

# Newsletter

## Issue 11 Summer 1997

### WILTSHIRE BOTANICAL SOCIETY

#### Mud, Curious Mud or a Unique Phenomenon in Wiltshire

*Wiltshire may have more flower-rich chalk grassland than every other county in Britain, but it is also home to a hydro-geological feature probably unique in Britain & possibly in Northern Europe.*

Intrigued ? then read on

Some 23 years ago, Dr Willy Stanton, then working for the Water Authority, came across what are now known as **Wootton Bassett Mud Springs**.

In a wooded area of about a quarter of an acre to the south of the town, there are several raised 'glisters' of cold grey mud, each several metres across. It is supposed that the liquid mud is being pushed up slowly from at least 20m deep from the Kimridge Clay.

It has also been suggested that there is a fault in the clay allowing water through from the underlying Coralline Ragstone (Coral Rag). However, this is only supposition, and faults in clay are difficult to map. Three to five litres of mud come to the surface every day and the mud never settles out of suspension.

A small stream runs through the site and after rain it is fairly easy to see the various fossils that are brought up with the mud. Ammonites have been described by Dr Neville Hollingworth of NERC as some of the finest preserved specimens anywhere. They retain their original shells as well as their iridescence. Bivalve fossils also occur and some of these even have their original organic ligaments. Previously undescribed 'shrimps' have been found, as well as Brachiopods and Clams. These fossils are up to 150 million years old and are slowly but continually being brought up to the surface. Ironically, although the 'springs' have been in existence for five thousand years, the real importance of the site has only recently been highlighted.

#### Fifth Anniversary Issue

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When proposals of a possible bypass for Wootton Bassett were tabled in 1995, one of the earlier routes ran very near the mud springs which are actually owned by Wiltshire County Council. Since then, English Nature has commissioned a study, funded by North Wiltshire District Council and Wootton Bassett Town Council and the site will soon be confirmed as a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

**Paul Darby**

# SUMMER MEETINGS 1997

**Sunday 27th April** 10.30am GR: SU 017938  
**Clattinger Farm**

Leaders: Dave Green and Paul Darby

This is the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust's very newest reserve. It is a very rare large area of lowland hay meadow and old pasture which has stunning flora. A chance to see a farm at fritillary time which has never been 'improved'..

Take a minor road North from Minety towards Somerford Keynes and park at farm gateway entrance, North East of Clattinger Farm on map. Bring lunch or if you prefer, just come for the morning.

**Wednesday 7th May 10.00am GR: ST 881566**  
**Biss Wood, near Trowbridge**

Leader: Gilbert Green

The Owner has kindly agreed to show us his traditionally managed woodland, with good flora, butterflies and birds, so bring binoculars. He has supplied us with interesting background information about the woodland management -- ask Jack Oliver to send you a copy beforehand if you wish.

We will have lunch in Biss Wood, then visit the adjacent Green Lane Wood in the afternoon. We will record the flora in both woods. Park at the entrance to Biss Wood, just off the A350 Melksham/Westbury Road. Bring lunch.

**Wednesday 4th June 10.00am GR: SU 112256**  
**Coombe Bisset Down**

Leader: Barbara Last

Explore this new Wiltshire Wildlife Trust reserve, purchased with help from the National Lottery. Very good downland flora, with orchids and butterflies. Approach from the A354. At Coombe Bisset village, turn East at Church, pass shop on left and take 2nd right by a chapel.. Park on track.. Morning only

**Saturday 14th June** 10.30am GR: SU 017938  
**Clattinger Farm**

Leaders: Dave Green and Paul Darby

A second visit to see this wonderful new reserve; lowland hay meadows and old pasture which has never been 'improved'. We should see some Burnt Orchids as well as many meadow species. Take a minor road North from Minety towards Somerford Common and park at farm track entrance. This is North East of Clattinger Farm on map.

Bring lunch or just come for the morning if you prefer.

**Sunday 22nd June** 10.00am GR: ST 982524  
**Great Cheverell Hill, near Devizes**

Leader: John Presland

Exceptionally fine downland of national importance. Sometimes 40 different species may be found in a square metre, including a number of rarities.

Take the minor road opposite the village sign for Lithe Cheverell South from the 83098 West Lavington to Westbury road and park by the barn at the GR above.

Morning only. Bring lunch if coming to Morgans Hill pm.

**Sunday 22 June** 2.00pm GR: SU 020672  
**Morgans Hill**

Leader: John Presland

Morgans Hill is another outstanding example of chalk downland, with 11 species of orchid recorded.

Meet at Smallgrain plantation picnic site car park which is on the minor road signed Blackland, North from the A361 Beckhampton to Devizes road.

**Tuesday 1st July** 6.00pm GR: SU 041701  
**Cherhill Down**

Leaders: Maureen Ponting and Joy Newton

Extensive National Trust downland: junipers, orchids & good butterflies. We reach the down by walking up an orchid-lined track South from the A4. There are several tracks: ours is NOT the one signed to Oldbury Castle. Take one at the eastern edge of Cherhill Village; there is a small layby (a disused bus stop) at the bottom, opposite a yellow house. Park here or in another 30m to the west.

