

NEWSLETTER

Issue 32

Summer 2008

WILTSHIRE BOTANICAL SOCIETY

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Martin Down

April 12th 2008

Joint Meeting with Hants Flora Group

Seven WBS members joined a similar number from the Hants Flora Group to form a working party the purpose of which was to monitor and map Dwarf Sedge *Carex humilis* on Martin Down. It proved to be a typical April day, chilly with some heavy showers, and we found that the flowering of the diminutive sedge was running a little later than our leader, Martin Rand, had expected.

None-the-less it became easy, with practice, to spot the male flowers and even to find the emerging leaves of vegetative plants. Our task was to walk a transect in designated 100m squares and to determine the frequency of the plant. We quickly got the feel for the type of vegetation most likely to support this species and our GPS was a vital tool to locate the squares assigned to us.

Four or five groups, working for much of the day, managed to cover almost half of this reserve and, although in Hampshire, we were actually surveying within VC8. It was clear that some of the best populations were centred around the earthworks in the southern part of the site but it

was pleasing to find that the plant was locally frequent in many other parts. Clearly the programme of grazing which has been in place for many years is having an effect and this small plant is thriving as a result.

To reward us for our efforts, Martin took us to see several plants of Pasque Flower *Pulsatilla vulgaris* which occur at two locations on the site and have been known since around 1983.

Pat Woodruffe



Pasque Flower - Pat Woodruffe

Bristol Botanic Garden

Wednesday 23 April 2008

We had a fine spring day for Pam Millman to guide us through the varied sections of the garden. We started with a show of plants which were grouped according to the animals that pollinate them. These pollinators included wasps, birds and bats as well as the more familiar ones.

After stopping to admire a grassy mound of colourful Mediterranean flowers, we moved on to a sequence showing the evolution of plants. Here, we saw tree ferns, cycads and specimens of the "living fossil" Wollemi Pine, recently discovered in Australia. A female Ginkgo tree in flower was a new and intriguing sight. Part of the garden was devoted to medicinal plants, which were arranged according to the parts of the body they treated. Graphical signs

made it clear which bit was the focus.

We ended with a visit to the glasshouses, which took us through the various combinations of wetter, drier, hotter and cooler of the world's warm climates. The highlight here was the pond, with the "Victoria" water lily among many other floating or deep-water plants.

The garden has a huge collection of plants, each needing (and getting) care according to its special requirements. There is work in progress and much of the planting is new, so return visits will be rewarding. Pam is thoroughly knowledgeable about the plants already there and developments to come. She gave us a fascinating morning.



Wollemi Pine

Richard Aisbitt



Ginkgo flowers



Pam Millman pointing out Rosy Periwinkle

Great High Croft and Hang Wood, East Knoyle

7 May 2008

About 20 of us gathered under the leadership of David Pickering to take a botanical walk up and down the hills and glades near East Knoyle in southwest Wiltshire. To our great approval, David began by explaining the importance of the local geology on both the scenery and the botany. He showed us the view, which slowly emerged from the morning mist, from Windmill Hill across the Vale of Wardour to the opposite escarpment near Shaftsbury. An upfold or anticline had, maybe 20 million years ago, pushed the layers of strata into an arch, with the harder layers, i.e. the Chalk and Upper Greensand, forming a domed ridge. Erosion over millions of years has breached this harder covering to reveal softer clays beneath, namely the Gault and Kimmeridge clay, which eroded more rapidly to form the Vale of Wardour we saw at our feet.

The walk began on a hill of Upper Greensand, left as the stump or root of the former arch, near to the old windmill, built of stones carved from the local rock. We walked down onto clay soil, and then returned back up to the hills. Though sandy, the Upper Greensand contains a lot of silt and also the clay mineral glauconite, which gives the greensand its colour. Botanically, it gives slightly acid soil, and you can feel an overall difference in the vegetation compared to the alkaline Chalk or the acid Kimmeridge Clay.

The accompanying block diagram attempts to show the scenery cut like a cake, and the two parts pulled apart to show the cross section of strata, and our walk shown as arrows in the background. We descended into High Croft Wood down to a stream, then across to Upton Lane and on past an ancient spring, then north into Hang Wood, then more meadows to Martha's Lane and back onto small roads up onto the Greensand back to the start.

The meeting point was at Windmill Hill, though the mill now has no sails. A grassy area has been cleared by

the Parish Council to give views southwards across the Kimmeridge clay vale to Shaftsbury but it was too hazy to see anything so we started to look down to see what was there. This grassy area sees acid species including bell heather, ling and milkwort.

Once into Great High Croft (woodland), with many chiffchaffs singing above, it was soon apparent that the wood was mainly dry underfoot passing down to wetter soil as Gault and Kimmeridge Clay was reached. Great High Croft hosted the usual selection of spring woodland plants and ferns including bracken and the broad buckler fern and in damper places there were sedges and horsetails such as pendulous sedge, wood sedge and giant horsetail. Among the mature tree species noted were holly, beech, birch, tall hawthorn, crab apple and a big field maple. Significant by its absence was common ash probably because it does not like the well-drained sandy soil. We all stopped to gaze and photograph groups of tall early purple orchids looking magnificent amongst the woodland. We clambered over debris which hosted all sorts of things to look at including a liverwort, making our way down to a stream where smelly ransoms were flowering.

Leaving Great High Wood the party walked through to a meadow which was bathed in bright sunshine. Here the interestingly named corky-fruited water dropwort (*Oenanthe pimpinelloides*) was found amongst the tall grass in this rather dank and poorly drained meadow on Kimmeridge Clay. This is a plant that is quite common in Hampshire and Dorset. Crossing Upton Lane where more early purple orchids were seen we started to make our way towards Hang Wood.

Hang Wood was gorgeous in the sunshine as this was an archetypal bluebell wood, with its floor just carpeted with bluebells looking at their best and here were the ash trees on the clay. Once again early purple orchids were seen along with Goldilocks and Pignut. As we started to make our way back towards East Knoyle David pointed out the small shrub Spurge Laurel (*Daphne laureola*) growing in an old hedge that is a field boundary.

Arriving back at the starting point of the excursion, the visibility had improved to give some views around the area. Lunch was taken under trees in the shade with a chance to reflect on the morning's walk. We must thank David for hosting such a good outing and for inviting all back to his cottage for tea and cakes and a chance to look at the garden.

