

WILTSHIRE BOTANICAL SOCIETY

(W.B.S.)

NEWSLETTER EDITOR - MRS RITA GROSE, THE SMITHY, SMITHY LANE, WOODBOROUGH, PEWSEY, WILTSHIRE. SN9 5PL. 0672 851244

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EDITOR'S NOTES.

Please mark the date of next years AGM in your diaries - SATURDAY 4th MARCH 1995, 2.00pm at Devizes Museum. Last years meeting was successful because so many members were able to attend.

Barbara Last would like to receive uncommon arable weed seeds as the WWT will be setting aside an area at Broadchalk to grow them. If you know of any please get in touch with Mrs Last, The Stables, Berwick St. James, Salisbury, SP3 4TN. Wiltshire source material only please.

Paul Darby of the Habitat Survey, Wiltshire Wildlife Project would like to express grateful thanks to all the members who have taken part in this years survey work.

Dr Oliver is continuing the Aster Survey this October, and would like to receive information regarding this under-recorded *genus*. Please record the date, map reference, habitat, extent of spread and send these details with a specimen to him at High View, Rhyls Lane, Lockeridge, Marlborough SN8 4ED.

As Society Secretary, Jack would like to initiate a record of articles written by members since the inauguration of the WBS in 1992. Copies of the articles would also be welcomed. Please send lists of your publications and, if possible, copies of any articles to Jack if you are interested.

Finally we have a reciprocal arrangement with the Hampshire Flora Group, and Newbury District Field Club (Botanical Section) whereby members can take part in each others meetings. Details from these two Societies will be displayed at our Winter meetings. If you require further information please contact Jack Oliver.

SUMMER PROGRAMME REPORTS.APRIL 16th 1994. RAVENROOST WOOD.

At the first meeting of the new season 4 members led by Steve Whitworth wandered down tracks of old baked Minety clay through an area of old coppiced woodland. We visited a small pond where we found early *Carex sylvatica* and *C. acutiformis*. *Carex pendula* was much in evidence beside the tracks. The woodland is now under management and some cleared areas have extensive and beautiful sweeps of bluebells (*Endymion - non scripta*) mingling with wood anemone (*Anemone nemerosa*).

Rita Grose.

APRIL 23rd 1994. SAVERNAKE FOREST.

Six of us met at the Column in the Savernake Forest. The night before had been very wet, but the morning was pleasant. Our leader Rod Stern said the rain had freshened the mosses and they were in perfect condition. We covered quite a small area and found a total of 34 mosses and 6 liverworts. We took our 'Booty' back to the College laboratory and examined the specimens with the help of microscopes. Most instructive! As a beginner I can recommend a Bryophyte field meeting led by Rod, he shares his expertise and generates enthusiasm.

Eileen Rollo.

MAY 11th 1994. LANGLEY WOOD.

Thirteen welly-booted botanists, led by Phil Wilson, enjoyed roaming through Langley Wood in the south of the county. We were shown the points of difference between *Dryopteris* species, *D. filix-mas*, *D. affinis* ssp *affinis* and *D. dilatata*, (Male-fern, Scaly Male-fern and Broad Buckler fern). Sedge species were much in evidence, the more notable being *C. pilulifera*, *C. pallescens* and *C. binervis*, (Pill, Pale and Green-ribbed sedges). Coppiced small leaved lime is a long established feature of this wood but we also noted more recent self-sown seedlings of Lawson's cypress. We watched Orange tip butterflies laying their eggs singly on *Cardamine pratensis* (Cuckooflower) and were pleased to see *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium* (Opposite-leaved Golden Saxifrage), *Anagallis tenella* (Bog Pimpernel), *Hypericum humifusum* (Trailing St. John's-wort) and *Stellaria uliginosa* (Bog Stitchwort). A memorable day ended with another fern, *Polystichum setiferum* (Soft Shield-fern).

Malcolm Hardstaff.

MAY 21st 1994. BREAN DOWN, SOMERSET.

