

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

I have really enjoyed the wild flowers this spring because the mild winter in the south-west has helped to make a wonderful display. Recently I was in the woods in both Dorset and the New Forest and the density and display of the Wood Anemones or Wind Flowers (*Anemone nemorosa*) were wonderful. The Bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scriptus*) were also superb this spring, but I am worried about the incursion of the Spanish Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides hispanica*) in several places. I have removed several of the pale pink or purple flowers where only a few occur within a stand of our native woodland species. They hybridize easily and our beautiful bluebells are becoming corrupted. As I write to you for this summer newsletter I am on a short holiday trip to the coast of Pembroke. I have been rewarded with the sight of many flowers and today's treat was on a slope down to the sea covered with Spring Squill (*Scilla verna*). The bright or pale-blue star-like flowers were at their very best and really abundant. The Kidney Vetches (*Anthyllis vulneraria*) were also in full display as was Thrift or Sea Pink (*Armeria maritima*). Many of

the Bluebells here, by the sea, are the Spanish variety or hybrids. There is nothing much one can do about that but I do want to keep some of our woodlands free of the invaders.

It is so good to be out and about in the field again after my severe illness in December that kept from trips to Brazil and Kenya. The short trips I am now doing in the UK are conditioning me to get back again to the tropics before too long. But in my research I have embarked on the taxonomy of another tropical American plant family the Humiriaceae. At present I am studying herbarium collections, many of which I collected in the past, but soon I will be back studying them in the field.

GHILLEAN PRANCE

Wood Anemone

Photo: Anne Kell

Copy date for Autumn
magazine
1st August, 2017



EDITORIAL

'The object of this magazine is to encourage an interest in wild flowers. It is primarily intended for members of a Wild Flower Society, which was modestly started in manuscript for children, more than ten years ago. The unexpected encouragement of several older people desiring to become members, led to the compilation of a "Field Botanists' Diary", which was printed in 1892. Since then the Society has been subdivided, and it is the aim of the Magazine to bring into touch the members of various branches by making known the result of individual efforts and collections. It is however hoped that all who are interested in wild flowers will take in the Magazine, and contribute any interesting or curious fact about them of general interest, that has come under their notice. In this way a great deal of valuable information may be circulated, but it is obvious that the success will depend largely on the contributors and subscribers.'

The words above are not my own. In fact they introduced issue number 1, February to March, 1897. However, I could just as easily have chosen

similar words to introduce this issue, which is number 500* and represents a huge milestone in the history of the Society. The Society was founded on branches, which still exist today, and this issue comprises the results of members' 'Field Botanists' Record Books' or 'Diaries', as they were formerly known. In this way we are continuing the aims of the Society and sharing the progress of members. I should like to encourage as many members as possible to complete a Record Book as, through personal experience, I have found it an invaluable method of reinforcing my botanical knowledge. I have vowed to correct my ways and submit my Record Book next year.

I would endorse Mrs Dent's sentiment about contributions to the magazine and, as always, any contributions are very welcome. Special thanks to all who contributed pictures and reports this time.

* Strictly speaking this is the 499th issue as there was no issue 221 but the inaccuracy in the numbering has been continued since then.

ANNE KELL

NOTICES

Changes to contact details:

John Swindells's Email address is: john.swindells3@sky.com The wrong address was given in the winter 2017 issue.

Pippa Hyde's new Email as from June 1st will be: pippahyde3323@gmail.com

Exotics Secretary

Christopher Westall has retired as Exotics Secretary. We would like to thank him for all he has done during his time in that role.

He has been replaced by Stephen O'Donnell, 21, Windsor Road, Albrighton, Wolverhampton, West Midlands. WV7 3DJ

Email: stevealbrighton@outlook.com

If you come across any interesting plants that aren't either in Stace 3 or Kent's List, do let Steve know, so that they can be reported in a future magazine.

THE MEMBERS' WEEKEND INCLUDING AGM AND TEA PARTY 2017.

Friday 1st September to Monday 4th September in Llandudno, North Wales. See insert for the full details which are also on the website, together with a copy of the Treasurer's Annual Report. There are also photos of some of the specialities of the Great Orme on the website. Bookings by the end of July 2017 please, to Sheila Wynn, 17, Southfield Drive, West Bradford, Clitheroe, Lancashire. BB7 4TU Phone: 01200 425813.

Email: wfsgensec@yahoo.co.uk

WILD FLOWER SOCIETY FACEBOOK PAGE

You perhaps know that we have both a website and a Facebook page. Our Facebook page was created in 2011 and did not have all the facilities I now need to maintain it.

Unfortunately, I was unable to archive the old page, transfer the

membership or to merge it with a new one so a new page has been created starting all over again with just a few members. The old Facebook page was scheduled for demolition on 29th March 2017 never to return. The new one has a cover photograph of Low Force in Teesdale taken on a WFS meeting and you can reach it via our website or by typing in:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/410218876012875/>

once you have logged into your Facebook account.

Our new page is a Public Group page and we are classified as a "club".

Public means anyone with a Facebook account who finds it can post comments or photos on the page but Dr Peter Llewellyn and Mrs Dawn Nelson, who are the two administrators, will endeavour to keep posts relevant, delete inappropriate posts (often people wanting to advertise things) and to keep discussions civilised.

You might find it surprising to think

that people who share interests in Natural History could become involved in robust exchanges of views but that sometimes happens when such topics as ragwort and horses, bluebells: Spanish and British, invasive plants and the definition of "wild plant" are the topics of conversation.

To start the new Facebook page I have included four photo albums of photographs of rare and special flowers of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. These are arbitrary collections but are intended to whet the botanical appetites of our members seeking new plants to find and photograph. They are accompanied by a file in Microsoft Word format and in 'rtf rich text format' for those who might only have Wordpad as a word processor.

These files give some information about the plant and its rarity but are essentially a personal commentary to add a bit of interest.

I hope you can visit our new page and you are invited to make comments about it, the photo albums and the accompanying text.

PETER LLEWELLYN

BRANCH REPORTS FOR 2016

BRANCH A, KENT

| | New | Total |
|-------------------|-----|-------|
| Annual | | |
| Sheila Anderson | | 288 |
| Cumulative | | |
| Jose Gibbs | 9 | 141 |

Jose Gibbs kept her diary going, but there were no botanical contributions from her holidays, which were spent outside the UK. She recorded Danish Scurvygrass (*Cochlearia danica*) across the central reservation of the A299 near St Nicholas at Wade, a habitat to be expected; but a much less predictable location for Common Restharrow (*Ononis repens*) was found, namely the putting green at St Mildred's Bay, Westgate-on-Sea. In moving into a new house, she found Deadly Nightshade (*Atropa belladonna*) in the garden. This is unlikely to have been a deliberate introduction but probably due to a more general presence in the area. Formally open farmland and cliffs, the area was developed from the 1930s to 1950s and the plant was known to Jose from nearby properties in the 1960s and 1990s. Seeds are known to have slow and erratic germination, which may explain the uncertainty of this species's appearances.

was Weasel's-snout (*Misopates orontium*), in a new Kent location, found by her near Upper Halling. This is an arable weed with very few recent records in the county. How many more plants are named after the facial feature of an animal? She also recorded Hound's-tongue (*Cynoglossum officinale*) at Cliffe, both this species and the last being on the Kent rare plant register. Continuing with this theme, Mouse-ear-hawkweed (*Pilosella officinarum*) was noted by her in three different Kent monads and Goat's-beard (*Tragopogon pratensis*) in several locations, including Ranscombe Farm. Here she also saw Narrow-leaved Ragwort (*Senecio inaequidens*), for further evidence of its continuing spread, both in Kent and more widely; observations such as this help towards building up the larger picture of plant distribution and trends.

GEOFFREY KITCHENER

Records were received from Sheila Anderson in a spreadsheet format which set plant names against a series of different monad surveys (37 of them), supplying a great deal of useful information for county recording as well as for WFS purposes. The highlight of her list

Deadly Nightshade



Photo: Ken Southall

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

| Annual | New | Total |
|-------------------|-----|-------|
| Jacqueline Rose | | 626 |
| Janet Blizard | | 620 |
| Ellen Campbell | | 600 |
| Lucy-Ellen Webb | | 349 |
| Cumulative | | |
| Jill Smith | 18 | 1117 |

Jill Smith managed to find Hedge Veronica (*Veronica x franciscana*) in Cornwall and Potato (*Solanum tuberosum*) on the Isle of Wight. A visit to Shoreham Beach was very productive with the classic Starry Clover (*Trifolium stellatum*) and Italian Catchfly (*Silene italica*). Locally, she recorded Perfoliate Honeysuckle (*Lonicera caprifolium*) near Kingston.

Janet Blizard made the most of many WFS meetings in Dorset and the Lizard Peninsula plus local plants found with the Hampshire Flora Group to reach the amazing total of 620. She found most of the rare and unusual plants of the Lizard Peninsula, including Long-headed Clover (*Trifolium incarnatum* ssp. *molinarii*), Wild Asparagus (*Asparagus prostratus*) and Hairy Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Lotus subbiflorus*). In Dorset she recorded Whorled Caraway (*Carum verticillatum*), Oblong-leaved Sundew (*Drosera intermedia*) and Viper's-grass (*Scorzonera humilis*), plus many more. Nearer home she also found Wild Gladiolus (*Gladiolus illyricus*) in the New Forest.

exclusively in her local area of Willingdon and Eastbourne and, with a lifelong passion for gardening, expertly identified many interesting and unusual species. Her finds included Cat-mint (*Nepeta cataria*), an uncommon plant on chalk, Lavender-cotton (*Santolina chamaecyparissus*), Pale Yellow-eyed-grass (*Sisyrinchium striatum*) and Silver Ragwort (*Senecio cineraria*), which is well established on Beachy Head.

Jacqueline Rose and Ellen Campbell botanise together in the Hastings area and are expert at finding rare and unusual plants. Interesting plants they recorded are Pirri-pirri-bur (*Acaena novae-zelandiae*), Maidenhair Fern (*Adiantum capillus-veneris*), Wall Bedstraw (*Galium parisiense*) and Lizard Orchid (*Himantoglossum hircinum*). They recorded most of the unusual plants at Rye Harbour including Least Lettuce (*Lactuca saligna*) and Rottingdean Sea-lavender (*Limonium hybleum*). Their two most unusual records were Least Pepperwort (*Lepidium virginicum*) and Slender Vervain (*Verbena rigida*).

Lucy-Ellen Webb botanised

GARETH BURNSNALL

BRANCH N1, YORKSHIRE, CLEVELAND, HUMBERSIDE

Annual
Mary Sorsby

Total
242

Several new members joined this year so I am looking forward to more record books next year.

Mary Sorsby sent in her first Field Record Book. She had an interesting year visiting lots of lovely places including the Burren, where she saw some of the Irish specialities including several orchids - Early Marsh Orchid (*Dactylorhiza incarnata*

ssp.*incarnata*), Irish Marsh Orchid (*Dactylorhiza kerryensis*), Shrubby Cinquefoil (*Potentilla fruticosa*) and Irish Saxifrage (*Saxifraga rosacea*), but says one of her favourite memories is of Thrift (*Armeria maritima*) on the Cliffs at Moher. On a visit to Derbyshire she saw Jacob's Ladder (*Polemonium caeruleum*).

JUDITH COX

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

Annual
Rob Kelsey (2015)
Rob Kelsey (2016)
Laura Waugh

Total
208
203
90

2015 Report

Rob Kelsey doesn't find much time for botanising except when he's on holiday, so for most of the year he confines his efforts to a relatively short stretch of the River Tweed near where he lives, and where he takes the dog for a walk every morning. He identified 110 species in 2014, and 98 species in 2015, on the bank beside the river, including the attractive Flowering-rush (*Butomus umbellatus*) and Amphibious bistort (*Persicaria amphibia*) (which he's not seen anywhere else), but regrets the increasing invasion of Indian Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*). In 2014,

while on holiday in Gloucestershire, he was pleased to see Gypsywort (*Lycopus europaeus*) for the first time in years, Ploughman's-spikenard (*Inula conyzae*) beside a canal near Bromsgrove, and Broad-leaved Helleborine (*Epipactis helleborine*) in Badley Wood near Bromyard. He also saw Hog's Fennel (*Peucedanum officinale*) and Dragon's-teeth (*Tetragonolobus maritimus*) in Whitstable. In 2015, while on holiday in Dumfriesshire, he saw both Ragged-Robin (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*), which is one of his favourite flowers, and Small Balsam (*Impatiens parviflora*), which he hadn't seen

before. Rob says that he is now 'getting into' grasses.

2016 Report

As usual, Rob Kelsey did most of his botanising while walking the dog along a short local stretch of the River Tweed, and while on holiday. He identified 203 plants in 2016, including 29 grasses. One of his favourite finds was Gallant Soldier (*Galinsoga parviflora*), which he'd not seen for about thirty years, and so was pleased to find, first in Whitstable and then, a few weeks later, at the edge of a road in Newcastle upon Tyne. Another interesting find was Rye Brome (*Bromus secalinus*) in Herefordshire, which he'd seen, but not positively identified, two years previously. His confidence in identifying it this time round is a sign that he's 'gradually getting to grips with the grasses' (which also means getting to grips with the sometimes differing descriptions in the various floras). He sent in a specimen of Reed Sweet-grass (*Glyceria maxima*), and was pleased to be able to see the cross-veins on the leaves ... once he'd been told where to look!

Laura Waugh helps to manage a number of sites across south-west Northumberland. The sites are on spoil/waste land from industrial reclamation sites and Laura has been interested in flowers that grow on this disturbed land since being the first to spot Bee Orchids in Pegswood in 2015 and also finding Grass Vetchling (*Lathyrus nissolia*), which I'm told is also very rare in this area. She has also been interested in the



Grass Vetchling

Photo: Anne Kell

Spetchells site, which are huge mounds of waste chalk from an old fertiliser factory, and enjoyed finding Perforate St John's-wort (*Hypericum perforatum*) there.

She also visited the South Downs, Shropshire AONB, North Yorkshire and the Isle of Mull, although with the latter being in September she missed much of the flowering season, but did see some beautiful heather.

As Laura already felt confident with trees and shrubs she was mainly interested in testing her flora knowledge. She particularly enjoyed the WFS field trip to the north-west coast where they were lucky to find a parasitic Yarrow Broomrape (*Orobanche purpurea*), which is beautiful. In 2017 Laura plans to visit Calaminarian sites on the North Pennines with Northumbria Natural History Society. She would also like to gain more knowledge and experience with lichens and bryophytes. She says, "I'm basically just discovering how much there is to learn and it's very exciting."

LIZZIE MADDISON

BRANCH N3

MERSEYSIDE, LANCASHIRE, CHESHIRE, GREATER MANCHESTER, NORTH WALES

| Cumulative | New | Total |
|-----------------|-----|-------|
| Bob Hodgkinson | 5 | 210 |
| Jean Richardson | 249 | 249 |
| Sue Riley | 25 | 1014 |
| Dorothy Ross | 3 | 94 |
| Carol Winder | 9 | 521 |

I received the sad news towards the end of November that Georgina Hargreaves had died peacefully in her sleep at home with her family at her bedside. Georgina had been a member since 1999 and each year from 2002 had sent me her diary. She and her husband had many interests and on one of their annual fishing trips to Tweedmill in the Borders she found Tall Scurvy-grass (*Cochlearia megalosperma*) on the banks of the River Tweed and this proved to be a first for VC81. I (we) shall miss her company and reading about her interesting finds.