Judy and Richard Gosnell

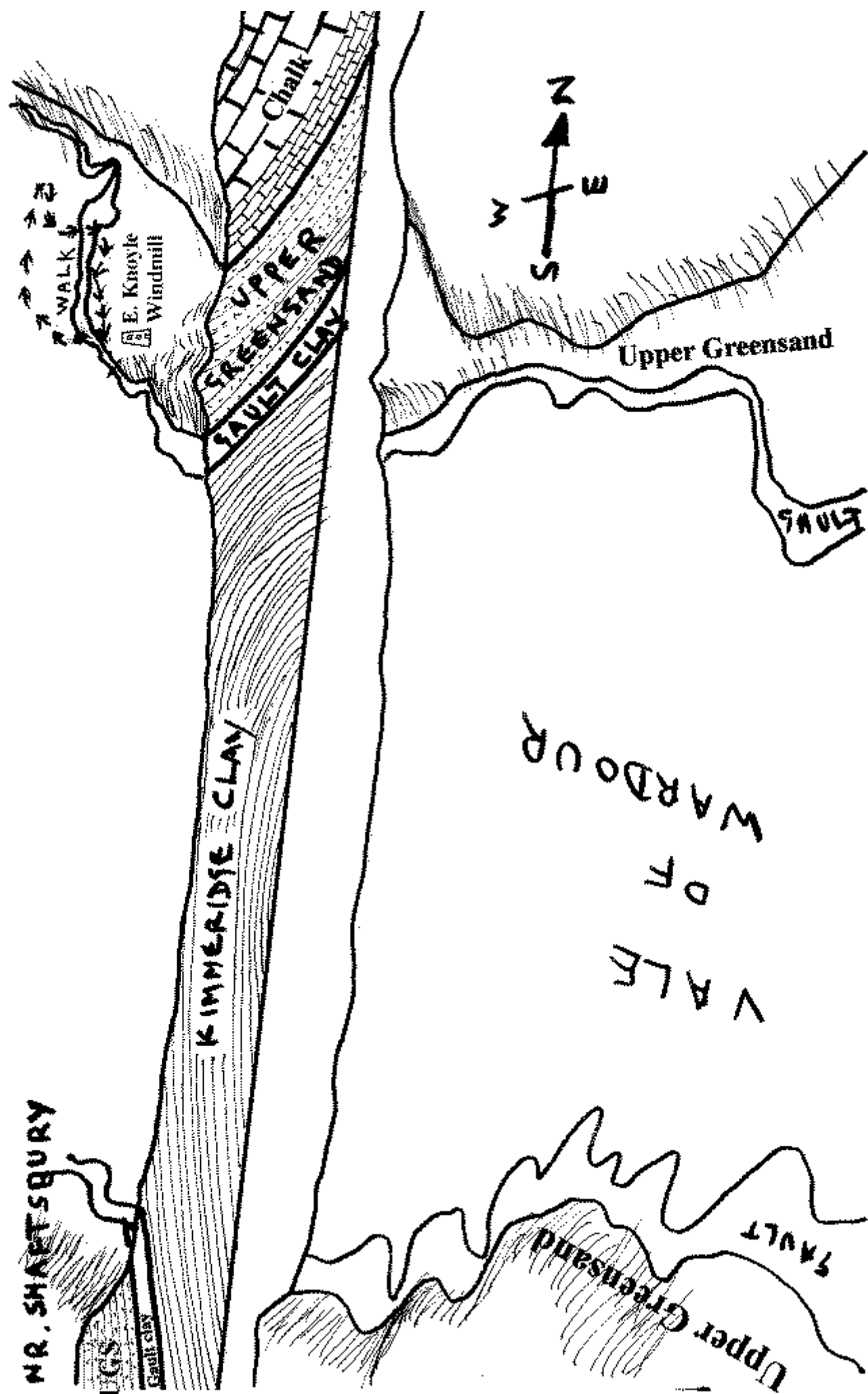


Diagram by Richard Gosnell

Clattinger Farm and Swillbrook Lakes

Thursday 22 May 2008



Southern Marsh Orchid

The return of Dave Green to one of his old favourite hunting grounds was much welcomed by WBS members. There were, however, four counties represented by the sixteen or so participants: Wiltshire, Gloucestershire, Monmouthshire and Herefordshire. The morning was spent on the neutral grasslands, the afternoon on rougher terrain around the Swillbrook stream and gravel pit lakes.

At least twelve sedge species were noted and examined. The other conspicuous floral group comprised orchids: Green-winged with a striking range of colours; Early Marsh and Southern Marsh; Common Spotted and clear hybrids between some of the latter. We also saw Fritillary fruiting capsules. Other uncommon species included Meadow Thistle (*Cirsium dissectum*, although its leaves are less dissected than most other thistles), Common Club-rush (*Schoenoplectus lacustris*) and Grey Club-rush (*S. tabernaemontani*, which is rare away from the coast), Smooth Brome (*Bromus racemosus*, a decreasing species nationally), and the largest of the Meadow Rues (*Thalictrum flavum*, another nationally decreasing species). Rosettes of Brookweed (*Samolus valerandi*), a species rarely seen inland, were



Early Marsh Orchid

seen, but the plants were not yet in flower.

Near Swillbrook, an apparently huge-girthed but senescent White Willow pollard was closely invested with dense *Prunus spinosa*. Negotiating the thorns, fallen limbs, old and new barbed-wire fencing and concealed snags was very difficult and painful. Unfortunately, the tree was low-



Common Yellow Sedge?

forking which gave the impression of a record-breaker. Ignoring a dead portion of trunk, the girth was only 480cm: big, but not a Wiltshire record for the species. The galvanised iron plate reads [06371 NCCOU]. Epiphytes included Rosebay and Yorkshire Fog (both numerous), Privet, Sloe, Yellow-rattle, Nettle and Rough Meadow-grass.

Dave's style of exposition was much enjoyed by all of us, with additional expertise from Mark Kitchen (BSBI Plant Recorder, Gloucestershire), to give a rewarding and instructive day.

Dave Green wished to dedicate this joint meeting to the memory of his old friend Steve Whitworth who died in 2005. Steve was a popular figure who had been a 10 kilometre square coordinator for the original Wiltshire Flora Mapping Project dating from before 1987. He and Dave knew the Clattinger area, and together were responsible for the finds of large new Fritillary populations, the emblem of the Wiltshire Botanical Society.

Jack Oliver



Carnation Sedge

Sedges found at Clattinger

<i>Carex acuta</i>	(Slender Tufted-sedge)
<i>Carex acutiformis</i>	(Lesser Pond-sedge)
<i>Carex distans</i>	(Distant Sedge)
<i>Carex filiformis</i>	(Downy-fruited Sedge)
<i>Carex flacca</i>	(Glaucous Sedge)
<i>Carex hirta</i>	(Hairy Sedge)
<i>Carex hostiana</i>	(Tawny Sedge)
<i>Carex nigra</i>	(Common Sedge)
<i>Carex panicea</i>	(Carnation Sedge)
<i>Carex riparia</i>	(Greater Pond-sedge)
<i>Carex viridula</i> subsp. <i>brachyrrhyncha</i>	(Long-stalked Yellow-sedge)
and probably	
<i>Carex viridula</i> subsp. <i>oedocarpa</i>	(Common Yellow-sedge)

Knighton Downs SSSI

29 MAY 2008

Pat Woodruffe, Anne Appleyard,
Sue Fitzpatrick and Jeremy Wood

This was almost a case of more Chiefs than Indians when five members joined Pat, Anne, Sue and Jeremy to scour several of the many units and sub-units of this SSSI for some of the early flowering chalk grassland specialities! This formed part of our recording effort on SSSIs for Natural England and we were grateful for any help. Pat provided a recording sheet with our target species and we were dispatched in three groups of three to various units off Crouchston Drove. The list included special species, other early flowering plants such as Bulbous Buttercup (*Ranunculus bulbosus*) and



Early Gentian

those we would expect to be present but had failed to record on particular units the previous year.