**Sunday 6th July** 10.30am GR: SZ 262984  
**New Forest**

Leader: Vera Scott

We should see species of calcareous mire, including *Epipactis palustris* and *Gymnadenia conopsea* ssp. *borealis*. There are acid wet heath plants including *Pinguicula lusitanica*, and by Avon Water we will see *Beidellia ranunculoides* and *Oenanthe fistulosa*.

Take A31 to Cadnam and Picket Post. Turn left through Burley St and Burley. At junction at SU 255007, signed Lymington, Sway & Set Thomas caravan site, turn right. At SZ273999, turn right over cattle grid signed Sway into Brighton Road. At SZ275986 take a very sharp turn right; there is a small post box here.

Bring lunch and footwear for boggy conditions.

**Saturday 12th July** 10.30am GR: SU 225668  
**Savernake Forest**

Leader: Rob Randall

'Brambles for Beginners'

Rob is going to help us recognise some of the brambles. Park at 8 Walks on main Grand Avenue through the forest. Bring lunch, secateurs, newspapers and carrier bags.

**Sunday 20th July 10.00am GR: SU 159689**  
**Newly planted Arboretum, Clatford, W. of Marlborough**

Leader: Jack Oliver

175 tree species young plants around the perimeter of a previously species-poor and over-enriched water meadow by the River Kennet but where there is some recovering riverside & meadow vegetation. This young arboretum contains three specialised tree collections:-

1. *Tilia* spp (Northern Hemisphere) 2. Natives (including *Populus nigra* ssp. *betulifolia* & 12 endemic *Sorbus* species) 3. Young trees grown from seed collected by recent botanical expeditions for the Edinburgh Royal Botanic Garden Conifer Conservation Programme. The Arboretum is on the South side of the A4, 3km west of Marlborough opposite a small industrial estate (Pegasus Aviation, Cyclone Airports etc).

Meet at West gate on Clatford road, South from the A4.

Parking inside. Close gate on account of animals. Dogs permitted. Bring lunch if staying for afternoon

**Sunday 27 July** 10.30am GR: ST 789609  
**Waterways in the Limpley Stoke Valley,  
nr Bradford on Avon**

Leader: John Presland

The valley has a rich variety of river, canal & marsh plants, including some rarities.

We meet in the lane lying South of the 83108 Bradford-on-Avon to Bath road between Winsley and Limpley Stoke. Parking space in the lane at the GR above should be filled first, after which cars can be parked in Sir Donald and Lady Maitland's drive (Murhill Farm House) a little way down the hill.

Bring lunch which will need to be carried with us.

**Tuesday 5 August** 10.00am GR: SU 030684  
**Cherhill Down**

Leaders: Maureen Ponting and Joy Newton

There are 'secret valleys' in this extensive National Trust downland. We have a very easy 20 minute walk to reach the best. There should be good downland flora, a dewpond and fantastic views.

We approach by a different route from that taken in July. From the North, turn South off the A4 at 016697, then East at Blacklands crossroads. From the South, take the Blacklands Road off the A361 and turn East at the Blacklands crossroads. Pass Manor Farm and park near South Farm, Calstone Wellington - about 2km. Bring lunch.

**Sunday 17th August 10.30am** GR: SU 503636  
**Greenham Common**

Leader: Malcolm Storey

Very interesting unspoilt grassland and heathland with many unusual species. From the A34 South of Newbury turn East onto the A339 signed Greenham Common at roundabout at SU 476640.

Meet at main entrance to Greenham Common on left at right hand bend 2km down road.

Bring lunch

**Saturday 18th October 10.00am GR: SU 197680**  
**Savernake Forest - Postern Hill**

Leaders: Peter Marren and Malcolm Storey

Fungus Foray

We will identify some of the very good fungi in Savernake Forest

Meet in Postern Hill picnic site car park

Morning only

For further information, contact : Joy Newton,  
1 Grasshills, Aldbourne, Marlborough SN8 2EH  
Tel.: (01672) 540356

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sites, particularly grassland which change hands.  
This is often when they are most vulnerable.

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Jack Oliver has decided for personal reasons to resign as Secretary and was thanked for his contribution to the Society by the Chairman. Jean Wall has taken over as Secretary. Her role as Treasurer has been filled by **Gwyneth Yerrington**. Three vacancies on the Committee were taken up by **Louisa Killgallon, John Harry & Christopher Perraton**. All changes were duly proposed, seconded and carried unanimously.

**Malcolm Hardstaff.**

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING: - - -

Preliminary Report

The AGM of the Society, was held in Devizes on 8th March. Here are some extracts from the Minutes:

Items from the Chairman's Report:

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Work on, our contribution to Atlas 2000 has begun. Members have taken on 10k squares, but few records have so far reached the recorders. The Science Group, with help from Sally Scott-White of the Devizes Museum, has made available print-outs for each 10k square (hectad) which indicate the number of species recorded in the Wilts Flora Mapping project. The Secretary also has species lists for each 10k square. Records sent in between 1991-1995 are stored on computer disk but will have to be transferred to another programme suitable for transmission to the National Biological Records Centre.

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Members were encouraged to take part in survey work on *Gentianella anglica* (Early Gentian). The journal Plant Life (see Spring 1996 Newsletter) is focussing on this species. Wiltshire has the highest concentration of records in Britain. It has a very short flowering period, between mid-May and early June, the precise timing being weather-dependent. **Phil Wilson** will be surveying major sites. Members are asked to make counts of population and record sites by 6 figure grid references and locality names. Records should be returned by September.