Bob Hodgkinson has had health problems during 2016, I do hope he is feeling better and will be able to continue botanising. It does get you out of the house and walking, which is vital. Two plants new for him were Oxford Ragwort (*Senecio squalidus*) and Meadow Fescue (*Schedonorus pratensis*, formerly *Festuca pratensis* - note the changed nomenclature).

Jean Richardson has had a good year and tells me her best flower hunt was with the Branch at Waitby Greenriggs. Her best flower was Smith's Pepperwort (*Lepidium*

heterophyllum) seen in Galloway. A trip to the Wirral gave her Scarlet Pimpernel (*Anagalis arvensis*) at Thursaston and near home on the Pennington Flash she spotted Three-cornered Leek (*Allium triquetrum*).

The Yellow Star of Bethlehem (*Gagea lutea*) was Sue Riley's first find of the year at Beetham, then Wood Millet (*Millium effusum*) by the River Lune in May. Later at East Dean she spotted Wild Basil (*Clinopodium vulgare*) and our last meeting of the year at Crosby gave her Isle of Man Cabbage (*Coincya monensis* ssp. *monensis*).

Just three new plants for Dorothy Ross in 2016 but she says "Better than nothing!" They were Wrinkled Viburnum (*Viburnum rhytidophyllum*) at Clitheroe, Alder Buckthorn (*Frangula alnus*), seen on our Cheshire meeting, and Hairy Buttercup (*Ranunculus sardous*) in Norfolk.

Carol Winder tells me Procumbent Yellow-sorrel (*Oxalis corniculata*) was in lots of places all over her village this year. Himalayan Honeysuckle (*Leycesteria formosa*) was coming up

in cracks in paths, a typical habitat for it and Common Yellow-sedge (*Carex demissa*) was seen on her regular walk in the Lower Burgh Meadow.

A new member this year Jim Clift has not been able to send a list but has written telling me of his forays. He visited Hay Bridge, a lovely nature reserve in the Rusland Valley, South Cumbria, where to everyone's surprise Yellow Bird's-nest (*Hypopitys monotropa*) appeared for the first

time. At a site near Blackburn there was a beautiful display of Marsh Gentian (*Gentiana pneumonanthe*) and on a trip to Teesdale he spotted Shady Horsetail (*Equisetum pratense*) before a thick mist came down - and that was that!

Once again, thank you for sending your finds which I look forward to reading about and hope 2017 is as productive.

JULIE CLARKE

BRANCH O BEDFORDSHIRE, BERKSHIRE, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, HERTFORDSHIRE, OXFORDSHIRE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

| | New | Total |
|-------------------|-----|-------|
| Annual | | |
| Barbara Spence | | 530 |
| Barrie Stockwell | | 287 |
| Cumulative | | |
| Jean Goodrum | 0 | 1197 |
| Margaret Holmes | 7 | 1024 |

Jean Goodrum wrote that she has had a busy year looking after family and friends who have been unwell. As a result she has had no time for wild flower hunting and indeed has not managed a proper holiday. I very much hope that 2017 is better for her, and that she has time to get out into the countryside.

Margaret Holmes sent me details of her new plants. Six of these were seen on a cold and very wet weekend in the Scottish Highlands. A day tour from Inverness took her to Pass of the Cattle, on the west coast,

where she found Mountain Sorrel (*Oxyria digyna*), Oblong-leaved Sundew (*Drosera intermedia*) and Pale Butterwort (*Pinguicula lusitanica*) growing in a boggy area. Unfortunately, the stop was all too brief. I'm sure there was much more to be seen if one could have spent longer there!

Barbara Spence has sent in an impressive Record Book, with grid references and the names of those confirming her more unusual entries. She has made a good advance on last year's total, with quite a few

grasses and sedges. Many of these resulted from a Field Studies Council course in Essex. She also had a holiday in Grange-over-Sands, near Morecambe Bay, with many northern, western, and coastal species – quite a contrast from her home territory in the Chilterns! Overall her favourite finds included Parsley-piert (*Aphanes arvensis*) “in flower at last!”, Lesser Water-plantain (*Baldellia ranunculoides*) at Otmoor, and Green Hound’s-tongue (*Cynoglossum germanicum*). She has taken on a couple of local tetrads to record for the Atlas 2020 project, which will doubtless help with her identification skills.

Barrie Stockwell has also sent me an interesting Record Book, with a healthy increase on last year’s total. Although many of his bread and butter plants are from his local area, he also has records from a wildlife holiday in the Scottish Highlands, which took him both to the Cairngorms and to the west coast. I was particularly struck by his record of Creeping Lady’s-tresses (*Goodyera repens*) near Loch Garten – exactly the place where I first saw it, many years ago. Field Gentian (*Gentianella campestris*) near Nethy Bridge was another good find. In his home area, around Hertford, he has nice records from set-aside fields and from an old rubbish tip. The latter provided Hoary Mustard (*Hirschfeldia incana*), another new one for his all-time list.

In addition to the lists I received in January, various members sent me identification queries during the course of the year. Some were easy to answer, but others much harder!

However, I enjoyed all our correspondence and hope to hear from many of you in the next twelve months.

I’ll end by reminding everyone about the various meetings in our area (details in the winter magazine). There will be plenty to see at each of the sites, whether you want to enjoy beautiful wild flowers at their best or to learn about the specialities of our region. So I encourage you to come along and hope to meet you soon. I wish everyone a good botanising year and look forward to hearing of your exploits in due course.

ROGER HEATH-BROWN

Creeping
Lady’s-tresses



Photo: Ken Southall

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

At this time of year it is always a positive pleasure reading about days of botanising in more enjoyable seasons, seeing accounts of special plants and feeling encouraged to look forward to a new botany season. This branch has members in several countries (Wales and Ireland, as well as England) so I have a very interesting time as secretary and a very helpful time for my own botanical knowledge as the geographic spread means I need to keep learning about the distribution of reported species.

As usual, notes on members are presented in alphabetical order. Record Books or comprehensive lists are rare in this age of busyness and there is no competitive element, so brief highlights seem the best way of showing people's varied interests.

Sarah Beetham had some exciting times visiting the Lizard, the Newport Wetlands Reserve, the Forest of Dean and the Cotswolds, as well as going on regular walks with her home U3A wildflower group near Bristol. She picked out two orchids as highlights. One, the little Burnt Orchid (*Neotinea ustulata* formerly *Orchis ustulata*), which enchants everyone who sees it, was growing on the Wiltshire Trust reserve at Clattinger Farm near Oaksey. The other is a handsome but much commoner plant, Southern Marsh-orchid (*Dactylorhiza praetermissa*) but, in

Sarah's case, just as thrilling because it was flowering in her garden for the second year running! Mornee Button is one of Branch P's most long-standing and active members and, although 2016 was a horrid year for her, coping both with her sadly recent widowhood and some painful health problems, she still managed a productive year. She took part in an important regular survey, monitoring and counting the threatened annual Perfoliate Penny-cress (*Microthlaspi perfoliatum*), a Cotswold speciality. She found 68 spikes of Bee Orchid (*Ophrys apifera*) on one road verge and gave talks on the wild flowers of Scotland and the Dolomites. So not exactly having a year off!

Monica Davis managed to find such widely differing things as Royal Fern (*Osmunda regalis*) at Westhay in the Somerset levels and Garden Petunia (*Petunia x hybrida*) as a pavement weed in a Somerset village! She also brought my attention to a plant which we should all challenge ourselves to find. Most of us are familiar with the mauve flowers of Lucerne (*Medicago sativa* ssp. *sativa*) because it's frequently sown in roadside mixes and persists as a crop relic. Sickle Medick (*Medicago sativa* ssp. *falcata*), with yellow flowers, is now almost restricted to East Anglia. However, according to the wonderful Stace, Preston & Pearman *Hybrid Flora of the British Isles* (2015), it

was once more widespread and the two subspecies can hybridise extremely enthusiastically, with the hybrids persisting when one or both parents have vanished! Monica found an unusually bright flower and though it turned out to be ordinary Lucerne, it started us thinking about the question. It seems that Lucerne plants with unusual flower colours, anything with yellow or greenish tones among the mauves, could be worth a close look. Lucerne has spiral pods with 2-4 complete turns, Sickie Medick has sickle-shaped pods as its English name suggests; fruits of the hybrid are intermediate.

[The hybrid, *M. sativa* nothosp. *varia*, commonly called Sand Lucerne, is conspicuously intermediate. Its flowers have a wide range of colour forms, illustrated by the centre page spread of this magazine, which shows a wonderful montage of images produced by Ken Southall. It is a speciality of East Anglia but also occurs in the London area, Co. Dublin and elsewhere. Fruits of all three subspecies are clearly illustrated on p. 67 of Sell & Murrell vol. 3. Page 169 of Stace ed. 3 illustrates *M. sativa* ssp. *sativa* and *M. sativa* ssp. *falcata* but not the hybrid. Ed.]

Ruth Harding lives near Cardigan and her work takes her into many good habitats across south Wales, so her diary always has an excellent range of common plants (often recorded near home) with rarer species from SSSIs and Reserves. Two great favourites of mine which Ruth saw in 2016 were the elusive Bog Rosemary (*Andromeda polifolia*) and Round-leaved Wintergreen (*Pyrola*

rotundifolia ssp. *maritima*) which can look so lovely round summer-dry dune slacks. She also pays careful attention to less spectacular plants, recording 15 sedges, bravely attempting the difficult identifications of subspecies of Celandines (*Ficaria verna*) and Scurvy-grasses (*Cochlearia* spp.), and finding the easily-overlooked Small-flowered Crane's-bill (*Geranium pusillum*). Brief habitat notes are helpful when checking her records and often grid references are included.

Sue Knights is a new member who has been drawn to the WFS after doing volunteer work with her local wildlife trust in the Cotswolds and with a 'Magnificent Meadows' project. I'm delighted to welcome such an active wild flower fan.

Clive Lovatt is a distinguished botanist and historian of Bristol botany, so I feel honoured that he's chosen to join the WFS. The plants he reported seeing range from the very rare Copse-bindweed (*Fallopia dumetorum*) found near Bristol (a new UK population) to the rather bizarre, an intergeneric hybrid between Blue Fleabane and Guernsey Fleabane (*Erigeron acris* x *Conyza sumatrensis*). Much of his time has been spent recording for the current Atlas scheme in his role as a County Recorder and very nicely he says that the real pleasure of his botanising year has been "simply the miles and miles of West Gloucestershire explored."

Damian Stone has also recently joined – he humbly describes himself as "in the enthusiastic amateur bracket" but he obviously has a real feel for habitat and the environmental

conditions in which particular plants thrive, so I hope the WFS can really help him to expand his knowledge while observing and enjoying plants. Catherine Tedder joined last year and is hoping to attend some Herefordshire meetings near her home in Ross-on-Wye. Like most of us she struggles with groups such as yellow 'daisies' and looks forward to going out with more experienced botanists.

David Wright is himself a rarity this time, because he was the only person to send me a Field Botanist's Record Book – and it has been a delight to check, carefully and clearly filled in. We sometimes disagree about counting planted trees but however the sums are done he has

recorded more than 250 plants in his home area near Belfast! These include a number of seaside species such as the charming Spring Squill (*Scilla verna*) and nice finds like the pretty pink-and-white striped Hairy Bindweed (*Calystegia pulchra*). Such careful recording of one's home flora is an excellent way to become familiar with a wide range of plants and to observe any changes in the vegetation.

I will welcome news or questions during the year, and look forward to any lists and highlights members can send me next winter. Good Hunting!

ROSEMARY FITZGERALD

Spring Squill



Photo: Anne Kell

BRANCH T CORNWALL, DEVON, SOMERSET, DORSET, WILTSHIRE

| Annual | New | Total |
|-------------------|-----|-------|
| Margaret Evelyn | | 304 |
| Cumulative | | |
| Kathleen Hughes | 2 | 250 |
| Sarah Delmas | 3 | 77 |

This year I received three Branch T Record Books. It would be really nice to have more members sending in their findings.

Margaret Evelyn's diary included many interesting wild flowers from the beautiful county of Dorset and the New Forest, including Chamomile (*Chamaemelum nobile*) and Brown Beak-sedge (*Rhynchospora fusca*). Margaret is a member of the Bournemouth Natural Science Society, which has a strong Botany section. Dodder (*Cuscuta epithymum*) and Subterranean Clover (*Trifolium subterraneum*) were some of the highlights of the WFS Record Book.

Kathleen Hughes's cumulative diary added two new plants. In the allotments in Crediton Kathleen found the wonderful little plant commonly known as Weasel's-snout (*Misopates orontium*). The other addition to the diary was Wild Mignonette (*Reseda lutea*) from a grass verge in Exeter.

Sarah Delmas lives in France and visits Devon a few time a year, so plant hunting is restricted to these short visits. Sarah writes that the October visit was somewhat disappointing plant-wise as many of

the hedgerows had been cut back hard. This year she added three new plants: Ground Ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*), Oxeye Daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*) and Hedge Woundwort (*Stachys sylvatica*).

STEVE PARKER



Weasel's-snout

Photo: Ken Southall

BRANCH U

STAFFORDSHIRE, WEST MIDLANDS, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE, WARWICKSHIRE, DERBYSHIRE, LEICESTERSHIRE, LINCOLNSHIRE

| Annual | New | Total |
|----------------------|-----|-------|
| Jackie Ellis | | 590 |
| Richard Fenn-Griffin | | 255 |
| Jackie Hardy | | 519 |
| Sian Matthews | | 454 |
| Richard Pykett | | 543 |
| Alan Swinscoe | | 132 |
| Cumulative | | |
| Patricia Cox | 23 | 456 |
| Marjorie Shepherd | 1 | 931 |

Unexpectedly finding Blue Fleabane (*Erigeron acris*) afforded Patricia Cox much pleasure. She is frequently captivated by the less showy plants and this year was no exception with Hop (*Humulus lupulus*) and Carline Thistle (*Carlina vulgaris*) joining her favourites. No garish colours for Patricia! Our favourite amongst her records is hardly more colourful, being Himalayan Honeysuckle (*Leycesteria formosa*). Patricia describes it as 'growing proudly in the narrow space between a metal shipping container and the fence'. Thus she saves us the agony of trying to decide if it is allowable as truly wild, or is it only just beyond a garden? Having previously recorded fully mature specimens of Royal Fern (*Osmunda regalis*) in Co. Kerry back in 2007 she did well to recognise it in Cornwall at only 20cms high and without its fertile fronds. Finally, Patricia underscores a point other diarists have made. She had never recorded Procumbent Yellow-sorrel

(*Oxalis corniculata*) in the wild until spotting it beyond a holiday cottage in Somerset. On returning home, it was found to be growing conspicuously in the block paving on her drive, having self-set without Patricia noticing.