Two groups recording west of the track, one on the way to their designated unit soon spotted a single spike of Green-winged Orchid (now known as *Anacamptis morio* rather than the *Orchis morio* most of us are familiar with). Sue, Sonia and Richard, then found another on their own patch. They also counted more than 120 plants of *Gentianella anglica* (Early Gentian) on south-facing slopes. Hairy Rock-cress (*Arabis hirsuta*), not previously noted by the 'Chiefs', was found on rabbit scrapes. Anne, David and Jenny, to the east of the track, where a large population of Autumn Lady's Tresses had been found last August, added a few plants

to the species list and saw plenty of *Carex humilis*, but nothing else of particular note. Pat, Jeremy and Rosemary noted *Gymnadenia conopsea* (Fragrant Orchid) and *Dactylorhiza fuchsia* (Common Spotted Orchid), not previously found in their unit.

After lunch back at the barn where we had parked, Pat *et al.* checked one of the areas found in 2007 to be heavily cattle-grazed and less diverse. It was ungrazed this time, but although they recorded some extra species, including Early Purple Orchid (*Orchis mascula*) and various

grasses, our initial assessment was confirmed. The rest of us headed off to the east, to a horseshoe-shaped valley with north, south and west-facing slopes. In July 2007, the south-facing banks had yielded one of the best populations of Bastard Toadflax (*Thesium humifusum*) that any of us had ever seen, but on this occasion we could find no trace of it! We did, however, soon find two locations for Early Gentian (7 and 30 plants) on the same slopes and, as we rounded the curve of the horseshoe, saw at least 120 plants. A few plants of Dodder (*Cuscuta epithymum*) were just showing on the same west-facing slope. We had recorded this in two locations off Church Bottom in the same SSSI in 2007, but not here. In July last year, the north-facing slopes seemed less botanically interesting, but in 2008 we soon started to find lots of Meadow Saxifrage (*Saxifraga granulata*) in a narrow band along the top of the slope and there were



Greater Butterfly Orchid - diverging pollinia

two other large patches to the west. A single spike of *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* (Southern Marsh Orchid), more often associated with wet places, as its English name suggests, was also found.

All in all, we had a successful day on some beautiful chalk downland, with the added bonus of providing some useful records. From the point of view of the 'Chiefs', it also saved us a considerable amount of legwork, as we would otherwise have had to cover all the ground ourselves. So, rather than thanking the leaders in the traditional manner, on this occasion we would like to thank the participants!

Anne Appleyard, Sue Fitzpatrick,
Pat Woodruffe



Meadow Saxifrage

Martin Down

Gentianella census

7th June 2008 – a report by
Martin Rand

OK, so it's not an Early Gentian, but this Burnt-tip Orchid was one of the many downland flowers enjoyed by the surveyors on this perfect summer day.

34 people from Plantlife International, Hampshire Flora Group, Dorset Flora Group and Wiltshire Botanical Society converged on the three counties' borderland at Martin Down. We split into two parties, one working the north-west parts of the National Nature Reserve and the other visiting a site in the centre before proceeding to Pentridge Down in Dorset.

The first group had modest success, recording a total of 81 plants of *Gentianella anglica* on two known sites of disturbed grassland around the rifle butts and northern car park. The second party did not manage to find any; while the site condition on Martin Down seemed satisfactory for the plant, Pentridge Down appeared to be in poor shape.

Text and photo: Martin Rand - reproduced with permission from Hampshire "Flora News" - see more at Martin Rand's website: <http://www.hantsplants.org.uk/>



Burnt Orchid - Martin Rand

Salisbury Plain – Silk Hill

Saturday 14 June

Leaders: Sharon Pilkington and
Eileen Rollo



The reputation of Silk Hill having superb stretches of chalk hill flora had spread and 23 of us gathered at the edge of the Plain then motored on in a dusty cavalcade.

We started with a little marsh work as we were at the headwaters of the Nine Mile River, a winterbourne which had flowed well this year – it does not always. The water had gone down leaving a wide expanse of damp to wettish grassland and some deep ponds, famous for their newts, in season.

The Water Crowfoot was *Ranunculus peltatus*, and we found Marsh Bedstraw *Galium palustre* in full flower, Hairy Sedge *Carex hirta*, Common Meadow-rue

Thalictrum flavum and other lovers of dampness.

We then set off for the hill, pausing at a wide track where it was too early for Knotted Pearlwort *Sagina nodosum* to be in flower though Sharon found some tiny plants doing their best. The large-flowered Field Mouse-ear *Cerastium arvense* was there, a new plant for some of us, and the first of many Long-stalked Crane's-bill *Geranium columbinum*, growing close to small Common Stork's-bill *Erodium cicutarium*.

On the long gentle slope of Silk Hill we formed ourselves into an extended straggle of folk. One little group would be reclining, busy with book and lens; another would be on hunkers manipulating cameras; another would be discussing Burnet Moths, Bee-flies *Bombyliidae* and Garden Chafers all of which were plentiful. The walk and the things to



Purple Milk Vetch - Tim Wilkins

be seen were totally delightful. Nearly all the expected participants in a good chalk hill flora were there. Highlights were Crested Hair-grass *Koeleria macrantha*, Hairy Rock-cress *Arabis hirsuta*, Fine-leaved Sandwort *Minuartia hybrida* and Thyme-leaved Sandwort *Arenaria serpyllifolia* growing in the same patch so convenient for comparison, and above all Purple Milk-vetch *Astragalus danicus*. Of course we all stopped at the first patch of it we came to but there was plenty of it, clumps and scatterings in the sward all the way up the hill. The Pyramidal Orchids *Anacamptis pyramidalis* were making a strongly coloured early showing, with rather fewer Fragrant Orchid *Gymnadenia conopsea* dotted

about. On the sides of the first of the barrows at the top was a good number of Burnt Orchid *Orchis ustulata* (now going over), more Fragrant Orchid and a few Field Fleawort *Senecio integrifolius*

On the comfortable top of the barrow we settled for our picnic. The views were glorious. Gentle downland curves, copses of mixed woodland with plenty of Scots Pine, a Roe deer unhurriedly proceeding. It was easy to imagine a band of our long-gone ancestors, perhaps woad-smeared, drifting through this lovely landscape.