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The Institute of Terrestrial Ecology (ITE) instigated a survey of Salisbury Plain in 1996. Our chairman and 13 other botanists took part. Information will eventually come to the Wiltshire Biological Records Centre. The Survey gave botanists a chance to visit parts of the Plain seldom open to anyone and many significant finds were made, eg: *Cirsium tuberosum* in much greater numbers than previously recorded. *Erucastrum gallicum* (Hairy Rocket) has also spread along tank tracks.

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*Populus nigra* specimens located in the Thamesdown area are to have Tree Preservation Orders. There is a cluster of female trees North of Swindon, however it appears that propagation is entirely vegetative. There are approximately 17 distinct clones. Wilts has more than 500 specimens of this rare native tree.

Other Points from the Meeting:

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**Paul Darby** thanked volunteers who helped with the Wildlife Sites Project. Work will continue through 1997. Some 200 sites have been examined since last April and volunteers are needed for this season's work. Paul also asked to be informed of

## BOTANICAL NOTES FROM THE SOUTH

by Barbara Last

( held over from the Autumn issue)

Hot weather was again a feature last August, and with low rainfall the soil moisture deficit was 120mm for the region. However, there were still a good number of flowers in evidence.

*Prickly Lettuce (Lactuca serriola)* has occurred on several sites but is not generally common. I have found it on waste ground in Stratford Tony and have had reports on it from both Porton and Amesbury. It is a plant of disturbed ground and is sometimes known as the 'Compass Plant' as the leaves point east-west. Underneath, the mid vein and along the edges are lines of sharp spines. It is a tall biennial and exudes a milky juice when damaged. This is bitter and narcotic, drying to a lump - *lactucarium* - which has been used as an adulterant to opium.

*Rough-headed Poppy (Papaver argemone/Papaver hybridism)* is a declining arable weed, but I have seen it in profusion in a linseed field near Pepperbox Hill. It has a small crimson flower with a black centre, giving way to a rather prickly seed capsule. Its distribution follows the chalk and it may be found on the margins of cereal crops where regimes of herbicide and fertiliser are less intense. It is mainly self-pollinated, but although prolific, has an inefficient seed dispersal.

The *Common Field Poppy (Papaver Rhoeas)* made a good show in soils recently disturbed and where the herbicide had missed it. There is an association with sleep and death, perhaps because of its occurrence on the disturbed soil of battlefields.

There is an old belief that smelling poppies produces a headache. In fact, the Field Poppy is only mildly narcotic, containing the alkaloid *Rhoadine*, unlike the opium poppy which contains an assemblage of alkaloids. The seeds are very long-lived and may persist with a 60% viability for 80 years. They have been a cornfield weed since the Bronze Age, the 12th Dynasty in Egypt and 3000 BC in Babylon. These seeds are commonly used in poppy-seed bread, Middle-Eastern confection. An edible oil can be extracted and is used in France and Germany. In the 18th Century, mill-workers made a beverage 'toddy' from the seeds and there was also a syrup made called 'shakers' to quieten children.

Barbara Last

Last Open Meeting of the Year

## CH1SBURY WOOD, Great Bedwyn

November 16th

We met just inside the wood on a cold, overcast day. The cars kept arriving and there were eventually sixteen members present, including our leader **Dave Green**. The trees had enough leaves left on their branches to make the scene interesting and we could hear the distant sound of shotguns, the call of pheasants and forestry buzz-saws.

We walked through the wood looking for anything of interest. We discussed the *Male* and *Scaly Male Ferns (Dryopteris felix-mas* and *Dryopteris affinis)* and compared the shape of their pinnules. In one area we found several clumps of *Great Wood-rush (Lazula sylvatica)* which is only found rarely in the north of the County. *Common Gromwell (Lithospermum officinale)*, with its pretty pearl-like seeds, grew by the side of the track. A complete list of finds was made by **Audrey Summers**.

We progressed as far as the pond which Dave remembered as an interesting habitat, but the years have not dealt kindly -- it was very barren. It may be the result of the many resident ducks that rose into the air as we approached and flew round our heads until we departed.

**Jack Oliver**, with his many interesting sidelines, found seven different self-set conifer seedlings -- he was pleased. We found various fungi, some spectacularly coloured.

Amongst the leaf litter, one member uncovered *Horn of Plenty (Craterellus cornucopioides)* 'As found in Sainsbury's' he remarked, but another member knew it as "*Death's Trumpet*" - no comment.

It was a most pleasant end-of-season meeting and everyone seemed to enjoy it. Perhaps it could become a permanent fixture on the Winter programme?

**Eileen Rollo**

## MIDDLETON DOWN

Barbara and Dick Last  
7th December 1996

*Early Gentian, Cowslips, Orchids-- Early Purple, Burnt Tip, Frog, Autumn Ladies' Tresses, Knapweeds, Autumn Gentian, Harebells, Thyme, Bellflowers, Yellow Rattle, Thistles* etc, etc .... just some of the flowers beautifully photographed on slides of Middleton Down that **Barbara and Dick Last** presented on 7th December.

Butterflies, moths, beetles, flies, ants and spiders also live on the Downs. Everything has its own natural place where the soil, vegetation and aspect suit perfectly.