Jackie Ellis made a real effort to extend her repertoire of grasses this year, although she expresses understandable horror at how tiny the individual parts are for identification. Her list is a superb one including Silver Hair-grass (*Aira caryophyllea*), Early Hair-grass (*Aira praecox*), Squirreltail Fescue (*Vulpia bromoides*) and, best of all, Grey Hair-grass (*Corynephorus canescens*), the latter carefully refereed. Finding Eastern Sowbread (*Cyclamen coum*) in February got Jackie off to a good start and she also saw Sowbread (*Cyclamen hederifolium*) in late summer. A pleasant surprise was accidentally finding Herb Paris (*Paris quadrifolia*) in a local woodland. Her Fleshy Yellow-

sorrel (*Oxalis megalorrhiza*) on the Isles of Scilly may well be a first for Branch U. Pale Sedge (*Carex pallescens*) and Thin-spiked Woodsedge (*Carex strigosa*) were both fine additions to a tricky group. Jackie frequently travels to Wales and there encountered Yellow Azalea (*Rhododendron luteum*).

It was good to hear that the highlight of Richard Fenn-Griffin's first year of recording was the WFS meeting at Lathkill Dale. He singled out Jacob's-ladder (*Polemonium caeruleum*), Dropwort (*Filipendula vulgaris*) and Mossy Saxifrage (*Saxifraga hypnoides*) as the plants that especially interested him. Earlier in the year a slightly more traumatic sighting was Purple Saxifrage (*Saxifraga oppositifolia*) found on the top of Snowdon on a rocky patch, fortunately left uncovered by the surrounding snow. But taking a photo proved impossible while holding an identification book in one hand, a plant lens in the other and teetering on an icy cliff edge! Richard did well to find Early Forget-me-not (*Myosotis ramosissima*) and Changing Forget-me-not (*Myosotis discolor*), both being fairly insignificant in size. We were impressed by Heath Dog-Violet (*Viola canina*) and Marsh Violet (*Viola palustris*) if only for the sheer difficulty in finding the latter in flower. Sheep's-bit (*Jasione montana*) from Pembroke was a nice addition to a first diary, the trip also enabling Richard to explore another habitat and add some seaside plants to his total.

Jackie Hardy found two particularly rich areas, namely Bredon Hill and Sutton Park, in which to botanise. The limestone of Bredon had Man

Orchid (*Orchis anthropophora*), Common Gromwell (*Lithospermum officinale*) and also Stone Parsley (*Sison amomum*). The acid soils of Sutton produced Flea Sedge (*Carex pulicaris*), Marsh Cinquefoil (*Comarum palustre*) and Butterwort (*Pinguicula vulgaris*) among many other nice finds. Purple Toothwort (*Lathraea clandestina*) is seldom recorded and was a welcome entry locally. Further afield, on a trip to Wicken Fen, Jackie noted Marsh Pea (*Lathyrus palustris*) and Fen Nettle (*Urtica dioica* ssp. *galeopsifolia*). Jackie often adds identification notes to her finds which is a help to us in checking her records and will provide a useful reminder to her in years to come. Disappointingly, we had to disallow Jackie's record for Wasp Orchid (*Ophrys apifera* var. *trollii*) as it is only a 'var.', but it must have been very exciting to have seen it.

A nice set of Rockets (*Sisymbrium* spp.), London-rocket (*S. irio*), False London-rocket (*S. loeselii*) and Horned Mustard (*S. polyceratum*), all seen in the middle of the city, sets the tone for Sian Matthews's many excellent local finds. Another yellow crucifer, Annual Wall-rocket (*Diplotaxis muralis*), turned up on a building site. Still in the city Sian even achieved a new VC record with Navelwort (*Umbilicus rupestris*) at the base of a wall. Along with others, she spotted the newly spreading House Holly-Fern (*Cyrtomium falcatum*). A little further afield Springbeauty (*Claytonia perfoliata*) was growing at the base of a street tree in Leicester. A slightly more rural trip added Black Bent (*Agrostis gigantea*), seen as a weed in a cereal crop. The more mundane

setting of a sewage farm for Rye Brome (*Bromus secalinus*) did not stop Sian from wisely checking this identification with her VC Recorder. It is not the easiest of grasses to distinguish. A busy but productive year for both Sian's diary and updating county records.

Richard Pykett achieved his highest total yet this year and this is very much due to his diligence and attention to learning the new plants he encounters. An addition this year was Lesser Sea-spurrey (*Spergularia marina*), seen in his local shopping street in Nottingham and new to the list of halophytes he sees in the City. An even more interesting pavement weed was Musk Stork's-bill (*Erodium moschatum*) in Lizard Village. Two of the rarities of our own area spotted were Mountain Currant (*Ribes alpinum*) and Mossy Saxifrage (*Saxifraga hypnoides*). Richard laments the difficulty of finding Japanese Knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) in flower as it is so persecuted. This statement will gladden the heart of the conservationists but fellow diarists will understand his frustration. Richard also gained a number from attending the AGM and we would highlight Squinancywort (*Asperula cynanchica*), Garden Parsley (*Petroselinum crispum*) and Dwarf Gorse (*Ulex minor*) because they were new for our diary as well and we shared his pleasure.

Marjorie Shepherd only added one record to her cumulative list this year but it was a rather nice one, Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*), seen behind Honister Slate Quarry while on holiday in the Lake District. She explains some of her lack of activity is because the

groups she walks with are tending to dwindle in numbers, 'age and other reasons get in the way'. Many of us will sympathise with her. Marjorie saw some interesting arable weeds during a canal side ramble but she was told that they were all planted; how disappointing. Perhaps they will self-seed, so worth another look next year.

Although he records only in a very restricted area the advantage of re-visiting a site in the different seasons is apparent from Alan Swinscoe's diary. The succession of plants, even on an ordinary roadside verge, is quite striking. From Common Whitlowgrass (*Erophila verna*) in March, on to Mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*) in July, succeeded by Common Poppy (*Papaver rhoeas*) in September, he has something new for most months of the year from this one site. Nearby, Alan has seen some very attractive plants including Pyramidal Orchid (*Anacamptis pyramidalis*), Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*) and Creeping-Jenny (*Lysimachia nummularia*). We also include Alan's record for Cherry Plum (*Prunus cerasifera*) in this category because the large flowers are a welcome sight early in the year and his Field Bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*), simply because it is very pretty as long as it is not in one's garden.

MARY AND CLAIRE SMITH

Don't forget to take some photos and enter the Photographic Competition!

BRANCH V GREATER LONDON, MIDDLESEX

| Annual | New | Total |
|-------------------|-----|-------|
| Ann Allen | | 203 |
| Jane Lowe | | 455 |
| Cumulative | | |
| Robin Blades | 24 | 1200 |

Two full 'Diaries' and a detailed plant list greeted me in the New Year, but pressure of work and ill health prevented me from checking them out until spring was on the doorstep. Apologies to all for the long delay.

Ann Allen manages to combine her botanical activities with bird watching so that, for example, she reported a fine trio of plants from the RSPB reserve at Minsmere in August: Marsh-mallow (*Althaea officinalis*), Sea Holly (*Eryngium maritimum*) and Melancholy Thistle (*Cirsium heterophyllum*). At Cley in Norfolk, another popular birding venue, she was pleased to find Milk Parsley (*Thyselium palustre*) - larval food-plant of the beautiful Swallowtail butterfly. Very helpfully Ann provided a six-figure map reference for each of her entries. She visited one site in the Chilterns that I remember well from more than twenty years ago when it was first created: College Lake, near Tring, a nature reserve now managed by the local County Wildlife Trust (BBOWT). Each time she explores this remarkable place she finds something new and unexpected. This year, in June, it was an alien clover that I have never seen - Large Trefoil (*Trifolium aureum*) that was growing at the edge of a footpath. In addition to its large lake, the majority of the reserve consists of chalk grassland

and this supports a rich flora. Ann listed Common Rock-rose (*Helianthemum nummularium*), Meadow Crane's-bill (*Geranium pratense*), Dropwort (*Filipendula vulgaris*) and Viper's Bugloss (*Echium vulgare*) among many others. One undoubted botanical highlight was an earlier visit, in late May, to a different part of the Chilterns near Marlow. Now well known to orchid enthusiasts, this was the 'hallowed ground' that still supports a population of the fabled Military Orchid (*Orchis militaris*), close to the spot where Ted Lousley first found it back in 1947.

Jane Lowe sent me a very helpful covering letter with her Record Book and enclosed five excellent photographs of some of the highlights of her botanical year. Four of these were taken in Cornwall during a visit in May. They included a close-up of the charming British and Irish endemic White Ramping-fumitory (*Fumaria capreolata* ssp. *babingtonii*) that was growing in the dry moat at Pendennis Castle. She also added Mossy Stonecrop (*Crassula tillaea*) and Thyme Broomrape (*Orobancha alba*) from the Lizard. At St Agnes Head she photographed Hairy Greenweed (*Genista pilosa*) - a plant that, for me, is forever associated with the Ashdown Forest in Sussex,

where it was last seen in 1977. Ro FitzGerald most memorably organized a detailed search (70 botanist hours!) for it in June 1987, to which I contributed. But all to no avail. Perhaps, none-the-less, as Tim Rich rather optimistically suggests "It could still lurk somewhere on the Forest." What a find that would be! Jane's final photograph was taken on Cissbury Ring in West Sussex and depicted a fine plant of Lesser Centaury (*Centaureum pulchellum*). In early June Jane bravely took the BSBI's Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC). She reports that it was "well worth it" for the chance to see Green-winged Orchid (*Anacamptis morio*) at Marden Meadows in Kent. Jane lives in Streatham in south London and has provided me with a number of useful records for the slowly developing London Flora Project. Right at the edge of the recording area for the new Flora, lies the village of Mickleham in Surrey. It was here, at the aptly named Cowslip Farm, that Jane found plants of the very local Green Hound's-tongue (*Cynoglossum germanicum*). She was familiar with this Red Data Book species, having seen it previously at its well-known site close by at Norbury Park. At the end of the year Jane completed a circuit of the London Loop walk. In the Chigwell to Harold Wood section, near Romford, she was pleased to find Sharp-leaved Fluellen (*Kicksia elatine*) after taking a wrong turning. She also added Narrow-leaved Ragwort (*Senecio inaequidens*) near the Thames between Rainham and Purfleet where it was "locally ubiquitous". All of Jane's records were accompanied with a six-figure map reference, which I found very

helpful.

Robin Blades sent me another fine list of his discoveries. More than half of these came from the Lizard where he was lucky enough to join a Wild Flower Society field meeting in May. It is now more than thirty years since I last visited the Lizard at that ideal time of year and it was good to learn that so many of its special plants appear to be doing well. The two scarce clovers, Upright (*Trifolium strictum*) and Twin-headed (*T. bocconeii*), were still present in the grassy slope above Caerthillian Cove and the third, Long-headed (*T. incarnatum* ssp. *molinerii*) was still present in the grass below Lizard lighthouse. Robin also saw the Lizard's two special rushes: Dwarf Rush (*Juncus capitatus*) and Pigmy Rush (*J. pygmaeus*) and they managed to track down Land Quillwort (*Isoetes hystrix*). On that same Cornish field meeting, he saw one plant that was quite new to me. This was Yunnan Cowslip (*Primula prolifera*) which was found growing in a wet woodland at Crousa Common near St Keverne. Stace says simply "One locality in Dorset", so maybe it is spreading (or under-recorded?). Its relative, Japanese Cowslip (*P. japonica*) is certainly getting about and this striking plant will shortly be getting an entry in the forthcoming new Flora of Sussex on account of plants escaping from our garden at Chelwood Gate! Robin lives in north London and continues to record for the London Flora project. This year he noted Bullwort (*Ammi majus*), a rather scarce birdseed alien from Southern Europe. It was growing by the New River, north of the London Wildlife Trust's Woodberry Wetlands nature reserve near Manor House.

Robin also joined me in July on a London Natural History Society field meeting along the Parkland Walk - a former railway line between Highgate and Finsbury Park. This is now London's longest Local Nature Reserve and supports an unusual flora. Robin was able to add Hairy Bindweed (*Calystegia pulchra*), which has been known here for more than twenty years. It grows on a grassy embankment close to Finsbury Park. He also noted vigorous plants of Hairy Mock-orange (*Philadelphus 'Lemoinei' Group*) that were scattered

along the Walk.

This winter has again been mild and much drier in London than in recent years and I wonder how this may affect the flora. Our local population of Wild Daffodil (*Narcissus pseudonarcissus*), which I have monitored over the last 14 years, is having its best spring yet and other early bulbs are all doing well. Thank you for all your records. I look forward to learning about your new discoveries at the end of the year.

DAVID BEVAN

BRANCH W SCOTLAND

I feel a little shy of Branch W, having taken over so recently after Helen Jackson's long service as devoted secretary and because I know few of the members personally. I'm therefore especially grateful to those who have contacted me about their doings in 2016. I hope as time goes on that we can all develop a stronger communication network. I'm resident in Somerset but Scotland has always had great importance for me, from childhood years on the south shore of Loch Linnhe, filling in my Junior WFS diaries, to the current recording I do with and for BSBI Recorders in the Hebrides, Wester Ross, Moray and Inverness. I feel a great lift of the spirits each time I see species like Sweet Cicely (*Myrrhis odorata*) or Melancholy Thistle (*Cirsium heterophyllum*) appearing on road verges, telling me I'm nearing the border. Hopefully there will be chances in the next years to botanise in Scotland with some resident members of this branch.

Hilary Blyth sent in a Record Book –

a pleasure for me - and I was interested to find not only a good spread of native species (recorded with the grid reference, which is a good exercise), but some adventives and aliens. She found Few-flowered Garlic (*Allium paradoxum*) and, another fast-spreading introduction, Pink Purslane (*Claytonia sibirica*), on the River Carron near Dunipace. The garlic started its march near Edinburgh in 1863 (I first saw it carpeting open woodland on the River Tweed) but it's now scattered right across southern England and said to be still on the move in Scotland. The very pretty purslane was originally cultivated, had escaped into the wild by 1838, and is now established in most of south and west England and south and central Scotland. It's a great Dartmoor plant – always a surprise on the edge of the moors! She also saw the true Fuller's Teasel (*Dipsacus sativus*), with spines on the heads strong enough to raise the knap in cloth manufacturing. Formerly a crop in Somerset, it has completely vanished

here, but Hilary knows a place with fairly regular appearances in a local park in Stirling. Not despising commoner plants, she relates that Common Figwort (*Scrophularia nodosa*) is allowed to self-seed in her garden because it 'keeps the wasps happy' and I wish I could have seen the page in her notebook with a drawing of a 'half-sized newt'!

Brigid Donald is a new member, living in Inverness and spending time regularly at Bonar Bridge, where she has been trying to establish a 'wild flower meadow' and meeting most of the many difficulties involved! Hopefully in 2017 she will have more time to explore the botanical treasures of Sutherland, while continuing to enjoy spotting 'weeds' in Inverness.

Lyn Jones tells me that she is unlikely to have time to make many records in the near future, as she is working to produce electronic keys to plants in Britain and Australia. I'm sure we all wish her well with these taxing projects and hope that she will inform Branch W when her programmes become widely available. From a presentation Lyn gave at a BSBI meeting in England last autumn, it sounds as if they will be welcomed by botanists who can utilise advanced apps. on their phones and portable tablets, solving the ever-present problem of whether to carry heavy books in the field, or be caught without them!