After lunch our path was not particularly determined and we followed a vague consensus of collective whim. We found more Burnt Orchid away from the slopes of the barrows and Sharon was pleased with a chalk-specialist moss, *Thuidium abietinum* she said it was. Hound's-tongue *Cynoglossum officinale* drew comment, as usual; it is a strange looking plant. .

Among the general delights, the afternoon specials tended to be just one or two species being especially showy. A carpet exclusively of Salad Burnet *Sanguisorba minor* was a bit odd and a mat of Mouse-eared Hawkweed *Pilosella officinarum* was pretty. The real wow was a patch that had been ploughed a few years ago [for Stone Curlew?] which was a metre high with Viper's Bugloss *Echium vulgare* and little else. An amazing sight, and sound as it was crowded with working bees. Behind it

was a big patch of Musk Thistle *Carduus nutans* in full maroon-purple flower, set against its silver foliage.

We had found, oddly, just one Grass Vetchling *Lathyrus nissolia* but then came across them growing more thickly than any of us had seen before – there were at least 50 in each eyeful without head-turning. Near our cars was another ploughed patch. This one had a mass of *Fumaria* forming a crimson-cerise haze a few inches above the soil. It was *F. officinalis* but *F. densiflora* was growing close by, so that was satisfactory.

With so many of us, often widely separated, I have only recorded the sightings of the sub-group I happened to be with at the time. Others will have other highlights of the day. For instance, Eileen was sporadically running a study session for grasses, while keeping at the back to check that none of us got lost or left behind

Rosemary Duckett



Grass Vetchling - Tim Wilkins



A buzzing sea of Vipers Bugloss



North York Moors

Botanical Society Field Trip

28th June to 2nd July

Twenty two of us made our way to Scarborough by land and air, but as far as I know, not by sea. We stayed in modern student lodgings on the Scarborough campus of the University of Hull, just five minutes from cliff and sea walks. This was handy for those of us who needed to counteract the weight gain from generous portions of supper in the canteen.

We benefited from a fearsome security system, which needed one pass card and two different keys to reach rooms with self-closing and self-locking doors. The security staff were very understanding when we locked ourselves out.

Anne Appleyard arranged a busy three days of visits to rich botanical sites in the North York Moors National Park, often with local experts to guide us. Anne herself had considerable



knowledge of the area as she had worked there as a professional ecologist. We saw moor and bog, acid and limestone, river, woodland and grassland, notching up a variety of never-to-be-seen-in-Wiltshire species. Some of us topped and tailed the three days with extra trips to make a full week.



Scarborough from Oliver's Mount

Flamborough Head

Saturday 28 June 2008

As I sit in my car in the pouring rain on Salisbury Plain, my thoughts go back to North Yorkshire. We arrived on Friday 27th June. Saturday was to be a free day. After consultations seven of us decided to visit Flamborough Head.

We took out a day's parking at North Landing. The cliffs stretched away from us to the north and south. We set off north in typical English weather, scudding clouds mixed with sunshine. Botanising began. We looked at quite ordinary maritime flora, admiring the Sea Plantain (*Plantago maritima*) with its sacs of yellow pollen, the Sea Mayweed (*Tripleurospermum maritimum*) the flowers of which seemed bigger and more attractive than the arable Mayweed. There were large patches of a striking grey blue grass, which Sharon identified as *Festuca rubra* ssp. *junceae*. Our most pleasing find was the Northern Marsh Orchid (*Dactylorhiza purpurea*) with its distinctive dark colour. The photographers recorded the spikes with gusto.

After lunch we went south from the car park, along the cliffs. Botanising was forgotten in the face of the magnificent display of the sea birds. There were hundreds and hundreds of them – Kittiwakes, Puffins, Gulls, Razor Bills, and Gannets. They wheeled and swooped over the sea, the noise of their calls all around us. Each cliff we came to seemed better



than the last. The afternoon passed in wonder.

For interest here is a short geological explanation of Flamborough Head - "Chalk lies in horizontal bands.

Above the chalk at the top of the cliffs is a layer of glacial deposits (till). As the cliffs are worn away the glacial till (clay) falls into the sea in huge landslips". We saw cracks, slips and falls of earth, but the cliffs were stable enough to provide safe homes for the nesting birds.

Saturday was a fine introduction to the good botanising days that followed

Eileen Rollo



Ashberry and Reins Wood

Sunday June 29th 2008

On the first of our three-day visit to the North York Moors National Park we visited a meadow and wood that are part of a larger SSSI and managed by the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust. We were led by Anne Appleyard and by Gill Smith, who records for the Ryedale Nat History Soc: both of whom quickly discovered what an unmanageable but enthusiastic group we are, especially when presented with a meadow full of interesting plants.

The area proved to be highly diverse: its wet, acid nature was modified

group included the flat-headed *Blasmus compressus*, the diminutive *Isolepis setacea* and black bog rush, *Schoenus nigricans*. If this was not sufficient of the 'little green jobs' we also saw marsh arrow grass, *Triglochin palustris* – a member of the Juncaginaceae with tiny green flowers a little reminiscent of a plantain – and there was also *Chara vulgaris* in the stream or beck.

Moving on to the more conspicuous, and generally more readily identified

lunches, a few were shown both Golden Saxifrages, *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium* and *C. alternifolium*, growing together. I am told that they look entirely different and there is no point searching for 'the other one' in colonies of plants that appear similar. After a quick bite to eat we headed up the valley side to see baneberry *Actaea spicata*, a plant which is confined to the northern part of the UK, and mountain currant *Ribes alpinum*.

Our final stop of the day was at Forge Valley, quite close to Scarborough. Mercifully, heavy rain lasted only whilst we drove between the two stopping places and we were able to enjoy this lush valley bottom in dry conditions. Botanists luck! The ferns here were impressive: both species of *Polystichum*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Dryopteris filix-mas* and *D. dilatata*. We commented on the variation seen in the leaf form and flower colour of hogweeds, enjoyed *Scirpus sylvaticus* and were entertained by Dave, who caught a native crayfish. Our

final find of a memorable day was *Tilia platyphyllos* growing along the banks of the stream.



Bird's-eye Primrose



Marsh Lousewort

species, we discovered numerous delights in the wet area around the stream. Early marsh orchid, *Dactylorhiza incarnata* was still in flower and there were some spectacular plants of Marsh Lousewort *Pedicularis palustris*, a plant that is so much larger than the more

familiar *P. sylvatica*. Marsh Hawk's-beard *Crepis paludosa* also grew here with globe flower *Trollius europaeus* and bird's-eye primrose *Primula farinosa* – two plants which I have only seen previously in alpine Europe.

Whilst many of us made our way back to the cars, and our



Globe Flower



Out grateful thanks to both Anne and Gill, as well as to other members of the group, who shared their knowledge and enabled us all to make the most of this great opportunity.