Middleton Down consists of three distinct 'downs' : Lime Kiln Bottom, Gorse Down and Rats Castle Bottom, all typical old chalk downlands. Sheep have always been grazed, and now that the Reserve is managed, young ewes are regularly grazed from autumn till spring. Some areas have cattle too where the brush is most vigorous.

Barbara and Dick are the wardens; they gave half the cost of purchase and in 1988 the reserve was all acquired by the Wiltshire Trust. Middleton Down lies south of the village of Broad Chalk, approximately 8 miles west of Salisbury.

15 members thoroughly enjoyed the slides and presentation - and the opportunity to see so much beauty in dark December.

**Joan Woodgate**

## Plants of the Pyrenees

Maureen Ponting  
18th January 1997

This talk covered expeditions to a wide and varied terrain on both French and Spanish sides of the Pyrenees and also the Cantabrian Mountains which are a continuation running roughly parallel to the north coast of Spain.

The season covered a period from mid-May to early July and the plants though mainly of shorter kinds went from cushions of *Chamaejasme* and *Dianthus monspessulanus* to trees of *Fagus Sylvestris* and *Pinus uncinata*. The immense drooping spikes of *Saxifraga longifolia* were impressive, and the tiny fringed bells of *Soldanella alpina*, emerging from melting snow, intriguing.

For beauty of flower, how about *Raymonda myconi*, *Antirrhinum majus*, *Paradisea liliastrum*, *Dactylorhiza majalis* or *Rosa pendulina* ? For curiosity, how about *Dioscorea pyrenaica*, a member of the tropical Yarn family and a rare Pyrenean endemic ?

A valuable insight for the horticulturalists amongst us was the view of several species in their natural habitats, such as *Euphorbia characias*, *Aster alpinus*, *Allium moly*, *Rhododendron ferrugineum* and *Geranium cinereum*.

It is impossible in the short article allowed to do justice to the large number of slides shown, but I know I can speak for the twenty members present when I say that the gloom of this grey January afternoon was forgotten whilst Maureen transported us to a world of beautiful scenery and fascinating botanising. Thank you !

**Gwyneth Yerrington**

## The Meadows & Waysides of Winsley

John Presland  
8th February 1997

On 8th February, 15 members of the Society were treated to one of **John Presland's** three illustrated talks on the flowers of Winsley. This one was on *Meadows and Waysides*. The slides were excellent, as usual, particularly the close-ups.

Winsley's soils are largely oolitic limestone, and John pointed out that a number of plants which grow on a wide range of soils in Southern Europe, are 'calicoles' here, because limey soils are warmer and drier and these plants are at the northern edge of their range.

Calicoles need in-built drought resistance and adaptations include small hairy leaves (eg: Rockrose and Thyme) to reduce evaporation, and long taproots (eg: Salad Burnet & Scabious). They also need to avoid grazing damage, and ground- hugging rosettes, spiny leaves and stems are examples of adaptations.

Wayside plants included Deadly Nightshade and Henbane -- the latter appearing in 1996 on the earthworks for the new Winsley by-pass. After the Winsley plants had been illustrated, John took us on a tour of other Wiltshire plants.

Tea was then enjoyed by all, when Jack Oliver had some adverts for new botanical magazines to tempt us.

**Simon Young**

# Pot Pourri

++' At the Annual General Meeting in March **Jack Oliver** retired after five busy years as initiator and Secretary of the Society. On behalf of all our readers, we would like to thank Jack for his continuing advice and very considerable help in the physical production and mailing of the Newsletter.

++ **Jean Wall**, our former Treasurer, now becomes Secretary in place of Jack & Gwyneth Yerrington becomes Treasurer. For a full slate of Committee members, see the Annual Meeting report on page 3.

++ A visiting Yorkshire naturalist exclaimed over the size and diversity of our new Summer programme. From a Yorkshireman, this is praise indeed! But Summer's promise and last Winter's successful season of lectures are the sole work of our Events Secretary, **Joy Newton** who has built our programmes over the years to their present level..

++ As corporate members of the Botanical Society of the British Isles our Society keeps copies of *Watsonia* and *BSBI Newsletter*. Anyone wanting to consult these should get in touch with Gwyneth Yerrington (01225 862740). However, some copies are missing, believed already borrowed. Please return any of these speedily to Gwyneth..

++ **John Presland , Gwyneth Yerrington and Joan Woodgate** have produced a number of display panels using some of John's beautiful photographs. These panels are available on loan to members for local use and are ideal for helping promote the work and benefits of membership of our Society. Gwyneth (01225 862740) will provide.

++ **Paul Darby** is interested in recording Ancient & Distinctive Trees in Wiltshire. Photographs would also be valuable. Get in touch with Paul at the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (01380 725670). Plans are already afoot to investigate Savernake Forest in the Autumn.

++ Extra copies of the Summer Events Card are available in limited quantity from Joy Newton (tel: 01672 540356) for distribution to potential members

++ New or potential members are most welcome to any of our Summer Meetings which are listed on pages 2 - 3. Details can be obtained from Hon. Secretary, **Jean Wall** (01666 823865) Winter Meetings start in November & the Autumn Newsletter and Events card will be circulated to members in October.