Janet Macpherson has had the saddest of years – her husband Neil, companion of so many hill walks and mountain and island explorations, became ill and died last summer. I'm sure she has heartfelt sympathy from

us all and I hope that, as this year goes on, she will find renewed peace and enjoyment from botanising.

Alison Wilson sent in a fascinatingly full Record Book (as I gather she usually does). She went on BSBI meetings in Lanarkshire, the Lake District and Northumberland as well as botanising nearer home round Perth. Some lovely things were seen, including 'masses' of Caraway (*Carum verticillatum*) on Loch Lomond and, elsewhere, a profuse population of the often very pretty hybrid between Water and Wood Avens (*Geum x intermedium*) and a thrilling spread of Yellow Star-of-Bethlehem (*Gagea lutea*). Alison also made an excellent new find for Perth, the elusive Alternate-leaved Golden-saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium alternifolium*) and survived a Wild Parsnip (*Pastinaca sativa*) attack! In spite of being a welcome new plant for her list, the hairs or juice caused unpleasantly itchy swollen hands. Several umbels can do this so it's advisable to avoid contact with any unfamiliar species, wash carefully and keep exposed skin out of the sun for a few days. I admired her list of 20 sedges, including Bog-sedge (*Carex limosa*) which I've loved at my few sightings – it seems the 'Pocket Venus' of this difficult group!

With best wishes for a flower-filled year to all Branch W members and please contact me at any time of year – I'm always happy to receive news or questions. Please remember that the WFS Magazine is keen to include plenty of photographs – I can send on anything which comes to me.

ROSEMARY FITZGERALD

BRANCH Y (2015)

ESSEX, CAMBIDGESHIRE, NORFOLK, SUFFOLK

| ANNUAL | New | Total |
|----------------------|-----|-------|
| Anne Cooper | | 332 |
| Elaine Law | | 260 |
| Christiaan Partridge | | 123 |
| Christine Silver | | 215 |
| CUMULATIVE | | |
| Elizabeth Day | 27 | 1241 |
| Nicola Dixon | 164 | 1223 |
| Barbara Mathews | 24 | 1488 |
| Pat Toschach | 8 | 1233 |

First of all I need to make an apology to all of those members in my East Anglian branch. They did not get to see their names mentioned in the annual write up for 2015, nor what they had achieved in that year. This stems from the accident that I had two years ago but from which I am still recovering. I was left with a problem which concerned everything to do with paper and communication. It is very slowly resolving and I think it only fair that over this year and next that it is seen that this East Anglian branch can see their results in print.

Local plants in Suffolk and foreign plants 'up north' in Cumbria and Northumberland feature for Anne Cooper this year. As usual, she records in her local patch in Ipswich and she gives GPS readings for every record. Nice to see that within two weeks of each other she had seen Southern Marsh-orchid (*Dactylorhiza praetermissa*) locally in Suffolk and, a fortnight later in Cumbria, Northern Marsh-orchid (*D. purpurella*). She visited Wolves Wood, near to me in Hadleigh, to admire Violet Helleborine (*Epipactis purpurata*), where it grows under

ancient Hornbeam coppice. When we had our Late Flower Hunt at the end of October she, and we, discovered Smooth Rupturewort (*Herniaria glabra*) in the soil in the old flowerpots in the conservatory at Holywells Park in Ipswich. Up north she found two of my favourite plants, the umbellifer with the aniseed smelling pods (good with rhubarb!) of Sweet Cicely (*Myrrhis odorata*), and the gorgeous yellow flowers of Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*). I learned then that sheep love to eat this plant but they end up with brittle bone disease, hence the Latin specific name.

Elaine Law says that there are very few species for her to record this year, for which her husband's illness has played its part. However there are still glaring omissions in her pages; a real dearth of grasses and sedges, for example. I think that she, and others, would greatly benefit by going out in the field with others. Join wildlife groups, botany groups, go out on WFS walks and you'll be amazed by what you can learn and take into those little grey cells! Strange too that she recorded the Hybrid Bluebell

(*Hyacinthoides x massartiana*) but not our native Bluebell (*H. non-scripta*). She revisited her old sites such as Chafford Gorges in Essex but found no new additions.

Christiaan Partridge is one of our newest members and lives in one of the richest parts of the county, north Suffolk and bordering Breckland territory, renowned for its flora. The major number of his records are from Mellis Common and supplemented by Barnham Cross Common which is not too far away. He is a beginner and he did grab the bull by both horns because he also enrolled on the distance learning course called Identiplant which is sponsored by the BSBI. Provided that you complete the course you cannot fail it because it is not given a numerical pass mark. The students are given practical tasks to do to identify families of plants throughout the year and their tutor (and I was his) assesses what they have achieved. Well, Christiaan threw himself into this challenge and acquitted himself well. Although he didn't record too many species he found some interesting ones like Deadly Nightshade (*Atropa belladonna*) and Large Bittercress (*Cardamine amara*). As with any beginner there's a paucity of records for grasses and sedges, but he did find Perennial Rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*). Strange too that he found Meadow Buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*) but not Creeping Buttercup (*R. repens*). His records can only get better.

Christine Silver recorded the blue form of Scarlet Pimpernel (*Anagallis arvensis* ssp. *foemina*) on a path through a vegetable patch in Suffolk.

She also gives a grid reference to each species that she finds and most, if not all, plants are found in Suffolk at or near her home. Her vegetable patch features widely and did include Green Amaranth (*Amaranthus hybridus*) and Gallant Soldier (*Galinsoga parviflora*). Many grasses were identified by a named referee, which is very helpful. But there are some very odd omissions such as Creeping Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*) which surely are just oversights.

Elizabeth Day apologises for the very few additions that she has made to her list for the year. She came on the Breckland Flora Project meeting at Weeting Heath in late April to look at the rare Speedwells that grow in this area. We managed to find all three but the new one for her, and for many others on that day, was Spring Speedwell (*Veronica verna*). This was followed a couple of days later by finding American Skunk Cabbage (*Lysichiton americanus*) in Foxhall Woods near Ipswich. I hope that it gets removed before it gets out of control. Then she came across the delicate pink hues of Rosy Garlic (*Allium roseum*) at Castle Mound in Eye.

Nicola Dixon has recorded only new plants to start her cumulative list. It was presented beautifully as a spreadsheet because she is in the process of digitising all of her botanical records. The majority of her new plants came from trips to the Isle of Wight, the Yorkshire Dales, Morayshire and the AGM which was held in North Yorkshire and Teesside. She tries to throw me with a record of Ling but written as *Calluna vulgaris*

var. *hirsuta* which I cannot find in Stace 3, but, if it's a variety then she cannot count this record until she reaches the heights of Parnassus (which she has noted at the top of the sheet)! What a well presented list it is too; scientific name followed by its English one; its location in the country; its habitat in great detail; an eight or ten figure grid reference; the date found and details of the meetings and their leaders. But in this stunning list of new plants which ones can I pick out to mention? What is great for me is that there are a few plants that I haven't seen before and therefore not necessarily a hundred percent sure whether they have been identified correctly, but when I see the names of the leaders as referees then I can rest assured! Lovely shore plants such as Seaside Centaury (*Centaureum littorale*) in Scotland, the lonely purple heads of Melancholy Thistle (*Cirsium heterophyllum*) typically found up north along with the beautiful yellow flowers of Globeflower (*Trollius europaeus*), Coralroot Orchid (*Corallorhiza trifida*) found at its site on the Moray coast at the spot where Ian Green showed it to us over ten years ago! She says that she found nine new plants on her own and one of these is Golden-samphire (*Inula crithmoides*) which she found on drier saltmarsh and in cracks on a tarmac path. And she adds a magnificent 164 new plants to her knowledge.

Barbara Matthews continues to scour every last inch of her area in Felixstowe, Suffolk, where she bemoans the fact that over a hundred and fifty new properties have been built and an area for kids to play. The surrounding area was sown with a

'seaside' mix of plants not seen there before such as Kidney Vetch (*Anthyllis vulneraria*) and Greater Knapweed (*Centaurea scabiosa*). She hasn't counted them for her local records yet and will wait a couple of years or so to see if they naturalise. She adds nine new plants to her cumulative list. Her first is a hybrid grass which I have seen further up the Suffolk coastline; it is called Purple Marram and revels in the magnificent Latin name of *Ammophila arenaria* (Marram-grass) x *Calamagrostis epigejos* (Wood Small-reed) = x *Calammophila baltica*. Another is one that I haven't seen before, yet she says that it has been there for years, Globe Thistle (*Echinops exaltus*). An alien grass which seems to be increasing its range but will only germinate at relatively higher temperatures is Yellow Bristle-grass (*Setaria pumila*) and she found several plants more than three feet high in a corner of a carpark close to the beach, and nearby were a few plants of Deadly Nightshade (*Atropa belladonna*).

Pat Toschach also apologises for the meagre number of additions to her plant list. She couldn't get to many meetings but she very much appreciated those that she managed to attend. She was also on that Breckland Plant Project day and was rewarded by seeing the Spring Speedwell. Amazingly five of her eight new records were found in June, three of which were found on a BSBI day looking at grasses in Trimley Marshes near Felixstowe in Suffolk, where she added Sand Couch (*Elytrigia juncea* ssp. *boreoatlantica*) (don't panic everyone, that is the full name of the subspecies

of that grass that is found in the UK!), Hard-grass (*Parapholis strigosa*), the attractive Annual Beard-grass (*Polypogon monspeliensis*) and Borrer's Saltmarsh-grass (*Puccinellia fasciculata*).

The Branch Y report for 2016 will appear in the Autumn issue.

STEPHEN CLARKSON

JUNIORS

| | Total |
|--------------|--------------|
| Alice Coutts | 151 |
| Lydia West | 103 |

Two junior members sent in diaries this year.

Lydia found 103 different plants, earning a second 100 Plants Badge. She continued to spot lots of flowers around home, in her road and local parks, as well as finding 16 species on a trip to Saltwells Local Nature Reserve, including Yellow Archangel (*Lamiastrum galeobdolon*) and Blue Water-speedwell (*Veronica anagallis-aquatica*). On trips to Wales, she found Hare's-tail Cottongrass (*Eriophorum vaginatum*) in the Black Mountains, Marsh Pennywort (*Hydrocotyle vulgaris*) at Ynys-hir bird reserve, Sea-rocket (*Cakile maritima*) at Barmouth and Autumn Gentian (*Gentianella amarella*) at Monmouth.

Lydia also found six grasses, including Wall Barley (*Hordeum murinum*) in her street at home, and Creeping Soft-grass (*Holcus mollis*) and Common Bent (*Agrostis capillaris*) at Milking Bank Park, where she also saw Compact Rush (*Juncus conglomeratus*).

Alice found 151 different plants, earning her 150 Plants Badge. She has been finding plants around Shetland, near her home on Yell and further afield on other islands. On Yell, Alice found her favourite flower, Heath Milkwort (*Polygala serpyllifolia*). She also found Northern Marsh-orchid (*Dactylorhiza purpurella*) and Heath Spotted-orchid (*D. maculata*), along with the hybrid (*D. x formosa*). At the Keen of Hamar on Unst, she found Northern Rock-cress (*Arabidopsis petraea*), Shetland Mouse-ear (*Cerastium nigrescens* var. *nigrescens*) and Arctic Sandwort (*Arenaria norvegica* ssp. *norvegica*).

Alice also found Hare's-tail Cottongrass (*Eriophorum vaginatum*), as well as Common Cottongrass (*Eriophorum angustifolium*) and Common Sedge (*Carex nigra*), making three Cyperaceae, along with Heath Rush (*Juncus squarrosus*) and four ferns including Moonwort (*Botrychium lunaria*).

As ever, I would be happy to hear from more of our junior members next year, whether you have time for a full diary, some drawings or photographs or a just a letter about your favourite plants.

NICHOLA HAWKINS





Medicago sativa ssp. *varia*
Colour variants of Sand Lucerne

Photos: Ken Southall

VALHALLA REPORTS FOR 2016

Z1 (1800-2000)

| | New | Total | | New | Total |
|-----------------|-----|-------|-------------------|-----|-------|
| Jan Armishaw | 81 | 2053 | Dawn Nelson | 129 | 1896 |
| Sheila Wynn | 28 | 2029 | Sue Kightley | 18 | 1890 |
| John Swindells | 10 | 2008 | Brian Bonney | 0 | 1881 |
| Steve Parker | 64 | 2003 | Caroline Giddens | 3 | 1876 |
| Dorothy Bullock | 3 | 1995 | Sue Poyser | 16 | 1875 |
| Ro FitzGerald | 57 | 1980 | Doug Grant | 14 | 1856 |
| John Martin | 92 | 1940 | Ted Phenna | 8 | 1856 |
| John Dicker | 4 | 1913 | Roger Heath-Brown | 27 | 1853 |
| Diana Stroud | 18 | 1908 | Pat Verrall | 7 | 1814 |
| Helen Jackson | 4 | 1893 | | | |

We say goodbye to Jan, Sheila, John S and Steve and welcome Dawn, to what is still the largest branch in Valhalla.

Jan Armishaw writes that she has very much benefitted from the various WFS trips she went on last year, including those to the Lizard, Cumbria, Norfolk and the interesting day trip to Cambridge. She particularly enjoyed seeing Fen Orchid (*Liparis loeselii*), the various Clovers (*Trifolia*) on the Lizard, the beautiful Broomrapes (*Orobanche* species) and Peruvian Lily (*Alstroemeria aurea*). She was also pleased to find on her own Sweet Pea (*Lathyrus odoratus*) and a Scaly Male Fern (*Dryopteris affinis* ssp. *paleaceolobata*) amongst others.

Sheila Wynn went to Guernsey and saw Yellow Centaury (*Cicendia filiformis*), which she had searched for on numerous occasions. The Viper's-grass (*Scorzonera humilis*) there was a surprise. She really

enjoyed the Purbeck meeting, where she saw 16 new species including Whorled Caraway (*Carum verticillatum*). With the help of Alan Willmot and Julie Clarke respectively, she found Red Hemp-nettle (*Galeopsis angustifolia*) on scree on the sides of Lathkill Dale in Derbyshire and Lake Loosestrife (*Lysimachia terrestris*) at the southern end of Windermere. Her favourite plants of the year were the two Fluellen (*Kickxia*) species that George Hounsborne pointed out at the Ranmore Common meeting. She had an interesting day out with Pat Lockwood and Phil Smith on the Sefton Coast in October. Golden Dock (*Rumex maritimus*) had been noticed for the first time this year in front of one of the hides at the RSPB reserve at Marshside. There were large patches of it over a large area. They were very pleased to find Long-stalked Orache (*Atriplex longipes*) in the salt-marsh, as last year they found the hybrid between it and Spear-leaved Orache (*A. prostrata*)

but could not find the species.