It poured and it poured, but the seven members who went to Brean Down to botanise were not going to let that put them off. There were such exciting finds that we forgot about the rain - almost! On the way up to the Down there was a profusion of interesting, mainly coastal, thistles, *Silybum marianum* (Milk thistle) and *Carduus tenuiflorus* (Slender thistle). We also saw *Orobancha hederaceae* (Ivy Broomrape). At the top Dave found the tiny *Trifolium ornithopodioides* (Bird's-foot Clover or Fenugreek as it used to be called) and plenty of *Ranunculus parviflorus* (Small flowered buttercup). Then on the cliffs there was a stunning display of *Helianthemum apenninum* (White rock-rose) with the slightly less stunning but very rare *Koeleria vallesiana* (Somerset Hair-grass). After lunch we moved a few miles to Berrow sand dunes. *Oenothera stricta* (Fragrant Evening Primrose) was a 'first' for many of us; it was abundant and lovely. *Carex divisa* (Divided Sedge) was another first for most, and *Anthriscus caucalis* (Bur Parsley) was quite common. *Holoschoenus vulgaris* (Round-headed Club-rush) we saw in what is probably its only site. The grand finale was the search for *Himantoglossum hircinum* (Lizard Orchid). Several were found in bud but en route a good patch of *Isolepis setacea* (Bristle Club-rush) was on the path. There were too many more to mention and our thanks to Dave for a fabulous trip.

Joy Newton.

JUNE 1st 1994. JONES'S MILL.

Under the leadership of Audrey Summers a group of 12 botanists clad in Wellington boots explored the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust's Reserve near Pewsey to see the unique fenland flora and to hear from the voluntary warden about the management of the reserve which was once a working water meadow. We were introduced to the Belted Galloways whose grazing over the past seven years has helped to preserve the diversity of plants in an area which otherwise tends to revert to fen carr, dominated by willow and alder. The plants of the reserve have been well-documented but *Tamus communis* had not been previously recorded in woodland at the edge of the reserve and *Carex ovalis* and *Carex hirta* were also newly-recorded species. We also found *Glyceria notata* (plicata) and Greater Tussock Sedge (*Carex paniculata*) among many other water-loving grasses and sedges such as the Bottle sedge (*Carex rostrata*), *C. nigra* and *C. remota*. 12 different species of *Carex* have previously been recorded in the area. Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*) had finished flowering but we saw Ragged-Robin (*Lychnis flos-cuculi*) and Southern Marsh Orchid (*Dactylorhiza praetermissima*) variety *junialis*, which had previously been thought to be a hybrid between the Southern Marsh Orchid and the Common Spotted Orchid (*D. fuchsii*), showing hybrid vigour. Marsh Valerian (*Valeriana dioica*) and Water Avens (*Geum rivale*) were prevalent in one area and in another a stand of *Sphagnum* moss. Marsh Fritillary butterflies had recently been introduced. These were mating and it was hoped that a colony could be re-established in the reserve.

Phillida Sneyd.

JUNE 14th 1994. BENTLEY WOOD.

Bentley Wood covers over 1700 acres but by using cars between carefully chosen stopping points, Pat Woodruffe gave us a good 'feel' of this interesting wood. Management, both past and present, was explained and some problems highlighted, e.g. conflict of interest with horse riders and bracken control. There is a good spring flora with primroses, violets and solomon's seal. Sedges, rushes and grasses are well represented, also there are several ponds with aquatic plants and an opportunity to see dragonflies. Noteworthy plants of the day were *Platanthera bifolia* and *P. chlorantha* (Butterfly orchids) growing together; a ride edged with *Aquilegia vulgaris* (Columbine) and *Euphorbia amygdaloides* (Wood spurge) with *Ophrys insectifera* (Fly orchid) growing in the ride; *Neottia nidus-avis* (Bird's nest orchid) and big stands of common spotted orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*).

Vera Scott.

JUNE 28th 1994. PLAITFORD COMMON.

On a beautiful hot day 9 W.B.S. members met Roger Veall at the Canada Common car park. By way of introduction, Roger told us about the impoverished acid soils of the New Forest, composed of sand, peat and gravels, with the vegetation heavily grazed by native ponies. We then went, bottoms up, to examine the turf. 14 species were found in a very small area. We managed to sort out the differences between *Trifolium ornithopodioides* Bird's-foot clover from *Ornithopus perpusillus* Bird's-Foot. Roger was able to show us the tiny *Moenchia erecta*, Upright Chickweed. A few metres further on, still bottoms up, but with wet knees in a boggy patch we saw *Ranunculus hederaceus*, Ivy-leaved Crowfoot and the more common - in the New Forest - *R. ornithophyllus* Round-leaved Crowfoot, growing close together. After a short walk, passing *Callitriche brutia*, Pedunculate Water-starwort on the way, we came across an extensive bog with many interesting plants; *Narthecium ossifragum*, Bog Asphodel and *Anagallis tenella*, Bog Pimpernel being the most colourful. Two sundews growing side by side; *Drosera rotundifolia* and *D. intermedia*, and another insectivorous plant, *Pinguicula lusitanica*. *Rhynchospora alba*, White Beaked Sedge, *Eleocharis multicaulis*, Many-stalked Spike Rush, were a few of the species growing on or amongst the *Sphagnum* moss. We lunched in the shade of gorse bushes and then set out across the moor at a slightly faster pace, noting on the way *Ulex minor*, Dwarf Gorse and the difference between

Continued.....