## STOP PRESS

### Research & Publication by Members

If you are involved in any botanical or ecological research or have been published in the last two years or so, please let us know during the Summer so we can write it up in our next issue.

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## Five Years Old This Month .....

At one of the last meetings of the Wiltshire Flora Mapping Project held at Lackham College in 1991, Jack Oliver suggested that the previous eight years' endeavour should not end with the publication of the Wiltshire Flora (eventually published in 1993). There was general agreement.

Following the final meeting on 14th March 1992, an informal gathering was held to inaugurate the Wiltshire Botanical Society. Inaugural members were **Dorothy Cooper, Dave Green, Rita Grose, Malcolm Hardstaff, Katie Long** (then Hill), **Joy Newton, Jack Oliver, John Presland, John Rayner, Audrey Summers and Phil Wilson**.

The first issue of the Society's Newsletter appeared almost immediately, in April 1992, so Happy Fifth Birthday to both Society and Newsletter.

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# Wiltshire's Seaside Flora

The title may seem something of an oxymoron, but in fact Wiltshire supports an expanding population of marine and salt-tolerant plants. For instance, three species of native British plants normally associated with sea shores now occur in the county: *Cochlearia danica* (Danish Scurvygrass), *Cochlearia officinalis* (Common Scurvygrass) and *Puccinella distans* (Reflexed Saltmarsh-Grass).

The spread of these species into Wiltshire can be attributed to the salting of major roads in winter and is well known in many counties. But not surprisingly, the invasion of landlocked Wiltshire has taken longer than in counties bordering the coast.

All three species tend to favour the central reservations of our largest & fastest roads where spray from speeding traffic perhaps mimics the spray occurring in the natural habitats of these plants. They also occur on road verges, but in lower densities, and not beyond 1m from the carriageway.

*C. danica* is the most frequent of the three and can be identified easily (and at speed in a passing car) by its pink inflorescence in March-May. The other two are as yet very rare in the county with only one record each.

How the plants first got a foothold on British roads is a matter of some conjecture, however, their route to Wiltshire is rather clearer.

Since I travel upwards of 30,000 miles each year on British roads, mostly on motorways, I have been able to watch over several years the progress of *C. danica* along the system around Bristol and on to the M4, then moving eastwards towards the Wiltshire border.

At the same time, I was aware of the spread of the species on the M4 westwards from Reading. During the early Spring of 1996 I noted new locations from the West Wiltshire border along the M4 towards junction 14 near Swindon.

The M4 and its radiating major roads are the first location where the three species were recorded in the County between 1993 and 1995.



In the South, *C. danica* seems to be centred along the A303, and recently on main roads such as the A360 and A36 around Salisbury.

Do look out for these plants on your travels in Wiltshire in the coming year.

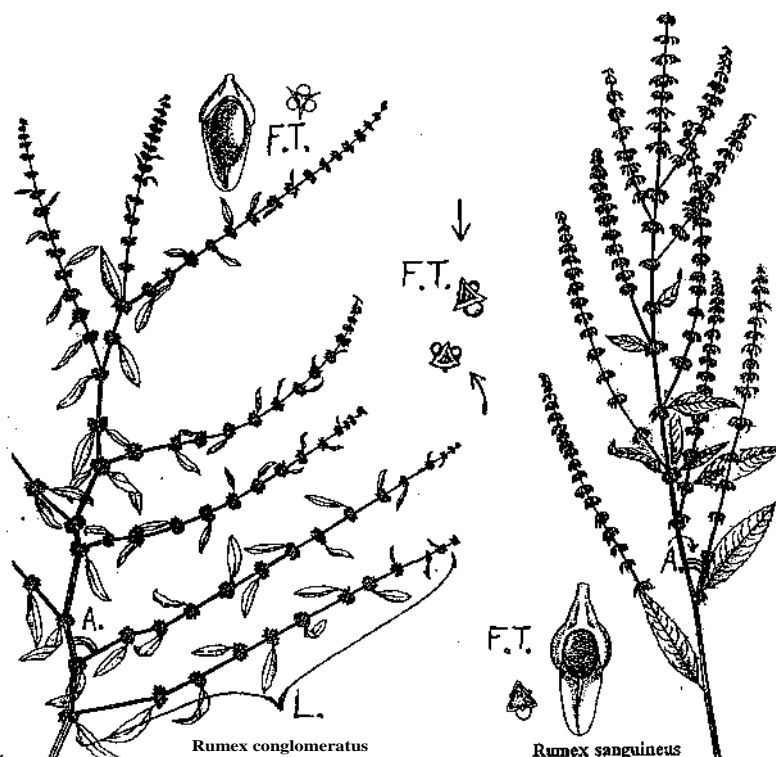
Please send any records to me at:  
Tower House, 297 Bloomfield Road,  
Bath BA 12 2NU

Dave Green

## INTERMEDIATES in IDENTIFICATION

The picture shows the inflorescences of Clustered Dock on the left and Wood Dock on the right, together with their fruits (FT). The two birds's (or worm's) eye views of the organisation of the fruiting tubercles shown in the middle (FT) are intermediate, not three large and oblong as in Clustered Dock, nor one large and globose as in Wood Dock, but two large, or one large and one or two smaller, subglobose. The two species are often quite distinct, but at some sites along the R. Kennet there are intermediates with fruiting tubercles as shown in the middle. Other features can also be intermediate. These include the inflorescence branching angles (A): about 30 degrees in Wood Dock but 60 degrees in Clustered Dock, and the more zig-zag stem of Clustered Dock, with leafy bracts along 2/3 or more of the inflorescence branches (L). Some plants have all these features in between: 2 fruiting tubercles, inflorescence branch angles 45%, stem faintly zig-zagged, leafy bracts 1/4 way along the branches. Intermediates can simply be the result of environmental or genetic variability, but may be the result of environmental or genetic variability, but may be the result of hybridization. If back-crossing of the hybrids occurs with one or both of the grand-parent species, the whole range of intermediate characters occur, making the keys in the floras hard or uncertain to use.