Joy Newton and Pat Woodruffe



Flat Sedge
- *Blasmus compressus*

by base-rich influences and it also had some dry banks and woodland. We found a total of around 14 species of *Carex* as well as several other sedges. A number of these were well known to many of us, whilst others were a rare treat or a first meeting. Thus in the space of a few hours we enjoyed the company of *C. hostiana*, *C. pulicaris*, *C. rostrata*, *C. viridula* ssp. *brachyrrhyncha* and made our acquaintance with *C. dioica*. The latter is the only dioecious sedge in mainland Britain and at this site we found only the female plants, already in fruit. Other members of the sedge

Forge Valley National Nature Reserve

Sunday 29 June, afternoon



Dave with the crayfish



woodland and these would have repaid further study, but as time was short we retraced our steps to the car park and returned to base.

Anne Appleyard

valley bottom. Available time (and energy) allowed us to see only the latter.

Soon after we set off, Dave headed into the river and emerged holding a white-clawed crayfish, our protected and endangered native species, vulnerable to pollution and to the crayfish plague carried by the introduced American signal crayfish. This was duly admired, photographed and returned to the river unharmed (Dave has been licensed to handle

The heavens opened as we made our way back towards Scarborough and our planned visit to this National Nature Reserve and there seemed not a glimmer of light as we drove into the Old Man's Mouth (car park). It looked as if botanists' luck had failed us as we reluctantly emerged from our cars and donned full waterproof gear, but a chink appeared in the clouds and moments later the sun came out as if by magic. There was time for only a brief visit, so we restricted ourselves to a walk on the boardwalk constructed alongside the River Derwent. It was a bit slippery in places, but we all survived unscathed.

Forge Valley, covered by one of the best examples of mixed deciduous woodland in North Yorkshire, was formed by glacial meltwater at the end of the last ice age. There is a sequence of woodland types occupying different levels of the valley sides, with oak, rowan and holly on acidic soils at the top, ash, wych elm and hazel on more base-rich middle slopes and wet alder and willow in the

crayfish – don't try this yourselves). The river also supports many other creatures including otter, but it would have been pushing our botanists' luck to expect to see such a shy and elusive animal!

Lush vegetation next to the boardwalk included abundant yellow flag (*Iris pseudacorus*), pendulous sedge (*Carex pendula*) and tussocks of *Carex paniculata*. We also saw wood club-rush (*Scirpus sylvaticus*), a very handsome plant. Some people had already seen the kidney-shaped leaves of the alternate-leaved golden saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium alternifolium*) at Ashberry in the morning, but it was here too, with the commoner opposite-leaved *C. oppositifolium*, as a component of the woodland ground flora. Large bittercress (*Cardamine amara*) was also present, but well past its best and not looking very impressive or convincing to those unfamiliar with it! We were impressed by the luxuriant growth of mosses and ferns in the



Hole of Horcum SSSI

Monday 30 June 2008

Approaching the Hole from the car park we looked down on a huge bowl in the landscape, with the slopes covered in Rowan and young planted Oak. The many familiar heathland plants around us included Tormentil, *Potentilla erecta*, Heath Bedstraw,



Galium saxatile and both Heather, *Calluna vulgaris* and Cross-leaved Heath, *Erica tetralix*. As we followed the path around the rim we found a variety of grasses, Purple Moor Grass, *Molinia caerulea*, Creeping Soft Grass, *Holcus mollis*, Mat Grass, *Nardus stricta* and Wavy Hair Grass, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, as well as a second brood caterpillar of the Emperor Moth, *Saturnia pavonia*. Then, to everyone's delight, we came upon Chickweed Wintergreen, *Trientalis europaea*. There were a number of flowering plants and although half hidden by bracken they made the photographers happy. Further



on there was Dwarf Cornel, *Cornus suecica*, so our luck was in.

Passing Dwarf Birch, *Betula nana*, we descended into the Hole. Here the damp flowery meadow at the bottom was dotted with familiar plants for the habitat, such as

Foxglove, Marsh thistle, Heath Speedwell, Common Lousewort and Devil's Bit Scabious. The flush at the field boundary had plenty to absorb our interest, including Blinks, *Montia Fontana*, Tufted Forget-me-not, *Myosotis laxa*, Bog Pimpernel, *Anagallis tenella*, Crowberry, *Empetrum nigrum* (the dioecious form), Slender and Trailing St. John's Wort, *Hypericum pulchrum* and *H. humifusum*, Greater Birdsfoot Trefoil, *Lotus uliginosus*, Creeping Willow, *Salix repens*, Wood Horsetail, *Equisetum sylvaticum*, and Marsh Speedwell, *Veronica scutellata*.

After the rewarding finds in the flush, most people headed uphill in search of picnic sites with good views. Mark and Anne were more energetic and penetrated further down the valley of the Havern Beck to be rewarded by finding Pale forget-me-not, *Myosotis stolonifera*.



During the course of our walk the experts identified a number of sedges. I am indebted to Joy for passing on her list to me. It included *Carex panicea* (Carnation Sedge), *C. Nigra* (Common Sedge), *C. Pilulifera* (Pill Sedge), *C. Hostiana* (Tawny Sedge), *C. dioica* (Dioecious Sedge - male and female) and *C. Echinata* (Star Sedge).

Gillian King



Fen Bog

Monday 30 June 2008



Marsh Cinqufoil

This Yorkshire Wildlife Trust reserve is part of the Newtondale SSSI. It is a valley mire with peat over 12 metres deep in places and records of more than 300 species of plant, including ten species of Sphagnum mosses, so very wet and wobbly under wellie.

En route from the car park passing lovely dainty tufts of Silver hair-grass *Aria caryophyllea* Barbara spotted a White thighed hoverfly *Cheilosia albitaris* Meigen, which is associated with buttercups *Ranunculus bulbosus* and *R.*

repens growing in damp places. This is a predominantly black species, white thighs meaning white hairs on thighs.

On the mire the characteristic lime green more skeletal fertile fronds of the Hard Fern *Blechnum spicant* highlighted by a foil of the darker heather were particularly attractive. Mat-grass and purple moor-grass also dominated and amongst the many sedges were Star *Carex echinata*; the very self effacing Dioecious sedge, *Carex dioica*, Pale sedge, *Carex pallescens* and the delightfully golden and abundant Bottle sedge *Carex rostrata*. Lots of Bog pond weed *Potamogeton polygonifolius*, Bog myrtle *Myrica gale*, the oil of which is manufactured as an insect repellent, Round-leaved sundew, Bog-bean and, a first for me, was the flowering Marsh cinquefoil *Potentilla palustris*.

Malcolm found *Tephrocye palludus*, a fungus companion of Sphagnum mosses, and the Devil's matchsticks fungi.

A lone photographer led us to Large and Small Heath butterflies as well as Small pearl-bordered fritillaries.