John Swindells writes that Yellow Chamomile (*Anthemis tinctoria*) and Four-leaved Pink-sorrel (*Oxalis tetraphylla*) were chance finds, but welcome. Two plants seen on his own patch in east London were both drawn to his attention by others: Wall Bedstraw (*Galium parisiense*) by John Edgington and Hungarian Mullein (*Verbascum speciosum*) by John Archer, the Biodiversity Officer for Tower Hamlets. Love-in-a mist (*Nigella damascena*) was found while tramping the streets of Coventry with



Photo: Ken Southall

his toddler grandson. (I wonder if he is the youngest member of WFS?)

For Steve Parker many of the new plants this year were seen on the

BSBI / Somerset Rare Plants Group meeting on Dandelions (*Taraxaca*). He also spent two wonderful weeks on Shetland recording with a large BSBI team for Atlas 2020. His plants there included the beautiful endemic Shetland Mouse-ear (*Cerastium nigrescens* var. *nigrescens*) on the Keen of Hamar, Curved Sedge (*Carex maritima*) and Magellan Ragwort (*Senecio smithii*), an introduction which likes the far north. He writes that starting in 1993 he has probably taken more time than most to reach 2000, but "it's been such great fun". He has travelled from the southernmost point to the northernmost point of these islands, many of his trips with the Society.

Dorothy Bullock did not do much botanising last year, being busy with other things, especially Girl Guiding activities, for which she was awarded her 50 year service brooch. She enjoyed seeing Perfoliate Alexanders (*Smyrnium perfoliatum*) in Essex.

Ro FitzGerald sent a much longer list than usual, thanks to the excellent Dandelion (*Taraxacum*) weekend organised by the Somerset Rare Plants Group and conducted by John Richards himself this spring. She has been quite modest with what she has included. More than 80 species were identified by John but, as she knew that many of them would remain beyond her identifying skills for the moment, she only listed her own records (determined by John) and a few field records from the weekend which were especially memorable and distinct, or which are thoroughly common and probably possible to know again when the new season starts. She also made great efforts

with hybrids, thanks to the new Hybrid Flora. Her great find of the year was Turkey Tangle Frogfruit (!! (*Phyla nodiflora*), which is not countable until she reaches Parnassus. There have been no UK records of it since before 1930 (and few before then). It was a real detective story trying to name it, involving Dr Meikle's *Flora of Cyprus* and some French literature and ending with confirmation from Fred Rumsey at NHM. She rightly found it very exciting! It is in the Vervain family (*Verbenaceae*), close to *Lantana* (though tiny), and a very odd little plant.

John Martin enjoyed a trip to Jersey in March, which produced many new species, including Jersey Fern (*Anogramma leptophylla*) and Rough Star-thistle (*Centaurea aspera*), with great help from Anne Haden. He visited Scotland at the end of July but was disappointed that Highland Cudweed (*Gnaphalium norvegicum*) was only in bud. Tall Bog Sedge (*Carex magellanica*) was more impressive and that leaves him just two native *Carex* to find. His favourite plant of the year was perhaps Rock Cinquefoil (*Potentilla rupestris*) in mid-Wales, which had eluded him when he lived in Shrewsbury in the 1980s. Locally, in the Bristol area, another real highlight was Copse-bindweed (*Fallopia dumetorum*), first found by others, maybe the first record in the area for over 100 years.

John Dicker continues to record for the Surrey Botanical Society, however this has not produced anything new for him. His new records are all on the Isles of Scilly; he particularly enjoyed the mostly

pink form of Hedge Bindweed (*Calystegia sepium* ssp. *roseata*).

Diana and Sue Kightly continue to do their botanising together. They enjoyed a holiday in Cumbria where, amongst other things, they saw the hybrid Tormentil x Trailing Tormentil (*Potentilla x suberecta*) and Fortune's Holly-fern (*Cyrtmonium fortunei*), Sherard's Downy-rose (*Rosa sherardii*), Glaucous Dog Rose (*Rosa caesia* ssp. *vosagiaca*) and Tall Mouse-ear Hawkweed (*Pilosella praealta*).

Dawn Nelson had a good year. She always does the Winter Months' Hunt and occasionally something completely new pops up. This year it was Hybrid Wayfaring-tree (*Viburnum lanata* x *V. rhytidophyllum*) at Warnford, South Hants, determined by Martin Rand, closely followed by Gelert's Dandelion (*Taraxacum gelertii*) which provided the impetus for her to search out more Dandelions. (Good for her!) A family holiday in April, in Gower, with a few tips from Tim Rich as to where to see things, gave her quite a few new finds. Hutchinsia (*Hornungia petraea*) and Yellow Whitlowgrass (*Draba aizoides*) were her highlights from there. She attended the meeting at the Lizard followed by leading a Naturetrek tour to The Burren the same week. Although somewhat hectic that was a very floriferous week too, with lots of new additions like Wild Asparagus (*Asparagus prostratus*) and Fringed Rupturewort (*Herniaria ciliolata* ssp. *ciliolata*) at the Lizard and Dense-flowered Orchid (*Neotinea maculata*) and Irish Saxifrage (*Saxifraga rosacea* ssp. *rosacea*) at the Burren. Then she had

a day on the Isle of Wight with Tim collecting Shaggy Mouse-ear Hawkweed (*Pilosella peleteriana* ssp. *peleteriana*) seed for the Millennium Seedbank. Her final time away was going to a regular haunt in north Norfolk in October, which added a few more, like Matted Sea-lavender (*Limonium bellidifolium*).

Helen Jackson enjoyed a week in Wigtownshire, where she saw Giant-rhubarb (*Gunnera tinctoria*) on a grassy cliff above Portpatrick harbour. I wonder if it will be a problem there as it has become in the west of Ireland. Nearer home, while on a recce for the autumn week hunt, she saw Fodder Burnet (*Poterium sanguisorba* ssp. *balearicum*) on a soil heap near an old power station. Brian was too busy with his PhD to write up his list, so will add it to the current year.

Caroline Giddens made a few new records this year, including a Marrow (*Cucurbita pepo*) flowering in a hedgebank and Four-leaved Pink-sorrel (*Oxalis tetraphylla*) escaped in a lane.

Sue Poyser and Doug Grant do most of their botanising together. They much enjoyed the WFS AGM weekend in Surrey. Sue particularly liked seeing (and photographing) Greater Dodder (*Cuscuta europaea*). Locally they have benefitted from attending Kent Botanical Recording Group meetings, often searching for rare plants and always learning a thing or two. It was particularly exciting to re-find Slender Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Lotus angustissimus*) in Trenley Park Woods after 29 years. Sue remembers searching for it many

years ago with Eric Philp, but they did not find it then. They think that recent chestnut coppicing has allowed sunlight in to germinate the seeds. Hybrid Common x Heath Dog-violet (*Viola x intersita*) at Scotney was another plant Doug appreciated. A Kent Field Club meeting gave them access to the grounds of Saltwood Castle, Hythe, where they were shown Southern Polypody (*Polypodium cambricum*) growing in profusion on the old walls.

Ted Phenna did not enjoy good health, but is now improving. Two of his finds were Maidenhair Spleenwort (*Asplenium trichomanes* ssp. *trichomanes*) and hybrid Hedge x Large Bindweed (*Calystegia x lucana*), both on a mine waste tip in Gwydyr Forest, North Wales. Roger made the trip to Stanner Rocks, Radnorshire to see Early Star-of-Bethlehem (*Gagea bohemica*). Later in the year he visited Lydd-on-sea to see Stinking Hawksbeard (*Crepis foetida*). In September he found Stinking Fleabane (*Dittrichia graveolens*) in Hampshire, for which he had searched unsuccessfully many times before.

Pat Verrall did not do much botanising in the year, apart from the AGM weekend, when a surprise was Stinking Fleabane (*Dittrichia graveolens*). (It is on the increase!) She did enjoy seeing, in Guernsey, a subspecies of Lesser Celandine (*Ficaria verna* ssp. *ficariiformis*), which was a splendid specimen, a single plant robustly conspicuous among plants of the usual subspecies, on a steep bank.

EDWARD PRATT

Z2 (1550-1799)

| | New | Total | | New | Total |
|---------------|-----|-------|-----------------|-----|-------|
| David Bevan | 6 | 1791 | Chris Metherell | 14 | 1576 |
| Dorothy Evans | 33 | 1716 | Graham Peck | 6 | 1734 |
| Pippa Hyde | 2 | 1666 | Rachel Rabey | 2 | 176 |
| Pamela Lee | 2 | 1606 | | | |

A roadside in Ayrshire gave David Bevan Japanese Larch (*Larix kaempferi*) in the form of widespread seedlings with parents nearby. Another roadside, this time in Sussex, gave him a single plant of Keeled-fruited Cornsalad (*Valerianella carinata*). Potentially his most exciting find was a hybrid grass on 'the Green' (Bounds Green in north London where David lives). If confirmed that will give him a splendid start for 2017.

Almost all of Dorothy Evans's new plants were seen on the WFS field meeting on Guernsey (reported in the Autumn 2016 issue of the magazine) but she tells me that the greatest fun was tracking down Pennyroyal (*Mentha pulegium*) in London's Regent's Park based on information provided by John Edgington.

Pippa Hyde's two new plants, both from Surrey, were Small Teasel (*Dipsacus pilosus*) from the banks of the River Mole and Weasel's-snout (*Misopates orontium*) from Pat Verrall's garden near Abinger Hammer which Pat tells me was growing there when she first moved to Abinger many years ago.

Pamela Lee was another whose two new plants were seen in Surrey. She

went to seek out Stinking Fleabane (*Dittrichia graveolens*) after we had found it on Chobham Common during our Members' Weekend. Pamela also recorded Spring Snowflake (*Leucojum vernum*) on Bramshott Common which she tells me derives from planting during the 1940s when there was an army camp there.

The rarest of Chris Metherell's additions in 2016 was ssp. *arctica* of Fir Clubmoss (*Huperzia selago*) from Lawers Burn in Perthshire. From his home county of Northumberland he added Small Toadflax (*Chaenorhinum minus*), Hairy Dog-rose (*Rosa caesia*) and Olive Willow (*Salix elaeagnos*) among others. I should probably mention that Chris has been appointed President-elect of BSBI (Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland). Congratulations, Chris.

"It gives a Botanist a buzz when we find a special plant", says Graham Peck. The special plant prompting that comment was Yellow Glasswort (*Salicornia fragilis*), not recorded in Suffolk for a long time (if ever). Graham has been studying the plants of the Suffolk saltings and mapping their distribution – "great fun and I have learnt a lot about my coast line". Among the plants recorded while doing that have been Purple Glasswort (*Salicornia ramosissima*)

as well as Yellow Glasswort and Slender Hare's-ear (*Bupleurum tenuissimum*) (which, if I recall correctly, is hard to spot even when you know it's there).

Rachel Rabey always sends me a newsy letter and this year is no exception. Rachel has spent two years compiling a list of the plants of the Parish of St Martin (her home parish in the south-east corner of Guernsey) which has now been published by La Société Guernesiaise. She has also started another project – to update the local herbarium where the single specimens of the commoner plants were all collected c. 1860! The plants new to Rachel's Valhalla list were Martin's Ramping-fumitory (*Fumaria reuteri*) and European White-elm (*Ulmus laevis*) and there is a story

behind each of these finds. For many years Rachel had observed patches of what she considered to be Tall Ramping-fumitory (*Fumaria bastardii*) only five minutes from her house. She told Andrew Lee (who had been helping her with the Parish plant list by climbing down the cliffs to check out some of the more inaccessible plants) and he noticed that they were different from the Tall Ramping-fumitory she had shown him a few days earlier. To be sure, Rachel sent some to Rose Murphy, author of BSBI's Fumitory handbook who declared it was *F. reuteri*! The elm was confirmed by a local expert and when Rachel took a piece for the herbarium she found this note in her own handwriting, "Dead and gone, 2003".

JOHN SWINDELLS

Z3 (1350-1549)

| | New | Total |
|-------------------------|-----|-------|
| Pauline Grimshaw | 58 | 1380 |
| Alison Gregory | 2 | 1404 |
| Beryl Savigar | 4 | 1439 |
| Anthony & Rita Grainger | 108 | 1457 |
| Carmen Horner | 131 | 1537 |

Pauline Grimshaw particularly enjoyed visiting the Channel Islands again, where she saw Land Quillwort (*Isoetes histrix*) and the two hybrid Spleenworts *Asplenium* × *sarniense* and *A.* × *microdon*. She writes that her favourite plant of the year, although not countable for her Valhalla total, was probably the Cudweed (*Gnaphalium coarctatum*) naturalised in a lawn. Pauline also visited the Cumbrian coast where she

saw Yarrow Broomrape (*Orobancha purpurea*) and Dwarf Gorse (*Ulex minor*) both of particular interest in north-west England. On mossland in the same county she also saw a choice three: Bog Rosemary (*Andromeda polifolia*), Great Sundew (*Drosera anglica*) and Oblong-leaved Sundew (*Drosera intermedia*).

In last year's letter Alison Gregory wrote that she hoped to see Moon

Carrot (*Seseli libanotis*) in 2016. So there it is this year, listed from Cherry Hinton, ambition achieved and with the added bonus of Yellow-flowered Teasel (*Dipsacus strigosus*). I am quite certain her new plants, whilst few in number, gave her immense personal satisfaction. It is a few decades since I saw Moon Carrot at Cherry Hinton or anywhere else for that matter. I have always had a fanciful notion of repeating the account in Lousley's *Wild flowers of chalk and limestone* (page 69) in describing how after nightfall the flower umbels 'showed up in the darkness'.

Beryl Savigar writes to say she did not get far afield in 2016. Although surely there is the greatest satisfaction over finds in one's local area, as I am certain Rostkov's Eyebright (*Euphrasia officinalis* ssp. *pratensis*) must have been. I would be delighted to find it on my patch! Beryl also found Chenault's Coralberry (*Symphoricarpos x chenaultii*) and Henry's Honeysuckle (*Lonicera henryi*) which was climbing high in trees.

In addition to their local area of Yorkshire, Antony and Rita Grainger, visited Breckland where they saw many of its specialities including Perennial Knawel (*Scleranthus perennis*), Spanish Catchfly (*Silene otites*), Breckland Thyme (*Thymus serpyllum*) and Field Wormwood (*Artemisia campestris* ssp. *campestris*). On the Lancashire/Merseyside coast was its double, Dune Wormwood (*A. campestris* ssp. *maritima*) and the endemic Isle of Man Cabbage (*Coincya monensis* ssp. *monensis*). From a personal

standpoint I was most interested to see listed the hybrid Forget-me-not (*Myosotis x bollandica*), not in Lancashire's Forest of Bowland from where I first found and named it, but in North Yorkshire. I feel a 'Rosa' incident coming on!