PLAITFORD COMMON continued

two water forget-me-nots *Myosotis laxa* and *M. secunda*, and the fairly common *Pedicularis sylvatica*. Roger showed us three locations for *Carex curta*, *Carex flacca* Sedge, all in boggy woods.

The highlight of the day was *Lycopodiella inundata* Marsh Club Moss, growing in only one site in the New Forest. On the way back we saw a large clump of *Osmunda regalis*, The Royal Fern; a new sighting for the Common. We ended the day examining the roses, Roger pointed out *Rosa micrantha* and *Rosa obtusifolia*, growing amongst the *R. caninas*. Miraculously, we found ourselves back in the car park at about 5 o'clock after a most species rich and rewarding day.

Maureen Ponting.

JULY 9th 1994. SOMERSET LEVELS.

On a very hot day several of us accompanied Dave Green to the Somerset Levels to an area recently acquired by English Nature from Fissons. It was a calcareous fen overlaid by peat and provided us with some most unusual plants. To start with there appeared to be a population of the 'new' Fen nettle, *Urtica gallopsifolia*, reputed not to sting. We tentatively tried some and decided that as they were only slightly stingy they were perhaps hybrids. There were numbers of typical bog species but *Osmunda*, Cornish Moneywort, Fine-leaved Water Dropwort and Marsh Fern were the most notable. After lunch we investigated a most exciting green ditch from which were obtained five species of Duckweed, including *Wolffia*, the smallest British flowering plant at all of 0.5mm diameter. Later, Marsh Pea and Frogbit were discovered along with rare grasses, *Poa palustris* and *Catabrosa aquatica*.

Barbara Last.

JULY 16th 1994. RECORDING FOR DORSET FLORA.

Seven members from WBS had a warm and interesting day 'Tetrad bashing' near Shaftesbury, working with members of the Dorset Trust. We were split into 4 groups and went to different tetrads. The River Stour yielded Arrowhead (*Sagittaria sagittifolia*) and Corky-fruited Water-dropwort (*Oenanthe pimpinelloides*) was found in two tetrads. One group found six sedges in Priors Wood. Elecampane (*Inula helenium*) was spotted on a roadside verge but the most interesting find of the day was the third ever recording in Dorset of French Oat grass (*Gaudinia fragilis*) - a grass which is almost equally rare in Wiltshire.

Rita Grose.

AUGUST 10th 1994. BRADFORD ON AVON RIVER & CANAL WALK.

"It won't be very interesting", apologised Gwyneth Yerrington as we gathered on this glorious summer's one raw day. "The Greater Dodder hasn't appeared in its usual sites". (*Cuscuta europaea* - nationally scarce, our only locations being beside the Bristol Avon between Melksham and Bath). "It doesn't have to be all rarities", said Joy Newton, cheerfully. We found ourselves looking more closely at ordinary plants and thereby learning more; finding the differences between the various Pondweeds, both broad and narrow-leaved (the Fennel Pondweed, *Potamogeton pectinatus*, was later identified at home); remarking on the two distinct shapes of Arrowhead leaves (*Sagittaria sagittifolia*); endlessly dissecting stem leaves of the Burdock (*Arctium*) to discover which was the Greater; and we noticed the abundance of Wild Carrot and Shepherd's Rod (*Dipsacus pilosus*). As we followed the river's left bank to Avoncliff and returned along the right bank of the Kennet & Avon Canal, we found a white-flowered Watted Thistle (*Carduus acanthoides*), flowing Water Bistort (*Polygonum amphibium*) and Water Chickweed (*Myosoton aquaticum*). With more 'Time to stand and stare' we could appreciate the forms of some of the commonest plants; the artistic arrangement of leaves and spikes of Greater Plantain (*Plantago major*), the Arrowhead's balance of 3-way veins and the architectural spires of Mugwort (*Artemisia vulgaris*). Not interesting? No rarities? I almost forgot. On one small patch of nettles we found Gwyneth's missing Dodder!