Some hybrids are common, or even more commonly found than one or other of the parents, yet few are recorded for Wiltshire. Stace's 1993 New Flora and the BSBI handbooks for instance include the following:  
Rumex x ruhmeri (R. conglomeratus x R. sanguineus, as discussed above). Fertile hybrid  
Rumex x pratensis (R. crispus x R. obtusifolius). Very common, not highly fertile but nevertheless frequently back-crossing.  
Silene x hampeana Pink Campion (S. latifolia x S. dioica). A highly fertile back-crossing hybrid  
Salix x reichardii Sallow hybrids (S. caprea) x S. cinerea)... commoner than S. caprea (!), completely linking the parents... very common... tends to replace (pure) S. caprea etc. (statements from Stace and BSBI Handbook)  
Salix x smithiana Osier-Sallow hybrid (S. viminalis x S. cinerea) " --- common throughout most of the British Isles " not necessarily with either



parent

Salix x sericans (S. viminalis x S. caprea)

"---common in most of Britain ---"

Juncus x surrejanus (Juncus articulatus x J. acutiflorus) "----commoner than either (parent) in places---"

Betula x aurata (B. pendula x B. pubescens) "----occurs in many areas, often in the absence of one or both parents---"

Veronica x lackschewitzii (Water Speedwell: Veronica anagallis-aquatica x V. catenata) "----frequent in England" (Stace) but some disagreement between experts on the fertility, commonness and back-crossing ability of this hybrid.

There are other hybrids which Stace and the BSBI also refer to as 'common' but which have not been recorded for Wiltshire. Dave Green would like well-pressed or growing specimens of these. The difficulty arises when there is a whole range of back-crossed intermediates !

Jack Oliver



# W.B.S. FIFTH ANNIVERSARY SURVEY

Meetings are perhaps our most important facet. But are there enough of them? Are they on the right subjects? Are they diverse enough? Are they on the right days? We'd like to know !

It's about time, too, that we learnt your views about the Newsletter, what else you would like to see in **it and whether you could contribute an article or** something else.

And finally, we are always on the lookout for keen new members and here too we would like to enlist your help.

So please complete and return this form (both sides). It will be of great help for our **future planning**.

## MEETINGS

Currently, we have about 15 meetings during the Summer months and 5 (including AGM) in the winter. Could you please give us some guidance:

### Summer Meetings

Would you attend more if the meetings were on different days?

Which days do you prefer .....

Which meetings/subjects interested you most ? Please list at least three....

1..... 2.....

3.....

### Winter Meetings

Would you attend more meetings if they were at another time or place?

State preferred time and place .....

The normal format is a talk and slide show by members on a botanical /ecological subject, lasting about 1 1/2 hours

Is this ( ) about right ( ) needs modification (specify below)

Changes in format

(specify).....

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Changes/Additions to Subjects ( specify):

.....

***(please turn over.....***

## ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

Do you read it ?    ☐ Completely    ☐ Partially

Which sections ?    ☐ Meeting reports    ☐ Other botany    ☐ Ecology  
                                 ☐ Book Reviews    ☐ Plant Records

**What changes would you like to see (Specify):**

.....  
**Would you Contribute ?** ☐ Meeting reports (if asked)

☐ Article (on botanically/ecologically-related subject):

(specify) .....

☐ Botanical illustration (line drawing preferred)

☐ Book Review (on botanically-related subject)

## EXPANSION OF MEMBERSHIP

Could you send us on a separate sheet names and addresses of potential members who might benefit from a trial copy of the Newsletter and/or Events Card.

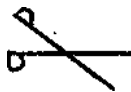
.....  
(your name here, please)

**Many thanks for your help !**

**PLEASE RETURN TO EDITOR, NEWSLETTER,  
Old Post Office, Manton, Marlborough SN8 4HH**

*(who will arrange onward transmission to relevant Committee members)*

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## ***SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER***

*If anyone hasn't paid their subscription for the year 1st Jan - 31 Dec 1997  
please send a cheque for £5.00, made out to the WILTSHIRE BOTANICAL  
SOCIETY, together with this slip, to:*

*Gwyneth Yerrington, Treasurer*

*28 Meadowfield*

*Bradford on Avon BA15 1PL*

**From (your name):**.....

## WILTSHIRE PLANT RECORDS IN 1996

I am indebted to Dave Green and Ann Hutchison, BSBI Recorders for VC 7 & 8, for comments which have enabled me to compile these notes. Please inform me if there are errors or omissions. Malcolm Hardstaff

### NOTEWORTHY VC7 RECORDS

*Carex binervis* (Green-ribbed Sedge) Seagry Wood and Haywood, P. Darby, S. Grinstead, J. Wall. 1st & 2nd recent VC records, ID D Green. This plant was tentatively identified as *C. laevigata* in the 1995 List.