From the comparable plant lists I surmise that Antony, Rita and Carmen Horner must have been to some of the same meetings or botanised together. Although Carmen writes in her note, "I seem to have had a very busy year", what an understatement! The Alps for a month, plus central and north-west Scotland, Snowdonia, Breckland, as well as Merseyside (Lancashire) and her local Yorkshire. The range of her plant hunting is well demonstrated by the two Wormwoods noted above, plus Norwegian Mugwort (*A. norvegica*). This triple was repeated with Saxifrages: Drooping Saxifrage (*Saxifraga cernua*) and Highland Saxifrage (*S. rivularis*) from Ben Lawers and Tufted Saxifrage (*S. cespitosa*) from Snowdonia. On Skye, Pipewort (*Eriocaulon aquaticum*) was another successful quest. Further south and east, Man Orchid (*Orchis anthropophora*) at Barnack, and presumably with Anthony and Rita, Fen Nettle (*Urtica dioica* subsp. *galeopsifolia*) at Wicken. They also recorded a most interesting suite of casuals from earthworks at Copley, Yorkshire. This year appears to be getting off to a wet start, let us hope it 'rains itself out' and we enjoy many pleasant sunny days as 2017 progresses.

PETER JEPSON

Z4 (1150-1349)

| | New | Total |
|-----------------------|-----|-------|
| Mary and Claire Smith | 34 | 1381 |
| Janet Cullen | 2 | 1308 |
| Lorna Holland | 10 | 1289 |
| Barbara Allen | 109 | 1265 |
| Susan Grimshaw | 9 | 1172 |

It was lovely to hear from members of Z4 with their lists for 2016. Having had a very quiet plant hunting season myself I found receiving the lists and reading about other peoples' finds very enjoyable. The letters or emails that came with the lists were lovely too. Thank you Z4 members for your kind words and thoughts which were much appreciated.

Mary and Claire Smith attended the 2016 Members' Weekend at Juniper Hall along with other members of this group and found it a productive area to visit. Green Hound's-tongue (*Cynoglossum germanicum*) was seen at the base of Box Hill on one of the days in a location mentioned in many published floras. Chobham Common provided Marsh Gentian (*Gentiana pneumonanthe*) for their list; a lovely plant that I can remember seeing (and picking bunches of as a child!) at Chobham Common. Mary and Claire will be moving on to a higher level of Valhalla from 2017 and I shall miss seeing their lists and witty letters.

Janet Cullen added two new ones to her total, both from East Anglia. Yellow Figwort (*Scrophularia vernalis*) was a good find at Ranworth Broad in Norfolk. Cemetery botanising has been a favourite of mine for some years and Janet found

Great Brome (*Anisantha diandra*) in Lakenheath Cemetery in Suffolk.

Lorna Holland had a fallow year in 2015 but sent me a record for Fringecups (*Tellima grandiflora*) that was seen during that year. In 2016 Lorna returned to the fray and added two nice Polypodies to her list amongst other plants: Southern and Intermediate Polypody (*Polypodium cambricum* and *P. interjectum*).



Photo: Ken Southall

Barbara sent me an impressive list with so many good plants listed it is difficult to single any out. A trip to the Lizard in Cornwall provided Twin-headed and Long-headed Clovers (*Trifolium bocconeii* and *T. incarnatum*). A visit to Corfe in Dorset added Dwarf Gorse (*Ulex minor*) to her total.

Susan also enjoyed the wonders seen at the 2016 AGM and added Pitcherplant (*Sarracenia purpurea*) from Chobham Common to her list. She also saw Pasqueflower

(*Pulsatilla vulgaris*) at Therfield Heath in Hertfordshire.

I have been writing this account whilst looking out of the window at a blossom tree having the buds torn off by Ring-necked Parakeets. Always a sign of spring for me and I am looking forward to getting out and seeing some new plants. I shall look forward as always to seeing what 2017 brings for members of Z4.

PIPPA HYDE

Z5 (1000-1149)

| | New | Total |
|-----------------|-----|-------|
| Pauline Wilson | 9 | 1046 |
| Peter Whitcomb | 0 | 1021 |
| Lesley Philpott | 1 | 1022 |

Pauline Wilson came to my WFS meeting at Newport Wetlands Reserve on the Severn Estuary in June and saw several species that day which were new to her including Narrow-leaved Everlasting Pea (*Lathyrus sylvestris*) which runs rampant over that reserve and Dittander (*Lepidium latifolium*) a tall member of the pepperwort family which favours coastal situations. She also attended Mark and Clare Kitchen's WFS Meeting in the Forest of Dean where she was shown Wood Horsetail (*Equisetum sylvaticum*) at its only site in the Forest of Dean. Good things obviously grow by car parks in this forest, as she saw Fragrant Agrimony (*Agrimonia procera*) at Norchard Railway Centre car park and Small-flowered

Sweetbriar (*Rose micrantha*) at New Fancy car park, an old quarry which has been turned into an attractive picnic site.

Peter Whitcomb arrives in Z5 this year having attained his goal of 1000 species last year. He tells me that he is celebrating his achievement by having a 'year off'. I hope he will return to plant spotting with added vigour in 2017!

Lesley Philpott has been hampered by ill-health and has not been able to get out as much as she would have wished. However she has managed to continue to take her wild flower group on their regular summer outings. She has only managed to increase her annual total by one with

Fen Bedstraw (*Galium uliginosum*), which was pointed out to her at Canworthy Water. “I would have ignored it totally and missed it”, she says. Quite understandable, I feel, if you do not remember that not all Marsh Bedstraw (*G. palustre*) is always what it seems; Fen Bedstraw is very similar, but has down-turned prickles on the stem!

So happy plant hunting to all in 2017, I look forward to hearing what you find.

HEATHER COLLS

Photo: Ken Southall



Dittander

Z6 (850-999)

| | New | Total | | New | Total |
|--------------|-----|-------|-------------|-----|-------|
| Susan Bowden | 31 | 931 | Alan Davies | 1 | 990 |

There were some super plants in the two lists I received. Susan Bowden's British botany was interrupted by a caravan trip to the Faroes and Iceland via Holland and Denmark. She was fascinated by the colonisation of volcanic ash and rock by flowering plants such as Mountain Avens (*Dryas octopetala*) and Thyme (*Thymus* sp.). Not countable for her WFS list though! Most of her British botany was closer to home. My favourite plants are Purple Ramping-fumitory (*Fumaria purpurea*) and Hoary Ragwort (*Senecio erucifolius*) from Lancashire, Hybrid Geum (*Geum x intermedium*), Bird's-eye Primrose (*Primula farinosa*) and

Mountain Pansy (*Viola lutea*) from Cumbria. And all this in a cover with our logo.

Alan Davies was dogged by ill-health in 2016. It didn't stop him finding a splendid plant, Crimson Clover (*Trifolium incarnatum*) at Tan Rogo Beach in North Wales only two miles from his home. This is a plant I've always wanted to see. Hope springs eternal.

Here's wishing everyone good finds and happy field meetings in our next botanical year.

RACHEL RABEY

PARNASSUS BRANCH CRITERIA

Parnassus is the branch of the Wild Flower Society which members may move up into when their cumulative total of records in another branch has reached 2000. The way it works is quite different from the other branches, and assumes that having reached such a splendid total, participants have found all the common plants and learned how to identify plants for themselves from books and websites. That makes them free to enjoy themselves adding anything they can find and name. That last word, name, is the crucial one.

In Stace's 'New Flora of the British Isles' which is the standard list of allowable names for W.F.S. purposes, supplemented by other sources for dandelions, hawkweeds and brambles which are too numerous for his one-volume format, only species and subspecies and their hybrids are included, but there are two lower botanical ranks and one horticultural one at which plants can have been named. The two botanical ranks are *varietas*, Latin for variety, and *forma*, abbreviated to var. and f. Varieties may differ in only one character from the typical plants of the species, but that variation has to be heritable and fairly constant. Forms always differ in only one character, and that difference from the type of the species may have no genetic basis, and may be randomly spread across the whole range of the species' variation in other respects. It must be possible to relate the names of varieties and forms to a description in a scientific publication. *Allium*

vineale var. *compactum* (Thuill.) Boreau is the common form of Wild Onion, with no flowers at all, only bulbils in their place. It was described as a species *Allium compactum* by Thuillier, and later Boreau published his decision that it was better as a variety of *A. vineale* L. Parnassians who find a Wild Onion with flowers mixed with the bulbils will need to know that they have found var. *vineale*, which is what was described as a species by Linnaeus, and add 'var. *compactum*' to the original entry for the species in their cumulative list. More usually the common plant is the one with the original species name, so if you find a white-flowered *Campanula rotundifolia* and ascertain that it has the name *C. rotundifolia* var. *albiflora*, then the ordinary blue-flowered Harebell which you had found before is *C. rotundifolia* var. *rotundifolia*.



*Campanula
rotundifolia* var.
rotundifolia

Photo: Peter Llewellyn

The horticultural rank referred to is cultivar, and the cultivar part of its name is written with initial capitals, in single inverted commas, e.g. *Pulmonaria* 'Mawson's Blue'. This is one of a few cultivars numbered in 'Stace', so it can be counted in all branches of the W.F.S., but there are many more which might conceivably be found in the wild. Quality Daffodils is a business in Cornwall which lists 'over 2000 varieties' of *Narcissus* in its catalogue, which are all cultivars, not varieties in the botanical sense; many of these have been found in wild places, planted by well-intentioned individuals or by squirrels who think they are nuts, and could be counted. Most cultivars are perennial herbs or woody plants which are increased vegetatively, so they have no genetic variation, but there are also cultivars which have been bred over several generations to form a

pure strain which can be grown from seed; these may be perennials, annuals, like almost all cereal crop plants, or biennials like lettuce 'varieties'. There is a code of rules for the naming of cultivated plants which is quite different from the International Code of Nomenclature for algae, fungi and plants.

A distinctive feature of Parnassus records is that they should be accompanied by a reference to the source of the name of the plant recorded, if it is not a name accounted for in the first sentence of the second paragraph above. It is most unlikely that anyone will claim to have seen the original publication of a botanical name and description, like the 19th century Thuillier work with *Allium compactum* in it. On the other hand, it is very likely that the only reference you can offer is along the lines of "name supplied by [name of leader of a W.F.S. or other field meeting, who may have got it from someone else or seen it in some modern publication with the plant's name and description]". You may create a problem for the leader by asking, "Where did you get that name from?" but it is not unreasonable that you should ask "How does that differ from the usual plant?" What you must not do is make up a name for a plant so that you can count it.

I hope to be allowed space in next year's report to say something about potential sources of names.

RODNEY BURTON



*Campanula
rotundifolia* var.
albiflora

Photo: Ken Southall

PARNASSUS REPORTS 2016

Unfortunately, due to family circumstances, Chris Pogson has been unable to complete his report on Parnassus 1 in time for this magazine. I hope to include it in the Autumn issue.

PARNASSUS 2

| | New | Total | | New | Total |
|-----------------|-----|-------|--------------------|-----|-------|
| Phyl Abbott | 41 | 2492 | Geoffrey Kitchener | 13 | 2217 |
| Gareth Bursnall | 20 | 2367 | Priscilla Nobbs | 40 | 2235 |
| Rodney Burton | 11 | 2488 | Janice Reynolds | 9 | 2282 |
| Everald Ellis | -1 | 2184 | Richard Robinson | 38 | 2104 |
| Peter Jepson | 3 | 2054 | | | |

Phyl Abbott has charged past me and is on the way to moving up to Parnassus 1 next year, as Heather Colls did last year. The Bradford Botany Group's meetings are the source for most of her additions; they included a long weekend in Breckland guided by Stephen Clarkson and a very productive day on the Sefton Coast in S. Lancs. She lists three *Crocus* cultivars, names supplied by Jesse Tregale but also verified by herself. *Acer campestre* var. *leiocarpon*, given from a meadow edge on Idle Moor in West Yorkshire, is a plant found in the same sort of places as the alien subspecies of Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea* ssp. *australis*) and Large-sepalled Hawthorn (*Crataegus rhipidophylla*), all imported in bulk for the planting of new hedges. She lists double-flowered Snowdrop (*Galanthus nivalis*) and Soapwort (*Saponaria officinalis*) by putting *flore pleno* after their scientific names, but this does

not constitute any of the categories mentioned; however my Plant Finder tells me that there is a cultivar name *Saponaria officinalis* 'Flore Pleno' and a forma name *Galanthus nivalis* f. *pleniflorus*, which will do nicely.

In the context of my remarks above, the most interesting plant in Gareth Bursnall's list is a white-flowered Herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*), from a pavement in Crawley. This species has not one but two races with cultivar names, and Gareth has given me a reference to B.S.B.I. News no.60 (1992), where there are several contributions on the subject of white-flowered variants generally, concluding a thread which started in no.57. From the one about *G. robertianum* on page 9 he has chosen to put the name f. *bernettii* first, though the writer Graham Rice calls it "'Album', a strongly pigmented, trailing form with large white or almost white flowers, but this may be the same as forma *bernettii*".

If Gareth's white-flowered pavement plant had had no red pigmentation anywhere and foliage of a fresh bright green, it would have been *G. robertianum* 'Celtic White', and if it did not match either of these cultivars it might have no name at all and therefore not be countable. All his plants are from Surrey, Sussex or (just!) Kent, and he was especially excited by Narrow-leaved Pepperwort (*Lepidium ruderales*) in Crystal Palace Park, on the east side of the botanical Surrey / Kent border by a few feet; in my view this is the least exciting plant imaginable, and I would far rather have seen the two Pitcherplants (*Sarracenia purpurea* and *S. flava*) on the post-AGM meeting on Chobham Common.

I have struggled to get as many as 11 new plants in 2016. I have one cultivar in my list, a dwarf form of Spring Cinquefoil (*Potentilla tabernaemontani* 'Nana'), from a street in Bexley, of obscure origin there; I got the description from 'The Collingridge guide to collectors' alpines' by Royton Heath, and the correct form of the name from the much more recent RHS Plant Finder. Preparing my second paragraph above, I discovered that *Allium vineale* var. *vineale* was not in my own cumulative list, but I had a verifiable memory of seeing it on Dartford Marshes in 2016. I came across Spotted Spurge (*Euphorbia maculata*) on a pavement when recording for the London Flora Project in Eltham Park, a SE London suburb, which was easily recognised being strongly spotted, but sometimes the spots are faint or absent. I have seen it abroad, and it

has recently been seen in a number of English cities, but mine was the first record from vice-county 16, West Kent.

Peter Jepson has had "a busy year, but not for plants". His Wrinkled Viburnum (*Viburnum rhytidophyllum*) was on a cliff ledge in a limestone quarry at Clitheroe where it could only have been bird-sown, and Hairless Blue-sowthistle (*Cicerbita plumieri*) was self-sown into woodland next to his own garden at Darwen, also in S Lancs.