Bog Pond Weed

There were willow Warblers, and Whinchats on the Hawthorns and we saw Roesel's Bush-crickets.



Bogbean flower

Finally the afternoon train from Pickering to Crosmont went by, beautiful maroon and wooden carriages. All very nostalgic.

Lesley Wallington



Butterwort



Bogbean leaves and sedges



Round-leaved Sundew

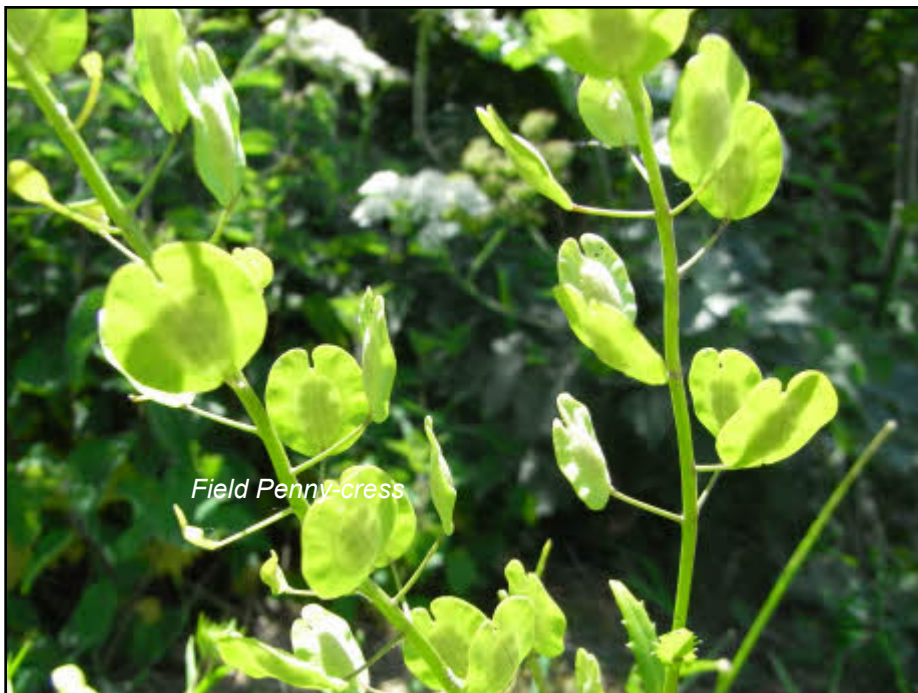
Ellerburn Bank Nature Reserve

Tuesday 1st July, morning



Venus's Looking Glass

We were met by Nan Sykes, author of 'Wild Plants and their Habitats in the North York Moors', at the entrance of Ellerbank Reserve within Dalby Forest. This reserve is a sloping limestone grassland in the care of the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust. This



Field Penny-cress

calcareous grassland is an unusual remnant within the acid moorland. The area contained many plants very familiar to the botanists of Wiltshire and at this season was full of yellow flowers including Rockrose, Birdsfoot Trefoil and Rough Hawkbit and in addition the remains of Fly-orchids and Greater Butterfly Orchids were found. The occasional Bee Orchid was also seen and patches of not yet flowering Autumn Gentian. It was interesting that no Upright Brome could be found a contrast with the

well known southern grasslands were this is a key component. Along the top edge was a raised area with Long-stalked Cranesbill and Musk Thistle.

An arable field behind the reserve yielded many interesting arable wild-flowers, of which Venus's Looking Glass, Field Woundwort and Dwarf Spurge were much admired, and Sharon made the exciting find of the Cornsalad, *Valerianella dentata* which was growing in profusion.



Bridestones

1 July 2008

This is a National Trust reserve and an SSSI. It is named after the series of isolated sandstone stacks which arise from the surrounding moorland.

From the car park we followed a path through tall grassland with Pale Sedge (*Carex pallescens*), and Lady's Mantle (*Alchemilla glabra*). The last is one of the number of very similar species forming *Alchemilla glabra* agg., distinguished from each other mainly on leaf characteristics.

After a while the track entered woodland, with Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*), Birch (*Betula pendula*) and Rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) the most obvious trees, and locally abundant Common Cow-wheat (*Melampyrum pratense*) and Hard-fern (*Blechnum*



Common Cow-wheat

spicant) at ground level. As the woodland thinned, Ling (*Calluna vulgaris*) and Bilberry (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) took over, with areas of Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*)



Cowberry flower

intervening. Other plants noted here were Cowberry (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*), Crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*), Wavy Hair-grass (*Deschampsia flexuosa*), Purple Moor-grass (*Molinia caerulea*), Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*), Heath Bedstraw (*Galium saxatile*), Heath Rush (*Juncus squarrosus*), other rushes, Common Cotton-grass



A Bridestone



(*Eriophorum angustifolium*) and Sheep's Sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*).

At the top we came upon the Bridestones themselves, like miniature forts at intervals along the track. The first had some fine plants of Heath Speedwell (*Veronica officinalis*), and the fern Black Spleenwort (*Asplenium adiantum-nigrum*) was common on the stacks generally. Also noted on the stacks were Wall-rue (*Asplenium ruta-muraria*), the strange-looking fern Moonwort (*Botrychium lunaria*), Wood Sage (*Teucrium scorodonia*) and a striking species of



Moonwort

Hawkweed (*Hieracium* sp), hard to distinguish from the many other very similar species which occur in Britain.



Black Spleenwort

On our way back down, we encountered further moorland plants - Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*), Gorse (*Ulex* sp.) and Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*). On return to the car park the more energetic members of our party visited a lake where they saw Monkeyflower (*Mimulus guttatus*) and the escaped garden plant *Alchemilla mollis*.

John Presland.





West Yatton Down

Saturday 12th July 2008

Leaders: Simon Young and Ron Hurst

It was with great expectation that we set out ostensibly to find Musk Orchid (*Herminium monorchis*) on this limestone grassland site. However this 14.4 hectare SSSI is home to numerous other plants and we were soon to see such familiar fare such as Common Rock rose (*Helianthemum nummularium*) and Common Centaury (*Centaurea erythraea*). A challenge was thrown down to identify the species of Eyebright (*Euphrasia* spp.) found but people just mumbled 'nemorosa' or 'life's too short' and walked on. We soon saw the notable Dyers Greenweed (*Genista tinctoria*) and were conscious to avoid the rampaging cattle that roamed the slopes. A conflict did occur though when we walked upon a patch of Thyme. This caused much head scratching and looking at hairs on angles and faces until Large Thyme (*Thymus pulegioides*) was confirmed. Before leaving the reserve, Long-stalked Cranesbill (*Geranium columbinum*) was spotted and we entered Hammerdown Wood. This connects West Yatton Down to a disused quarry which is also rich in limestone grassland plants.