*Centaureum pulchellum* (Small Centaury) on ride, Somerford Common, 1st recent VC record, J. Grigson

*Hedera helix* ssp *hibernica* (Atlantic Ivy) near St. Katherine's, Bedwyn Common, Savernake, M. Ponting

*Impatiens parviflora* (Small Balsam) Salthrop Wood; 2nd VC record, P. Darby & J. Taylor

*Isatis tinctoria* (Woad) Urchfont, introduced and has been regenerating as a weed for 12 years, now 100s of plants seeding over at least half an acre, 1st County Record, J.E. Oliver.

*Juniperus communis* (Juniper) Oare Hill and Martinsell, up to 100 elderly bushes, an extension of the known population, D. Green.

*Papaver argemone* (Prickly Poppy) between Beckhampton & Cherhill, 1st 10Km record, P. Andrews

*Phacelia tanacetifolia* (Phacelia) Between Cherhill and Yatesbury, Set-aside field edge strip. Increasingly planted as a crop. J.E. Oliver.

*Populus nigra* (Black Poplar) new 10Km records from Bratton, Westbury and South Wraxall areas. There are now over 500 trees identified in Wilts. D. Green.

*Potentilla x mixta* (Hybrid Cinquefoil) Somerford Common, new 10Km record, J. Newton.

*Ranunculus arvensis* (Corn Buttercup) 1 plant in wild part of Witcha Cottage garden, J. Newton.

*Rosa rubiginosa* (Sweet-briar) Coate Water, Swindon, J. Newton, previously confirmed by D. Green.

*Rosa sherardii* (Sherard's Downy-rose) 1 bush in a hedge, Luckington, new 10Km record, P. Darby.

*Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani* (Grey Club-rush) Haydon, North of Swindon in a pond, P. Darby. Urban flood lagoon, Swindon, D. Green. Both are new for this 10Km square.

*Sison amomum* (Stone Parsley) Hurst Lane, Woodborough, 5ft tall plants on a lane verge near a ditch, R. Grose

*Stratiotes aloides* (Water Soldier) Thornhill Pond, Savemake Forest, introduced, new 10Km record and 2nd VC record. Seen separately by D. Green, M. Hardstaff.

*Tilia cordata* (Small-leaved Lime) two trees in woodland, By Brook near Ford. 1st 10Km record, E. Overend. 2 Trees in hedgeline, heavily coppiced, adjacent to Clattinger Farm, Cotswold Water Park. two huge trees on Marie Louise Track, Savernake Forest, 1st native 10Km record, D. Green

*Vicia bithynica* (Bithynian Vetch) in a hedgerow at Okus, Swindon, 1st County record of a nationally scarce species, P. Andrews.

**Erratum**

*Frangula alnus* (Alder Buckthorn) at Marston Meysey, 1995 List, was *Rhamnus cathartica* (Buckthorn).

### NOTEWORTHY VC8 RECORDS

*Anaphalis margaritacea* \* (Pearly Everlasting) Dean Hill, Whiteparish, set-aside field, D.J. Wood

*Blackstonia perfoliata* (Yellow-wort) Coombe Bissett, A. Dale

*Carex humilis* (Dwarf Sedge) Stony Hill, Sherrington, B. Last

*Carex pilulifera* (Pill Sedge) Wordow Castle Woods, B. Last

*Centaureum pulchellum* (Small Centaury) Stony Hill, Stockton, Sherrington, . A small colony of plants, all 3cm or less. 1st vc record for 25 years. B. Last.

*Cephalanthera damasonium* (White Helleborine) Cattle Market (!) Salisbury, M.Thomas

*Chenopodium ficifolium* (Fig-leaved Goosefoot) Dinton, A. Dale (1995, specimen please!)

*Cochlearia danica* (Danish Scurvygrass) several records by P.M. Woodruffe illustrate the spread of this species: A360 immediately S. of jn. with A303 before Druids' Lodge. 3 locations on the Alderbury bypass and the 'Tesco Roundabout', all on the A36.

*Cuscuta epithymum* (Dodder) on Melilot and Gypsywort, Whaddon Common, E. Gange

*Cyperus longus* (Galingale) Harnham, reappearance on an old site, a ditch that was cleared out, B. Last

*Epipactis phyllanthos* (Green-flowered Helleborine) Steeple Langford Gravel Pits, 15 spikes, D. Peart

*Dracunculus vulgaris* \* (Dragon Arum) a field in Mere, D. Sears, D. Bristow, id. A.M.H.

*Erigeron acer* (Blue Fleabane) Dean Hill, Whiteparish. Set aside field, D.J. Wood. Broadmead Farm, W. Grinstead, I. Adgie

Pepperbox Hill, area of cleared scrub, P.M. Woodruffe. One plant in disused railway yard, Hullavington, J. Presland.