* = Small Thistle

Jean Maitland.

W.B.S.WINTER MEETINGS 1994/95

We welcome members and friends to our meetings whether you are a comparative beginner or more experienced. If you have any queries or suggestions for the future, please contact:-

Joy Newton, 1, Grasshills, Aldbourne, Marlborough, Wiltshire.SN8 2EH
Telephone 0672 40356

1. Saturday 19th November '94. 10.00am. REDWAY PLAIN LONGLEAT WOODS.G.R.ST844434
Leader Dave Green.
Morning only. We will look at remnants of Heathland Flora well known to Grose, and attempt to identify non-native conifers.
Take the A362 Frome road West from Warminster. Turn South at the main entrance to Longleat, Picket Post Gate. After 100 Metres turn left and very soon left again. After half Kilometre park on right side of verge.
2. Saturday 3rd December '94. 2.00pm. MARLBOROUGH COLLEGE SCIENCE LABORATORIES.
Talk, with slides, by Barbara Last. Western USA - 'The Red Desert'.
Tea interval for discussion and specimen identification.
3. Saturday 28th January '95. 2.00pm. MARLBOROUGH COLLEGE SCIENCE LABORATORIES.
Talk, with slides, by John Presland. 'The Wild Flowers of Winsley'.
Tea interval for discussion and specimen identification.

***** ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING *****

SATURDAY 4th MARCH 1995

4. 2.00 pm
THE MUSEUM, LONG STREET, DEVIZES.

After the official business there will be a tea interval followed by a short Quiz/Slide show given by Maureen Ponting.

5. Tuesday 4th April '95. 10.00am. SAVERNAKE FOREST ARBORETUM IN SPRING.
Leaders Jack Oliver and Maureen Ponting. G.R.SU 225668
Morning only. Meet at Eight Walks, Savernake Forest.
A follow-up to our Autumn meeting for those who missed it and those who would like to look and learn again.
6. On a Saturday in April, Rod Stern has agreed to help us with Bryophytes again in Savernake Forest, with an afternoon spent in Marlborough College Science Laboratories to examine specimens.
Details of the date in the Spring Newsletter.

Instructions for finding the Science Laboratories, Marlborough College:-

Turn South off A4 - 100 metres West of College Bridge, just west of the Memorial Hall. Continue for 200 metres past the Science Laboratories and park in the Parade Ground. The main entrance to the Science Laboratories is between the Labs and the Memorial Hall.

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WILTSHIRE PLANT RECORDS.

Continue to send all information to Dave Green (VC7) or Ann Hutchison (VC8) and Malcolm Hardstaff (for W.B.S. Annual Review).

The Science Sub-Group will be giving some thought as to what records are required. In the meantime, here are some suggestions of what is of interest. They involve reference to the new Wiltshire Flora (1993).

Native Species, Subspecies and Hybrids.

- a) Records for uncommon species for which there is no published map, especially if the locality is thought to be new.
- b) Records which put a new dot on the map. Each dot is located in the centre of a 2km square.
- c) Species not recorded for some years (see Wilts Flora Appendix 1V p 370).

Introduced Species.

These are a particular problem. The following suggestions as to what to include are based on D.H.Kent's List of Vascular Plants of the British Isles (BSBI 1992). Include "introduced species, including garden plants which have spread to the wild, which are established in a locality for a period of 5 years, are competing with other vegetation where present and are reproducing by seed or sucker".

Note that VC recorders will continue to protect the locations of threatened species by not publishing details.

Malcolm Hardstaff.

RIVERSIDE AND CHANNEL PLANTS (2) SCRAMBLING SPECIES & TREES.

Details were given on the study carried out on the Rivers Avon, Ebbles and Kennet by WBS volunteers in Newsletter 4. These charts are a continuation of the detailed study started in 1992.

Chart 'A' shows the 8 most common climbers, twiners and scramblers, and Chart 'B' shows the 12 most common trees and shrubs, ^{by (or in)} the 3 rivers.

Jack Oliver.