Geoffrey Kitchener's list is entirely from Kent like mine, except that his *Viola odorata* var. *praecox*, an early-flowering variety of Sweet Violet with very dark purple flowers, and one other were from the South Downs above Eastbourne. This has a much fuller description in the recently published and very comprehensive BSBI Handbook 'Violas of Britain and Ireland', by Michaels Porter and Foley. His most interesting plant was undoubtedly a fern. Ferns and 'fern-allies' such as horsetails differ from flowering plants in that they have



Spotted Spurge

Photo: Rodney Burton

alternating generations. The generation responsible for dispersal, which requires access to the wind for distributing its spores, consists of plants large enough to be observed by botanists who are otherwise mainly interested in flowering plants, like users of floras; these plants are the sporophytes. The other generation is the gametophytes, which usually take the form of tiny green patches with male and/or female organs on their surface, which can only function in a permanently moist environment, so they grow in strongly shaded situations, likely to be observed only by a bryologist looking for liverworts and mosses, or by an enthusiast growing ferns from spores. Killarney Fern (*Trichomanes speciosum*) was considered a great rarity in Britain for a long time, with one known site in Wales and one in Cornwall, and rumours of others. That was because people had only looked for the sporophytes. The gametophytes of Killarney Fern are unusually distinctive, consisting of tangles of green filaments which branch at right angles, which can grow to form patches without ever producing a sporophyte. The first discoveries of populations distant from any known sporophyte site were in France, in wells in central Brittany and in clefts of sandstone rocks in the Vosges mountains; British records began in 1989 from Yorkshire and Cumbria, soon followed by searches

producing further discoveries, mostly on western coasts north to Shetland, but also on suitable sites inland, as far east as Sussex quite close to the Kent boundary. The photograph by Stephen Lemon, whose targeted searches for this plant and for bryophytes of similar habitat preferences have been instrumental in adding it to the Kent flora, gives an idea of its general appearance; the site only gets direct light from a low winter sun. His photograph showing the structure of the gametophytes on the cover of 'Kent Botany 2016', which can be downloaded from bsbi.org/kent, was taken in artificial light.

Priscilla Nobbs's list owes a lot to W.F.S. meetings, especially the one on the Cumbrian Solway coast, which I wish I could have got to – I would have loved to see Hoary Mugwort (*Artemisia stelleriana*) on the dunes at Allonby and Silverberry (*Elaeagnus commutata*) and *Escallonia* 'Apple



Trichomanes speciosum
gametophyte. Rock overhang with
fallen yew, Hungershall Rocks
Photo: Stephen Lemon

Blossom' on waste ground at Workington. In Finlandrigg Wood the var. *hirsuta* of Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*) was named for her by Julie Clarke; I must look at the description of this in Sell & Murrell's flora, as most of the honeysuckle plants I see in local woods, which seldom flower, have noticeably hairy leaves.

All Janice Reynolds's records this year are from her home area in East Sussex. Her *Asphodelus fistulosus* in a pavement crack in Denton made it to BSBI News no.133. Four of the others are *Narcissus* cultivars, and she has *N. minor* too. "I keep finding new narcissi, it makes one wonder how they arrive where they do", she writes.

25 of Richard Robinson's plants are from Alan Leslie's Cambridge walk in June. All the rest, including white-flowered Marjoram (*Origanum vulgare* var. *album*) and Harebell *Campanula rotundifolia* var. *albiflora* found in Arundel Park, are from Sussex, with the exception of white-flowered Chicory (*Cichorium intybus* f. *album*) which came from near a nursery garden at Witchurch in Hants. Many of the white-flowered plants described as varieties might be better as forms, and vice versa, but one has to accept the rank which they have been given.

In 2015, Everaldest listed white-flowered Common Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra* var. *alba*) and Common Centaury (*Centaureum erythraea* var. *album*) mentioned in Terry Wells's *The flora of*

Huntingdonshire and the Soke of Peterborough, and I failed to check whether the varietal names were taken from the book. They are not. I have since found that the name *Centaurea nigra* var. *alba* does exist. Does anyone know a name for white-flowered Common Centaury? Unfortunately she had no new records to add in 2016, so her total for the year appears as -1.

RODNEY BURTON

Check list of plants in St Martin, Guernsey

Members may like to know that Rachel Rabey has compiled the above checklist which is available from La Société Guernesiaise, Candie Gardens, St Peter Port, Guernsey GY1 1UG for £3.50 (+ postage of £1.80 to Jersey or the United Kingdom). It may also be ordered via La Société's website www.societe.org.gg. The list is in family order. All plants listed were seen between March 2014 and June 2016. Each entry has a brief note of habitat or locality and an indication of frequency.

Lisa is currently collecting British folk tales for a new book called 'Botanical Folk Tales of the British Isles'. If you know of a story, ancient or recent, that originates from somewhere in the British Isles and where plants have a key role – and you would be willing to share it as part of this project – then get in touch! Lisa would love to hear from you. Contact her through her website: <http://www.lisaschneidau.co.uk/botanical-tales/>

10 KM SQUARE STUDY (NORTH) 2016

| Name | Hectad | Location | Year | Records | Total |
|------------------|--------|---------------------------|------|---------|-------|
| Mrs. J. Clarke | SD48 | Lindale & Whitbarrow | 14 | 6 | 751 |
| | SD58 | Milnthorpe | 14 | 13 | 411 |
| | SJ66 | Winsford | 27 | 6 | 764 |
| | SJ76 | Sandbach | 28 | 0 | 728 |
| Mr. J. Dews | SE93 | South Cave | 21 | 0 | 546 |
| | SE94 | Middleton-on-the-Wolds | 25 | 2 | 607 |
| | TA03 | Beverley (South) | 25 | 0 | 700 |
| | TA04 | Beverley (North) | 26 | 1 | 693 |
| A. & R. Grainger | SE23 | Horsforth & Rodley | 6 | 36 | 405 |
| | SE24 | Otley & Wharfe Valley | 6 | 30 | 299 |
| Mr. P. Jepson | SD61 | Bolton (North) | 36 | 1 | 505 |
| | SD62 | Darwen & Blackburn | 42 | 2 | 862 |
| | SD71 | Turton | 35 | 1 | 453 |
| | SD72 | Accrington | 41 | 0 | 623 |
| Mr. G. Kay | SJ57 | Frodsham | 20 | 24 | 706 |
| | SJ67 | Northwich | 18 | 21 | 509 |
| | SJ87 | Alderley Edge | 28 | 3 | 506 |
| | SJ97 | Macclesfield | 30 | 4 | 582 |
| | SJ98 | Marple | 38 | 9 | 662 |
| Mr. A. Kafel | SE02 | Halifax | 10 | 80 | 733 |
| Mr. K. Robson | NZ24 | Chester-le-street | 4 | 38 | 470 |
| Mrs. D. Ross | SD32 | Lytham | 14 | 9 | 372 |
| | SD45 | Galgate | 4 | 16 | 290 |
| | SD63 | Longridge | 29 | 4 | 370 |
| | SD64 | Chipping | 6 | 9 | 198 |
| | SD73 | Whalley | 12 | 0 | 280 |
| | SD74 | Clitheroe | 27 | 2 | 359 |
| Mr. B. Tregale | SC39 | Ballaugh, Isle of Man | 19 | 5 | 755 |
| | SE13 | Bradford | 27 | 29 | 1688 |
| Mrs. S. Wynn | SD64 | Bowland, Lancashire | 10 | 0 | 237 |
| | SD65 | Forest of Bowland | 6 | 41 | 149 |
| | SD74 | Clitheroe, Lancashire | 10 | 0 | 546 |
| | SD75 | Slaidburn, Gisburn Forest | 10 | 0 | 239 |

Julie Clarke found the variegated leaved form of Greater Periwinkle (*Vinca major* 'Variegata') at Leasgill and Italian Toadflax (*Cymbalaria pallida*) growing on a wall in SD48. Italian Toadflax is a native of mountains in Italy, which probably accounts for it being more commonly found self-seeded in the north,

climate having a bigger influence than garden popularity. In SD58 the densely hairy Great Willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum* var. *villosissimum*) was by the canal at Crooklands and in the canal was Greater Duckweed (*Spirodela polyrrhiza*). Julie had an exciting find at Marton Hole, SJ66, Round-leaved

Wintergreen (*Pyrola rotundifolia* ssp. *rotundifolia*), the second record for Cheshire; also here was the rarely recorded Narrow-fruited Watercress (*Nasturtium microphyllum*).

John Dews had two new plants for SE94, Greater Periwinkle (*Vinca major*) in a hedge at Etton, and one I would love to find in my Bradford square, the not so common, Common Milkwort (*Polygala vulgaris*) growing on the bank of a newly found nature reserve near Sancton. In TA04 John found at least two plants of Stinking Iris (*Iris foetidissima*) on a former railway embankment near Beverley.

Anthony and Rita Grainger had some nice finds in SE23, Balkan Anemone (*Anemone blanda*) on Westbrooke Lane, Horsforth and Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*) on waste ground on Feast Field. They also led a Bradford Botany Group meeting in Horsforth, finding the rare Dog-rose x Field-rose hybrid (*Rosa x irregularis*), confirmed by the BSBI rose expert. In SE24 they found Green Snowdrop (*Galanthus woronowii*) at Adel Dam. This Snowdrop with wide shiny green leaves seems to be getting more common, at least in Bradford, with at least four sites, and it is still at the West Wood site at Saltaire where I first found it in 1991. Anthony and Rita also found the long-awned Couch (*Elytrigia repens* f. *aristata*) and Green Field Speedwell (*Veronica agrestis*) both in Horsforth.

Peter Jepson found Many-stalked Spike-rush (*Eleocharis multicaulis*) on Bromiley Pasture, an upland mire in SD61. Narrow-leaved Ragwort (*Senecio inaequidens*) has now spread into SD62 at Darwen,

Lancashire, seen on the hard shoulder of the M65, not the best place to botanise but a good view of the plant could be found on Google Earth. In SD71, Early Pampas-grass (*Cortaderia richardii*) was in the felled conifer area of Charters Moss. This is becoming a relatively common self-seeded plant but I have only ever once seen Pampas Grass (*Cortaderia selloana*) self-seeded. Peter's biggest triumph was that the West Pennine Moors, covered by parts of his four squares, SD61, SD62, SD71 & SD72, have now been notified as an SSSI by Natural England, which he had been pursuing through work and retirement since 2003.

Andrew Kafel has had an excellent year in SE02 with 80 new taxa. Many of his more exciting plants were found at Hollas Bridge, a new bridge and flood defence with a new development of houses and factories being built after the previous winter's floods. On the flood defence by the bridge, some fine plants of Spreading Hedge-parsley (*Torilis arvensis*) were found; these appear to be spreading further along the river, possibly being spread by the floodwater. On the area for the new development together with the usual waste ground weeds were some interesting annual aliens, including Corncockle (*Agrostemma githago*), Clarkia (*Clarkia unguiculata*), Golden Tickseed (*Coreopsis tinctoria*), Annual Baby's-breath (*Gypsophila elegans*) and Crimson Flax (*Linum grandiflorum*). These are commonly found in wild flower mixes but the area did not seem to have been deliberately seeded, as it was covered in mud and rubble and only

temporary with most of it being built upon later in the year. Possibly some seed was scattered in the area but it is also possible the seeds of these plants came in with the mud and rubble. Earlier in the year Michael Wilcox and I met up with Andrew at Hollas Bridge where we found a hybrid Yellow-cress; Michael took a specimen and later identified it as Thames Yellow-cress (*Rorippa x erythrocaulis*) the hybrid between Greater and Marsh Yellow-cress, a surprising find as Greater Yellow-cress (*Rorippa amphibia*) is unknown in the area. Finally, I have to mention the unusual double Meadow Saffron (*Colchicum autumnale* 'Waterlily') looking well naturalised on the grassy bank below the Burdock Way flyover; I am hoping to visit this in Halifax next October.



Photo: Andrew Kafel

Graeme Kay, not surprisingly, has some interesting additions to his squares in SJ57; the subspecies of Water-purslane (*Lythrum portula* ssp.

longidentatum) was found in Fourways sand quarry and Krauss's Clubmoss (*Selaginella kraussiana*) was on the grassy entrance to Foxhill. This native of Africa is rarely recorded in the north. I also liked the hybrid Sharp-toothed Mint (*Mentha x villosa* ssp. *oerfata*) found by the track at Alvanley; interestingly one of its parents *Mentha longifolia* is not known in Britain. An interesting find in SJ67 was Babington's Orache (*Atriplex glabriuscula*) which is usually to be found on sandy or shingly beaches but Graeme found it on a brine spring at Anderton, well inland. Beggarticks (*Bidens frondosa*) was on Vale Royal Lock and the Yellow Sedge (*Carex oederi* ssp. *bergrothii*) was found by Stephen Lemon on Ashton Flashes and, although known in Ireland, this appears to be the first UK record for this subspecies. The pink-flowered Hedge Bindweed (*Calystegia sepium* ssp. *roseata*) was found in the Shrubbery by Sainsbury at Cheadle Royal. In SJ87 Virginia-creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) was on an old wall, and Field Madder (*Sherardia arvensis*) was a pavement weed in Macclesfield. In his final square some nice plants were found on Bramall Moor, SJ97; Cyclamen (*Cyclamen hederifolium*), White-stemmed Bramble (*Rubus cockburnianus*) and Vervain (*Verbena officinalis*). Fig trees (*Ficus carica*) are not all that unusual in the wild but usually they are mature plants often appearing very old, so it must have been a pleasant surprise when Graeme found seedlings on the canal footbridge.

Keith Robinson found some interesting plants in 2016; the

highlight I think goes to Downy Currant (*Ribes spicatum*) in Brough's Gill Wood, Lumley. I think this is the first time I have had this recorded for the 10Km square North study. The more robust alien sub-species of Yellow oat-grass (*Trisetum flavescens* ssp. *purpurascens*) was found in Langley Park and the rather pretty Wild Pansy (*Viola tricolor* ssp. *tricolor*) was in Felledge Wood, Waldrige.

Dorothy Ross found new plants in five of her six squares. Orpine (*Sedum telephium*) was a good find on the Fairhaven Dunes at Lytham in SD32, as was the Smooth Tare (*Vicia tetrasperma*) in Booths car park. Most of her plants in SD45 were found in Conder Green, including Hoary Cress (*Lepidium draba*) which is not common this far north and Wood Speedwell (*Veronica montana*) which is always nice to find. Dorothy found the pretty Slender St. John's-wort (*Hypericum pulchrum*) and Druce's Crane's-bill (*Geranium x oxonianum*) at Longridge reservoir in SD63 and, although SD64 is mainly moorland and not very accessible, the splendid Melancholy Thistle (*Cirsium heterophyllum*) was found near Loud Mytham Bridge. In Salthill Quarry SD74 Common Cornsalad (*Valerianella locusta*) and the rarely recorded alien Wrinkled Viburnum (*Viburnum rhytidophyllum*) were found.

In my Isle of Man square my father-in-law John Harris showed me the Pale Galingale (*Cyperus eragrostis*) by Ballaugh Church and it was John who noticed the Balkan Spurge (*Euphorbia oblongata*) in the old

quarry at Close-e-Quayle. In Bradford a new railway station was built at Apperley Bridge with a new car park and slip road. Michael Wilcox first visited the site, finding an unusual cabbage, which turned out to be Ethiopian Rape (*Brassica carinata*), the first Yorkshire record and, on later visits, we found Yellow Bartsia (*Parentucellia viscosa*) and Wild Clary (*Salvia verbenaca* ssp. *verbenaca*) and, after 26 years, Michael managed to re-find Toothwort (*Lathraea squamaria*) in its recorded site of Walker Wood, Shipley Glen and I re-found Sand Leek (*Allium scorodoprasum*) not at its known site by the River Aire but on the scrubby triangle at the end of Bullroyd Avenue.

