria verna* ssp. *verna*. However, as a botanist who rather likes grasses, I could not overlook African Dropseed *Sporobolus africanus*, from a gutter in Marazion, Cornwall

This year Ted's botanising was local to where he lives in North Wales. He has also benefitted from the help of Wendy McCarthy, the BSBI Recorder. The West Beach at Llandudno has always managed to

produce interesting plants and this still seems to be the case. Safflower *Carthamus tinctorius* and Cabbage Palm *Cordyline australis* were among his finds. By the River Conwy at Betws-y-Coed he added Western Sword-fern *Polystichum munitum* and the rather attractive, but rarely naturalised, Cyclamen-flowered Daffodil *Narcissus cyclamineus*.

Janice continued with her varieties in 2022. This time she records two Wood Anemone colour varieties, *Anemone nemorosa* var. *carnea*, with pink in the flowers, and *Anemone nemorosa* var. *purpurea* with purple in the flowers. She also found the Creeping Spurge *Euphorbia prostrata* at its second Sussex site in paving cracks in Lewes Cemetery. A late spring walk in Mid Sussex, on the footpaths, tracks and woodland around Sheffield Park, produced Sensitive Fern *Onoclea sensibilis* and Variegated Greater Woodrush, *Luzula sylvatica* 'Marginata' both naturalised a long way from habitation.

It has been fascinating going through your diaries and sharing your delight with your new finds. I hope you all have an excellent and fruitful season this year, with many notable finds along the way.

I look forward to reading your diaries again in early 2024.

PAUL HARMES

EXOTICS

A large chunk of what I have to say this time comes courtesy of Aaron Woods, who has once again come to my rescue by sharing his records of three *Narcissus* cultivars not described or referred to in Stace 4 (and for which unfortunately there are no images). Found in different places around Alfrick (v.c. 37), they are *Narcissus* 'Emperor', *Narcissus* 'Queen of the North' and *Narcissus* 'Victoria'.

Narcissus cultivars were by no means his only "non-Stace" find. He also recorded *Salvia yangii* as a pavement weed in Worcester (v.c. 37). This is now the accepted name for Russian Sage *Perovskia atriplicifolia*, which in turn is the species that some equate with the popular garden plant *Perovskia* 'Blue Spire'. I have noted elsewhere how this plant sends forth flowering and non-flowering growth that can mimic seedlings while still being connected to the "parent", but this doesn't seem to apply to Aaron's record.

For good measure he also observed the Artillery-plant *Pilea microphylla* as a plant pot weed in the Burford House Garden Centre (v.c. 40). This nondescript tropical American member of the Nettle Family is also known as a weed of tropical greenhouses and is even used as a "filler" in horticultural displays.

Another record, not sent to me directly by the recorder (E.S. Gregory) but which caught my eye in a list forwarded by Nevil Hutchinson of the Sussex Botanical Recording

Society, involved the garden plant Kara Tau Garlic *Allium karataviense*. It comes from Central Asia and boasts a distinctive (though perhaps not unique) combination of a few very broad, blunt, blue-green leaves and a tight dome of pale pink stellate flowers – so readers who have never heard of it or don't know what it looks like now have another plant to research!

This record was for Newhaven but there were few other details. It could be the first authentic one for Britain and Ireland. Given the sheer amount of soil being moved around with or without obvious purpose these days, more casual records of it are highly likely.

MATTHEW BERRY

Winter Months' Hunt

Wandering around the local lanes
To find plants that are out
Is often very difficult
'Cos usually there's nowt.
Daisy is a definite cert
Plus its cousin dandelion.
But finding new plants still in flower
Is often very tryin'.
But now the days are longer
And the nights begin to wane
How fabulous it is to see
The Spring's first celandine.
The violets and primroses very soon will follow.
We look at them alight with joy
As we gaze into the hollow.

GARETH BURSNALL