CHART 'A'

ORDER OF ABUNDANCE	EBBLE		AVON and tributaries		KENNET (Winterbourne)		KENNET (Mainstream)	
	Banks	Channel	Banks	Channel	Banks	Channel	Banks	Channel
1st	Ivy	Bellbine (Cal. Sepium)	Cleavers	Cleavers	Cleavers	Cleavers	Cleavers	Woody Nightshade
2nd	Bramble	Woody Nightshade	Bellbine	Woody Nightshade	Bellbine	Woody Nightshade	Ivy	Cleavers
3rd	Cleavers	Cleavers	Dog Rose	-	Woody Nightshade	Bellbine	Woody Nightshade	Bellbine
4th	Woody Nightshade	-	Bramble	-	Ivy	Ivy	Bellbine	Bramble
5th	Dog Rose	-	Woody Nightshade	-	Bramble	Bramble	Bramble	Ivy
6th	Bellbine	-	Bush Vetch	-	Dog Rose	Large Bellbine	Dog Rose	-
7th	Traveller's Joy	-	Common Vetch	-	Bindweed	-	Dewberry	-
8th or 8th =	Black Bryony	-	Bindweed and Hop	-	Large Bellbine (Cal. silvat)	-	Bush Vetch Field Rose Large Bellbine (Cal. sylv.)	

ORDER OF COMMONNESS	EBBLE		AVON and tributaries		KENNET (Winterbourne) (Isolated plants) 1992		KENNET (Mainstream)	
	Banks	Channel	Banks	Channel	Banks	Channel	Banks	Channel
1st	Ash		Hawthorn		Hawthorn	Crack Willow	Hawthorn	
2nd	Crack Willow		Crack Willow		Elder	Osier	Ash	
3rd	Elder		Alder		Ash	Ash (Mainly seedlings)	White Willow	
4th	Hawthorn		Elder		White Willow	Hawthorn (Mainly seedlings)	Osier	
5th	English Elm		Ash		Sycamore	Red Currant	Crack Willow	
6th	Sycamore		Grey Willow		Crack Willow	English Elm (Suckers)	Elder	
7th	White Willow		Field Maple		English Elm	Horse Chestnut (seedlings)	English Elm	
8th	Hazel		White Willow		Hazel	Grey Willow	Sloe	
9th	Purple Willow		Osier		Sloe		Pedunculate Oak	
10th	Sloe		Hazel		Field Maple		Sycamore	
11th	Goat Willow		Sloe		Horse Chestnut		Purple Willow	
12th or 12th =	Snowberry Spindle Guelder-rose		Goat Willow Pedunculate Oak Flowering currant		Cherry Grey Willow Osier Oak Red Dogwood		Hybrid Black Poplar Yew Hazel Goat Willow	

PHOTOGRAPHING PLANTS 2: PLANTS IN CONTEXT

By John Presland

The first article in this series concentrated on photographing just the plant as a whole, the priority being to show its features as clearly as possible. Very often, however, one often wants to show the plant in it's habitat, with both clear - or the background may be included to get a more attractive picture.

For photographing most plants in context, a wide angle lens is needed - I use a 28 mm lens. This provides a large depth of focus, so that the plant in the foreground and the habitat in the background can both be in focus. It also, in effect, distorts the picture so that the background appears further away. This enables you to get more of it in without sacrificing much of your subject. I've used this, for instance, to obtain a picture of a sizeable alpine plant with mountain scenery behind - or a clump of a large umbellifer with a country lane going off into the distance behind - with everything in sharp focus.

With smaller plants, such as a dandelion, for instance, the lens would have to have such a wide angle to achieve the above results that the distortion would become too obvious. A device I have used a few times in these cases is a split field. This is essentially half a close-up lens which is screwed on over the main lens. The result is that the half of the view seen through the close-up half can be focused clearly on the dandelion, while the half seen through the blank half is focused on the background. It may take some minutes of experimenting with the focusing and light metering mechanisms to get it just right. It also needs to be borne in mind that the result is a picture which has the plant in focus and the background blurred on one side and the background in focus and anything close up blurred on the other side. The plant does, therefore need to be strategically placed, and the view as a whole composed to distract attention from the two-half nature of the picture. By this method, I did manage to get a convincing picture of a single dandelion close up with a background of a mass of other dandelions receding into the distance. I hope to use the technique more as I get older and more patient.