Unfortunately it did hammer down with rain and shelter was taken under umbrella or tree before our investigations could proceed. An interesting first spot was an odd looking rose which turned out to be *Rosa x toddiae*, the hybrid between Dog Rose (*Rosa canina*) and Small-flowered Sweetbriar (*Rosa micrantha*). The slopes on both sides of the quarry yielded all the classics and it would be churlish to forget the butterflies and moths that were on the wing. They included Meadow Brown, Marbled White, Small skipper, Yellow Underwing and a flurry of Burnet moths. One unfortunate Ringlet had the misfortune of having two mites infesting upon it. The differences between the Red clover (*Trifolium pratense*) and Zig-zag clover (*Trifolium medium*) were elucidated by some members. Indeed what better place to botanise with the sun on your back, the insects fluttering in the air and the roar of petrol engines coming from the Castle Combe circuit which is nearby. Yes it did spoil it a bit, but not too much, as a number of members took to investigating the Fibonacci numbers present in the Woolly Thistle (*Cirsium eriophorum*). A lovely site even though Simon admitted that he had meant to put Musk Thistle rather than Musk Orchid, a species which had only been seen here a long time ago.

It was then lunch time and slight consternation that some members had forgotten to bring theirs with them. They had clearly forgotten the botanist mantra of never to be away from your lunch!

After suitable refreshment we searched another slope and noted Clustered Bellflower (*Campanula glomerata*), Saw-wort (*Serratula tinctoria*) and interestingly Yellow Rattle (*Rhinanthus minor* subsp. *calcareus*), which is probably under-recorded.

From there we meandered down to the water meadows. There were some nice Nettle-leaved Bellflowers (*Campanula trachelium*) and some very large Wild Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*) in a nearby field. It was hard not to notice the leaves of the Tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*) on our way to spotting a Spike Rush. After inspection this turned out to be only *Eleocharis palustre* and not *uniglumis* as anticipated. Walking alongside the river yielded a few treats, not least some Perfoliate Pondweed (*Potamogeton perfoliatus*), Wych Elm (*Ulmus glabra*) and a possible Small Leaved Lime (*Tilia cordata*) flanked the banks. Strangely no one was prepared to wade into the river to confirm this. A Wood Club-



rush (*Scirpus sylvaticus*) was sighted on a river island, perhaps the same one that was seen last year. Another shower interrupted our peregrinations but to those with a bryophyte bent this was no encumbrance. As well as *Anomodon viticulosus*, *Thamnium alopecurum* and *Neckera crispa* there was also the less common *Leucodon sciuroides* all growing on a lovely Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*). It was soon time to turn back at this point but not without noticing the venerable old Field maples (*Acer campestre*) scattered about the river banks. All in all a varied day with something to please everyone – OK, so there were hardly any sedge species but let's not quibble!

Tim Kaye

Scotchel Nature Reserve, Pewsey

Sunday 20 July 2008

Leaders: Jane Brown and Paul Darby

Pewsey Parish Council has established the Scotchel Reserve along a wooded stretch of the Salisbury Avon very close to the middle of Pewsey. Jane and Paul started us off along the smooth wide track beside the river to do a quick survey and then to look at the reserve in more detail. However, botanists can be unruly and get distracted easily. We moved very slowly from the start, taking in all points of interest, like the Opposite-leaved Golden Saxifrage *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, which grew all along the stream banks. An examination of the tapering wings down comfrey stems led to the identification of Russian Comfrey *Symphytum x uplandicum*. Movement on the opposite bank tuned out to be a young Water Vole, a welcome new sighting. Several members waded the river to look at Water Starwort *Callitriche stagnalis* and then set off through head-high reeds, finding Bifid Hemp-nettle *Galeopsis bifida* and juicy raspberries on the way. Jane produced a long list of species from our visit, which will act as a base line for the reserve.



Bifid Hemp-nettle

We puzzled over a tiny, pale-flowered cranesbill, frequent in a mown verge. This turned out to be Dovesfoot Cranesbill, *Geranium molle*. After lunch on the grass, remaining members walked to a wet woodland. Branches of the Ford Brook run through the wood, providing challenging banks for intrepid botanists. The even-aged growth of small alders and willows, together with a few mature poplars and

willows, led to speculation that the site is an abandoned water meadow.

A patch of woundwort on the road verge nearby 'looked odd' and puzzled us. Most features led to Marsh Woundwort *Stachys palustris*, but the leaves had a foetid woundwort smell. Francis Rose's Wildflower Key gives it as "odourless", as does Clapham, Tutin and Moore's flora, but Stace allows "slightly-smelling". Botanists' noses are not all the same.

The last stragglers returned for a look into the Scotchel Reserve and were rewarded with a good find just by the gate: half a dozen spikes of an orchid in bud, probably Green-flowered Helleborine *Epipactis phyllanthos*.

Richard Aisbitt



Marsh Woundwort



Woodland mosse



Anne and Sue on the trail of elephants

Winsley Botanical Sites

29th July 2008

Leader: John Presland

Ten brave members met in the lay-by in a quiet wooded lane in Winsley to visit some of the Winsley sites which John Presland had introduced us to in his talk last November. I say brave because of the gloomy weather forecast.

We started the day in the rain looking at Murhill Reserve which consists of a steep meadow with a small copse at each end. The site was bought by the Parish Council in 1997 and John has been organizing a group of volunteers to do the much-needed work on the reserve. This has consisted of clearing the meadow of cherry trees which threatened to destroy the lovely ground flora if left for very long, making a flight of steps in part of the meadow, erecting fencing, stile, seat and signpost and publishing a reserve leaflet.

Marjoram, Hemp-agrimony, Field Scabious and Ploughman's-spikenard.

Walking from the top of the meadow towards the main road we came to a complex of senior citizen housing in the grounds of which we saw White Helleborine and Pyramidal Orchid.

We walked down the main road towards the canal and River Avon along the pavement at the foot of the long protected verge, very rich in species. Some of the things noted were Deadly Nightshade, Yellow-wort, Common Centaury, the remains of Common Spotted Orchid, Burnet-saxifrage, Quaking-grass, Black Knapweed and Rest-harrow.

We moved down to the river for a much needed sit down and lunch. Below where we were sitting near the road bridge was a large amount of a Water-crowfoot, which we didn't identify at the time because of the difficulty of reaching any of it, but it is in fact River Water-crowfoot, a species of fast flowing rivers, which occurs in only 18 1Km squares in Wiltshire.

Small Teasel



When we got back to the main road four of us caught the bus back to the start of the road where the cars were parked. Overall it was a good day in pleasant company despite the damp start. The walk seemed to be enjoyed by all who took part. Thanks to John for an interesting and varied day.

Jean Wall

Dry Stone Walls

After the others had gone home, John gave me a lightening tour of the dry stone walls of Winsley, as featured in his booklet "*Conserving the Flora of Limestone Dry Stone Walls*". There were generalist roadside plants at the base of the walls with a more characteristic limestone-wall-mix further up where the conditions were tougher. He showed me examples of new walls with little plant life, older walls with a mix of species, ivy-covered walls, rebuilt walls either assembled randomly, burying established encrustations, or more thoughtfully with the capping stones still on top and the right way up. He pointed out characteristic pioneer lichen and moss species, sadly quickly forgotten, and the completely different species mix on mortared limestone walls.