*Euphorbia exigua* (Dwarf Spurge) Newton Tony, D.O. Graiff

*Helleborus foetidus* (Stinking Hellebore) Clarendon Wood, B. Last

*Hieracium* sp (Hawkweed) several plants at edge of car park, Bradford-on-Avon, J. Presland

*Hyamoscyamus niger* (Henbane) a single plant in a barnyard near Winsley, J. Presland

*Inula conyzae* (Ploughman's-spikenard) Wilton Car park, B. Last

*Lepidium heterophyllum* (Smith's Pepperwort) Salisbury, Boscombe Railway, J. Hodgkinson and B. Last

*Leucojum aestivum* Ssp. *pulchellum* (Summer Snowflake) Hurdcott, A. Dale (further details please!).

*Malva neglecta* (Dwarf Mallow) Newton Tony, D.O. Graiff

*Melissa officinalis* (Balm) one plant, roadside, Winsley, J. Presland

*Myosotis ramosissima* (Early Forget-me-not) Chickengrove, B. Last

*Myosurus minimus* (Mousetail) Shalbourne (1994), A. Flower

*Ophrys apifera* (Bee Orchid) Marleycombe Hill, Bowerchalke, V. Milne-White. Near White Horse Monument, Bratton, F. Gains & E. Chadwick

*Orchis ustulata* (Burnt-tip Orchid) Coombe Bissett, a large population, B. Last.

*Ornithogalum umbellatum* \* (Star-of-Bethlehem) St. Mary's, Lover, Churchyard, Redlynch, D.J. Wood

*Papaver dubium* (Long-headed Poppy) Cattle Market, Salisbury, M.Thomas

*Petasites hybridus* (Butterbur) Tisbury, B. Last

*Phyteuma orbiculare* (Round-headed Rampion) Bentley Wood, D.O. Graiff

*Polygonum wallichii* (polystachum) \* (Himalayan Knotweed) plantation, Longleat Estate, conf. refind, D. Green

*Rosa tomentosa* (Harsh Downy-rose) Earldoms, close to junction with A36, Wilts Bot. Soc.

*Rumex sanguineus* (Wood Dock) St. Mary's, Lover, Churchyard, D.J. Wood

*Saxifraga granulata* (Meadow Saxifrage) SSE of Collingbourne Ducis, old railway line embankment, E. Rollo

*Saxifraga tridactylites* (Rue-leaved Saxifrage) Snail Down, alongside tank track on disturbed ground, E. Rollo

*Sedum telephium* (Orpine) one plant, edge of afforested part of Stanton Park Wood, J. Presland

*Serratula tinctoria* (Saw-wort) Middleton Down, B. Last

*Spergularia rubra* (Sand Spurrey) Whiteparish churchyard, on gravel path, P.M. Woodruffe

*Trifolium fragiferum* (Strawberry Clover) Salisbury Butts Watermeadows, J. Hodgkin

*Umbilicus rupestris* (Navelwort) wall at Dinton, E. Gange

*Verbasum thapsus* (Great Mullein) Stratford Tony, B. Last

*Veronica austriaca* (Large Speedwell) one plant on the roadside near Thorney Down, J. Presland

## SUGGESTED DETAILS FOR PLANT RECORDS

**BRC No.** Latin Name (Common Name), Vice-County, Grid Ref.(6fig.), Recorder, **Date(D/M/Yr)**, Locality and other notes  
(BRC Numbers originate from the Biological Records Centre. They are to be used in submitting records for Atlas 2000. Lists of species with their numbers are available from the Secretary.)

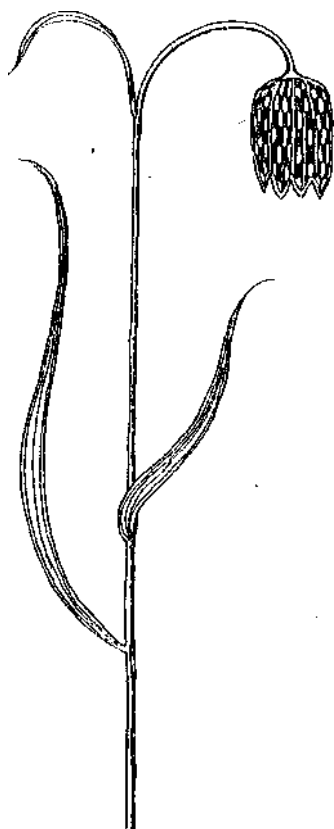
## LIST OF RECORDERS (and number of records submitted)

The total number of records submitted to date (March 1997) is 1,118. Particular thanks are due to J.E. Oliver and R.M. Veall for their comprehensive, meticulously compiled lists.

P Andrews (2), I Adgie (1), R Brockbank (1), P Darby (4), AC Dale (253), N Dixon (1), E Gange (2), B Gillam (1), DO Graiff (11), D Green (8), S Grinstead (1), R Grose (2), M Hardstaff (1), J Hodgkinson (15), N Langdon (1), B Last (36), U Milner-White (1), J Newton (11), J Notman (1), JE Oliver (152), E Overend (1), P Palmer (1), M Ponting (1), M Pragnell (1), J Presland (9), E Rollo (2), J Taylor (1), M Thomas (3), RM Veall (556), J Wall (1), DJ Wood (26), PM Woodruffe (8), WBS (1).

If you have any queries or suggestions  
for the future, please contact:

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Marlborough SN8 2EH (01672) 540356



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<b>Sally Scott-White</b>	Wilts Biolog. Records	(01380) 727369
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