A long focus lens also has its uses. I use a 105mm lens, but a 200mm would probably be better in some instances. These lenses frame a smaller field of view than other lenses and are therefore useful when something distant needs to be "brought nearer". Long focus lenses also distort, but in the opposite way to a wide angle lens. They bring near and distant objects apparently closer together. This is sometimes useful when taking, say, a field full of flowers. What looks dramatic to the eye can, with a standard 50mm lens, be disappointing, in that the field doesn't look as full of flowers as you thought. The long focus lens decreases the gaps between the flowers and makes them look more crowded. Scenes can even be made more dramatic than in real life. A largeish plant with a somewhat distant hill behind, for instance, can be transformed into one with an apparently precipitous mountain towering over it. Unfortunately, these lenses have a narrow depth of focus and it may sometimes be difficult to get both near and distant objects in focus. It's a technique requiring experimentation.

The attractiveness or interest of the picture will owe much to the selection of the background. Among the pictures I've been particularly pleased with have been rose hips against a blue sky, purple loosestrife against a Wiltshire river, a group of early spider orchids against the sea in Dorset, an asphodel against the Greek Theatre at Taormina in Sicily with the sea beyond, and a martagon lily against a mountain panorama in the Dolomites. A plant often looks more attractive in a particular light or illuminated in a particular way e.g. blackthorn in the evening light, or a group of flowers with the sun shining through the petals. In many of these cases the need is for opportunism rather than photographic technique. If you think a particular framing of a plant might make an effective picture, don't ponder on it or leave it to take on the way back - take it now!.

The previous article described ways of making a plant stand out from its background. Some of those techniques are also relevant here. Although we are trying to include the background, we don't want to lose the plant in the process. Unfortunately, some of the techniques I described make the plant stand out at the expense of a clear representation of the background. It may, of course, sometimes be sufficient to have just an impression of the background - hazy mountains can look very attractive. Otherwise, it is best to try to compose the picture so that the plant is positioned in front of the part of the background which contrasts with it most.

A particular problem is pale blue and hazy skies. A polarising filter is supposed to darken them if the picture is taken at angle of 30 to 90 degrees to the sun. However, I've not tried it. It also reduces reflections - for instance, when the reflections in a water background are so bright that a white-flowered plant is lost against them. This property makes it particularly useful for taking plants which are underwater - from above the water, that is. Another of its effects is to increase the contrast between a flower and a background such as water or sky. It should be used at 30-40 degrees to the reflecting medium for best results.

An ultraviolet filter is supposed to help with a blue haze at high altitudes. Again, I can't comment on this from personal experience because I keep a Hoya Skylight 1B filter (which does filter out ultraviolet radiation), on the lens all the time, so I can't compare the two conditions. (This filter makes no difference to any other picture and it protects the lens against mechanical damage).

Other filters which are said to be useful are green (e.g. Hoya X1) for lightening foliage in sunlight; amber (e.g. Hoya 81A) for reducing excessive blue on cloudy or rainy day; yellow (e.g. Hoya K2) for improving contrast between blue sky with clouds and foreground. However, these are future projects for me.

Sometimes, of course, the plant and the background are one. I have particular pleasure from such photographs of my own as a white sweep of river water crowfoot extending towards and under a bridge on the Bristol Avon, an almost totally yellow field of buttercups at Trowbridge, a pale blue carpet of slender speedwell on a grassy bank seen through a wooden fence at Turleigh, and a mass of yellow alexanders descending to the sea at Folkestone. In such pictures, the individual characteristics of the of the plants may not be apparent at all, but you can see how they contribute to the landscape. In such pictures, we can also utilise the characteristics of the wide angle or long focus lenses described above. I used a long focus lens, for instance, to make a distant hillside red with poppies fill almost the whole picture rather than just be a bit in the middle. With wide angle lenses, a foreground object can be included, in focus, to increase the impression of depth and make it seem more like a real life scene.

Another kind of photograph shows a plant in its immediate environment, such as my shots in the new Wiltshire flora of fool's parsley and poppies on the edge of a rape field, three different species of fern on a limestone wall and greater yellow stonecrop on a dry stone wall. Some of these can be difficult. For instance, my first attempt at the ferns made them too dark, and I had to have another try with a larger aperture. Weeds in agricultural crops can be completely lost and again several different apertures may need to be tried. Sometimes flash will make them clearer, which works so long as you don't want any background further away to be included. There are techniques for using natural light and flash in the same shot to overcome this problem, but I doubt my ability to describe them clearly without excessive length, and I haven't tried them yet.

At the end of this second article, there remains the topic of photographing plants in close-up. That will be the subject of a third article.