Sheila Wynn has sent in records for her new square SD65 which was originally started in 2011 with the highlight being Peter Jepson's WFS meeting in 2013 where the newly discovered Forget-me-not hybrid (*Myosotis x bollandica*), Bog Rosemary (*Andromeda polifolia*) and Ivy-leaved Bellflower (*Wahlenbergia hederacea*) were seen. New plants in 2016 included Greater Burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*) by the River Hodder and, at Newton, Yellow Corydalis (*Pseudofumaria lutea*) and Fairy Foxglove (*Erinus alpinus*).

Thanks to all who sent records - as usual lots of exciting plants found, some new to me, which I will have to look out for, and I wish you all good hunting in 2017.

B. A. 'JESSE' TREGALE

10 KM SQUARE STUDY (SOUTH) 2016

| Name | Hectad | Location | Year | Records | Total |
|-------------|--------|------------------------------------|------|---------|-------|
| G Bursnall | TQ23 | Crawley, West Sussex | 2 | 69 | 521 |
| R Burton | TQ56 | Darenth Valley, Kent | 12 | 14 | 646 |
| A Daly | SO88 | Kinver, Staffs | 4 | 17 | 670 |
| | SO98 | Stourbridge, Staffs | 3 | 50 | 509 |
| J Gibbs | TR37 | Margate, Kent | 2 | 12 | 59 |
| B Mathews | TM23 | West Felixstowe, Suffolk | 19 | 5 | 669 |
| | TM24 | Woodbridge, Suffolk | 17 | 6 | 522 |
| | TM33 | East Felixstowe, Suffolk | 20 | 6 | 649 |
| | TM34 | Shottisham, Suffolk | 8 | 33 | 336 |
| D Mills | TQ75 | Maidstone, Kent | 7 | 17 | 592 |
| R Parker | TQ17 | Hounslow & Richmond, Gt. London | 16 | 0 | 568 |
| | TQ26 | Sutton, Gt. London | 25 | 0 | 1016 |
| | TQ38 | East London | 23 | 6 | 609 |
| T Phenna | SH57 | Bangor & Anglesey | 9 | 4 | 422 |
| | SH67 | Llanfairfechan, Gwynedd | 13 | 2 | 650 |
| | SH68 | Llangoed, Anglesey | 4 | 26 | 299 |
| | SH78 | Great Orme, Gwynedd | 37 | 5 | 680 |
| S. Poyser & | TQ76 | Rochester & Chatham, Kent | 19 | 28 | 871 |
| D Grant | TQ77 | Higham and Cliffe, Kent | 11 | 38 | 583 |
| T Pratt | SY97 | Worth Matravers, Dorset | 5 | 17 | 538 |
| | SY98 | Wareham & Corfe, Dorset | 9 | 34 | 1161 |
| | SZ08 | Studland, Dorset | 11 | 14 | 1139 |
| J Reynolds | TQ40 | Newhaven, East Sussex | 15 | 31 | 591 |
| J Swindells | SP38 | Radford, Coventry | 1 | 122 | 122 |
| P Verrall | TQ04 | Shere, Surrey | 26 | 3 | 524 |
| | TQ14 | Dorking, Surrey | 23 | 17 | 552 |
| | TQ15 | Leatherhead, Surrey | 5 | 68 | 372 |

Thank you all for sending your records by 15th January as usual. I would appreciate it if we continue with this date for 10km South lists. Thanks also to those who included their totals and wrote about their most interesting finds. Unfortunately Fred Booth has suspended recording in TQ85 due to caring for his wife; we wish them both well. However our Chairman, John Swindells, has joined us this year to swell the numbers.

In TQ23 Gareth Bursnall made an early start with Wild Pansy (*Viola tricolor*) on waste ground at New Year. A spring walk in St Leonard's Forest brought Lily-of-the-valley (*Convallaria majalis*) at appropriately named Lily Beds where they are native, said to have arisen where St Leonard's blood fell as he slayed the last dragon. His Petunia (*P. x hybrida*) has a more prosaic origin, being self-sown below hanging

baskets at a Crawley pub! Other casuals which pleased Gareth were Slender Mugwort (*Artemisia biennis*) self-sown from birdseed, Argentinian Vervain (*Verbena bonariensis*) on a field margin, and Yellow-eyed-grass (*Sisyrinchium californicum*) which appeared after removal of a hedge. Some unusual native finds included the attractive lobe-flowered form of Hedge Bindweed (*Calystegia sepium* f. *schizoflora*) on dumped soil and the hybrid Hogweed x Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium* x *H. mantegazzianum*) in woodland.

Several alien species feature in Rodney Burton's TQ56 list. A large plant of Common Fiddleneck (*Amsinckia micrantha*) by a farm gate was a good find. Nearer home he recorded two casual grasses around Eynsford, Winter Wild-oat (*Avena sterilis* ssp. *ludoviciana*) in a field gateway and Rescue Brome (*Ceratochloa cathartica*). The latter was in Sparepenny Lane, where he also found Niger (*Guizotia abyssinica*). Among Rodney's native plants found as garden weeds were Wild Onion (*Allium vineale*) and Pale Willowherb (*Epilobium roseum*).

Anne Daly concentrated on a single tetrad in each square. SO88 includes woodland where she was delighted to find Hybrid Monk's-hood (*Aconitum* x *stoerkianum*) and Water Chickweed (*Myosoton aquaticum*). Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*) was recorded by the River Stour in autumn, so presumably living up to its name. Anne's chosen tetrad in SO98 is a busy urban area but proved botanically rich as it contains Fens Pool NR, where she was

especially pleased to see Yellow Bird's-nest (*Hypopitys monotropa*); she also discovered a bank full of Sowbread (*Cyclamen hederifolium*), a new record for the Reserve. In Brierly Hill she was amazed by a dramatic 'forest' of Cotton Thistle (*Onopordum acanthium*) on neglected ground. Behind the Art College Dropwort (*Filipendula vulgaris*) and Knotted Clover (*Trifolium striatum*), both locally scarce, grew in close proximity. As they prefer alkaline and acid soil respectively Anne concludes that mixed soil was imported during construction.

José Gibbs has moved to almost the edge of the cliff top in TR37. Her most interesting find was Deadly Nightshade (*Atropa belladonna*) in the raspberry bed; it is known as an occasional garden weed in the locality. Tamarisk (*Tamarix gallica*) is to be expected, but she was surprised to find Lesser Celandine (*Ficaria verna*) among long grass on the clifftop.

Exotic aliens appeared in both of Barbara Mathews's Felixstowe squares (TM23 and TM33). Beside the River Orwell in October a withered plant with very distinctive seedpods was later identified by Martin Sanford as Rough Cocklebur (*Xanthium strumarium*). Directions from Martin led her to Panic Veldt-grass (*Ehrharta erecta*), a South American species, under a church hedge. Several European species around Felixstowe included Moth Mullein (*Verbascum blattaria*) behind houses and White Mignonette (*Reseda alba*) by the Felixstowe

Ferry. By the River Deben in TM24 Barbara added Sea Wormwood (*Artemisia maritima*) and Zig-zag Clover (*Trifolium medium*) at Kirton Creek. Further upstream Golden Samphire (*Inula crithmoides*) was in a saltmarsh at Woodbridge. After a 'gap year' for TM34 Barbara crossed the River Deben regularly to record butterflies but had greater success with plants. A derelict Bawdsey garage had Caper Spurge (*Euphorbia lathyris*), and on the sea wall she identified Sand Lucerne (*Medicago sativa* ssp. *varia*). Corn Marigold (*Glebionis segetum*) was on a grass verge, but prize for most novel habitat goes to Tree-mallow (*Malva arborea*) growing in an old gun emplacement.

In Aylesford (TQ75) Daphne Mills spotted a pale form of Scarlet Pimpernel (*Anagallis arvensis* ssp. *arvensis* f. *pallida*) and a road over the M20 had Thrift (*Armeria maritima*) in the pavement, presumably due to road salting. Flowering Rush (*Butomus umbellatus*) was another nice find in the village. A Kent field meeting led by Geoffrey Kitchener visited Ditton Quarry where several Roses boosted Daphne's list, notably Small-leaved Sweet-briar (*Rosa agrestis*) and its hybrid with Dog-rose (*R. x belnensis*), both exciting records for that area.

Walking by East London canals in TQ38 Ron Parker recorded several transatlantic aliens: Beggarticks (*Bidens frondosa*) and Orange Balsam (*Impatiens capensis*) are not infrequent, but he also saw Large-flowered Waterweed (*Egeria densa*). The only native species on his

interesting list was Blue Water-speedwell (*Veronica anagallis-aquatica*).

Ted Phenna explored the northern part of that tiny corner of Anglesey which constitutes SH68. Penman Point had a great variety of species, ranging from Stinking Tutsan (*Hypericum hircinum*) to Sea-kale (*Crambe maritima*), then Pyramidal Orchid (*Anacamptis pyramidalis*) and Tree Mallow (*Malva arborea*) near the café. At Mariandrys NR Ted found Saw-wort (*Serratula tinctoria*) and Pignut (*Conopodium majus*). Still on Anglesey, he discovered Greater Tussock-sedge (*Carex paniculata*) in a wood in SH67. Back on the mainland a barley field margin near Bangor (SH57) had French Crane's-bill (*Geranium endressii*) and Oat (*Avena sativa*). At home on Great Orme (SH78) Ted still finds new records. This year he added Dwarf Mouse-ear (*Cerastium pumilum*) and Goldilocks Buttercup (*Ranunculus auricomus*), finishing the season with Potato (*Solanum tuberosum*) at the golf hut.

Waste ground in TQ76 provided some attractive aliens for Sue Poyser and Doug Grant: Pink-headed Persicaria (*Persicaria capitata*) and Argentinian Vervain (*Verbena bonariensis*) at Strood and Argentine Needle-grass (*Nassella tenuissima*) at Leybourne. In June they were pleased to spot Crested Hair-grass (*Koeleria macrantha*) flowering at Chatham, having previously passed it by unnoticed. October being the ideal time to identify Glassworts (*Salicornia*) they explored the muddy edge of the River Medway and were

rewarded with Yellow Glasswort (*S. fragilis*) and a rare hybrid Glasswort (*S. pusilla* x *S. ramossissima* = *S. x marshallii*). On the same day they had another exciting find, Caucasian Mullein (*Verbascum pyramidatum*). Sue and Doug's TQ77 hectad lies between the tidal banks of the rivers Thames and Medway. Here they recorded Sea Wormwood (*Artemisia maritima*) and Shrubby Orache (*Atriplex halimus*). Inland there were freshwater aquatics, Tubular Water-dropwort (*Oenanthe fistulosa*) and Thread-leaved Water-crowfoot (*Ranunculus trichophyllus*), and they were particularly pleased to find Water Chickweed (*Myosoton aquaticum*) in a damp dyke near Hoo. From a cornfield edge they added Prickly Poppy (*Papaver argemone*) and Yellow-juiced Poppy (*P. lecoqii*).

Surveying Natonal Trust ancient woodlands in SY97 Ted Pratt recorded two Golden-scaled Male-ferns, (*Dryopteris affinis* ssp. *affinis*) and Borrer's Male-fern (*D. borrieri*), also Smooth-stalked Sedge (*Carex laevigata*), rare in Purbeck, and Wood Millet (*Milium effusum*). In SY98 young plants of Large-leaved Spindle (*Euonymus latifolius*), a commonly planted European species, had self-sown in a field edge; Ted thinks this is only its third record in the wild for Dorset. Another garden plant, Giant-rhubarb (*Gunnera tinctoria*), was naturalised by a woodland pond near Creech. More easily overlooked is Pink Shepherd's-purse (*Capsella rubella*) which Ted found in both this square in a pavement crack and in SZ08 by a gateway. In a field above Swanage Ted discovered the rare Cornfield

Knotgrass (*Polygonum rurivagum*). A Peach (*Prunus persica*) near the toll booths at Sandbanks Ferry had presumably grown from a discarded stone, and by the Poole jetties there was Oxford Ragwort (*Senecio squalidus*). The attractive white-flowered form of Herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum* f. *album*) appeared in all three of Ted's hectads.

Janice Reynolds added many interesting records for TQ40, her most exciting being Hollow-leaved Asphodel (*Asphodelus fistulosus*), a rare Mediterranean alien well established along a pavement crack near Newhaven. Janice had first noticed it in 2015 after it had gone over. (Reported in Adventives and Aliens, BSBI News no.133). Pavement cracks proved a good hunting ground with records of Hairy Finger-grass (*Digitaria sanguinalis*), Star-of-Bethlehem (*Ornithogalum umbellatum*) and Green Bristle-grass (*Setaria viridis*), all in Bishopstone pavements. Here, too, a humble native, Thale Cress (*Arabidopsis thaliana*) had chosen the same habitat, which pleased Janice just as much because she had not seen it in her area before.

Staying regularly with family in Coventry (SP38) John Swindells started recording within the monad around their daughter's home and already has a comprehensive list including trees, ferns, grasses, aliens and some attractive self-sown escapes such as Mexican Aster (*Cosmos bipinnatus*) and Love-in-a-mist (*Nigella damascena*). Water Bent (*Polypogon viridis*), common in

the Channel Islands but casual on the mainland, was a nice find and Argentine Fleabane (*Conyza bonariensis*) is becoming a more frequent casual. Among the native species John saw Henbit Dead-nettle (*Lamium amplexicaule*) and did not overlook tiny common 'weeds' such as Thale Cress (*Arabidopsis thaliana*) and Procumbent Pearlwort (*Sagina procumbens*). John's enthusiastic helper on these walks around local roads is his grandson, nearly three; maybe a future WFS Chairman in training?

My few additions in TQ04 were all below the wall of Shere Museum, Rat's-tail Fescue (*Vulpia myuros*) being particularly splendid. In TQ14 I was delighted to find Green Hound's-tongue (*Cynoglossum germanicum*) in a new site close to where, later in the year, members attending the AGM weekend explored an arable headland. There I added Broad-leaved Spurge (*Euphorbia platyphyllos*) and Small Toadflax (*Chaenorhinum minus*). The latter seems to be getting scarce in this area. It used to appear regularly in my notoriously weedy vegetable garden. Recording in Polesden Lacey estate for the National Trust provided a lot of gap-fillers for TQ15, but the most spectacular sight was a dense circular patch of Yellow Bird's-

nest (*Hypopitys monotropa*), some 10-15 metres diameter, surrounding a Pine tree. My thanks to John Dicker for showing me, for the AGM meeting, Greater Dodder (*Cuscuta europaea*) by the River Mole at Mickleham. A large patch of Small Teasel (*Dipsacus pilosus*) further along the bank was an unexpected bonus.

As always I have enjoyed reading about your discoveries. For lengthy lists it is greatly appreciated if you can send a hard copy if possible, it saves me throwing the PC and/or printer out of the window! I wish you all good botanising and I look forward to hearing from you in the first fortnight of 2018.

PAT VERRALL



Small Teasel

Photo: Anne Kell

PHOTO COMPETITION

Details and rules of the Photo competition were published in the Winter 2017 issue of the magazine. The deadline for submission of images is 21st August. Please send your photos to Ken Southall, Aspen cottage, Nettlestead, Ipswich, Suffolk. IP8 7BB

Start taking your photos now.