We even fitted in a roadside pond with sloping ends, which was maintained as a mini-nature reserve. It had previously been used for carts to drive through so as to swell and tighten the timber in their wheels.

Richard Aisbitt



White Waterlily

The East wood consists mainly of Ash, *Fraxinus excelsior*, with a Spurge-laurel, *Daphne laureola*, under cover. The West wood is mainly Wych Elm, *Ulmus glabra*. Both sections of woodland had been thinned by John's team to let more light in. Other species seen in the woodland were Sanicle, Stinking Iris and Spindle. Fortunately we soon left the rain behind as we headed up the steep meadow which had been grazed by sheep in the winter. Here some of the species noted were Rock-rose, Greater Knapweed,

The rest of the meeting took place walking along the river bank and back partly along the canal to the main road. The canal had been cleared of all vegetation. The river walk produced Small Teasel, Bristly Oxtongue, Gipsywort, Water-figwort and Teasel. In the river near the bank we also saw White Water Lily which must have been introduced as this lily likes ponds and lakes, not fast flowing rivers as the Avon can often be. Also recorded were Banded Demoiselles.

Tilshead Arable Weeds

7th August 2008

Leaders: Rosemary Duckett and Sonia Heywood



Round-leaved Fluellen

In the midst of that dismal early August weather there was one perfect summer's day and our leaders had picked it! The original field was full of arable weeds but they proved to be docks and thistles so we missed that out and moved on to the afternoon's site. A field full of interest to the arable weed enthusiast, the plot contained 65 species in all. We found such common delights as the common Scarlet Pimpernel (*Anagallis arvensis*) and Field Madger (*Sherardia arvensis*) the latter growing tall amongst the carrot (*Daucus carota*) and tufted vetch (*Vicia cracca*). Among the treasures were Round-leaved Fluellen (*Kickxia spuria*), Small Toadflax (*Chaenorhinum minus*), and, though not rare but beautiful nevertheless, the Perennial Sow-thistle (*Sonchus arvensis*). A single

Teasel stood high above the surrounding plants.

Keen butterfly watchers spotted the occasional Dark Green Fritillary and several Essex Skippers (the ones with the tiny black knobs on the underside of the antennae). Someone, was it

Ann, Spotted a Wasp Spider weaving a web. It's abdomen, striped black and yellow, is very similar to that of a wasp. Originally from France these spiders have appeared in Dorset recently.

After a picnic lunch we wandered on and look at the remains of an ancient boundary barrow, before returning to our cars. It had been an absorbing day, with stimulating

discussion, in perfect botanising weather.

Rita Grose



Wasp Spider



Small Toadflax



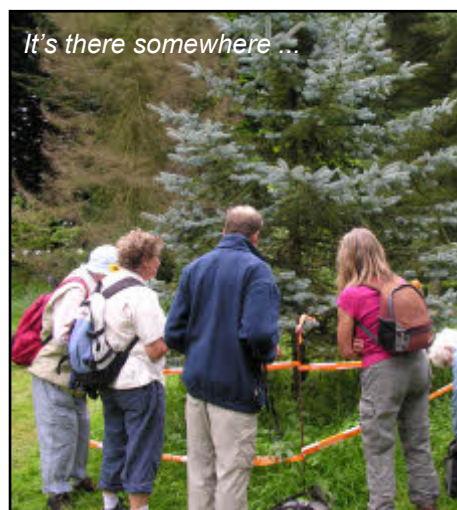
Botanists on the long barrow

Silk Wood at Westonbirt Arboretum

Wednesday 20th August 2008

Leader: - Dave Green

We had an interesting morning among the mighty trees of Silk Wood. As many of them were exotics their splendour rather passed us by, but there was a huge Small-leaved Lime *Tilia cordata* to gaze at. Also, with Scots and Black Pine growing together, we could see the diagnostic cinnamon bark of the Scots Pine which distinguishes it from the superficially similar and widely planted Black Pine.



Otherwise, we tended to fossick in the undergrowth, especially admiring Spreading Bellflower *Campanula patula*. This plant is listed at various



Violet Helleborine

locations by Donald Grose in "The Flora of Wiltshire", but now seems to be lost from the county. It was not re-found by the Wiltshire Flora Mapping Project (1985-1992) or more recently. Silk Wood is in Gloucestershire, but still within VC7, the North Wilts vice county, so we can claim part-ownership. Nettle-leaved Bellflower *C. trachelium* was also there protected from the mowing machines under shrubs,

Another treasure we were after was Violet Helleborine *Epipactis purpurata*. There were several groups of it under the Beech trees, just as they should be. Many had gone over but there were still enough in good condition for all to see and

photograph. In one of the Helleborine areas there was Thin-spiked Wood Sedge *Carex strigosa* and Slender Speedwell *Veronica filiformis* was scattered about.

Cockspur *Echinochloa crus-galli* was an unexpected and unusual grass to find beside one of the rides.

After admiring some Meadow Saffron *Colchicum autumnale*, Dave took us into THE Westonbirt Small-leaved Lime, which is a dark cave of a tree with many moderate-sized and small trunks. In fact, all is the same tree, said to be at least 2000 years old.

Our walk back to the car park (and café, and shops) took us through a downland slope where plots had been screened from grazing by electric fences. These areas had grown up lush and flowery in contrast to the grazed parts around; remains of Dropwort flowers could be seen.

We were accompanied by two members of the Westonbirt Plant Group, Rosemary Westgate and Geoff Goatly, who generously gave us their time and showed us their treasures, and by Tim Wilkins from Plantlife.

Rosemary Duckett and Richard Aisbitt



Spreading Bellflower



New Forest - Stony Moors and Holmsley

6th September 2008

Leader: Sharon Pilkington

We met, seventeen stalwarts in the wind and rain, to follow Sharon into the bogs of the New Forest. She had arrived early in order to check the site, but hadn't counted on everyone else being early too. After a brief introduction, we returned to our cars for a while to wait for the worst of the rain to pass over. Wellies were mandatory, waterproof trousers welcome.



Some had spent the night before in the area, and some were staying over for the following day's botanising on the coast nearby.

Sharon initially expressed disappointment that she could not see many of the expected plants in the area, the ponies having given the grass a very short haircut, but we were to be rewarded with a great variety when we reached the bog.

At the outset a group gathered around a mint-like plant in a dip near the edge of the road - Pennyroyal (*Mentha pulegium*). Chamomile (*Chamaemelum nobile*) was flowering here and there. Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*), Waxcaps, Lesser Hawkbit (*Leontodon saxatilis*) and a variety of rushes were noted. We were searching for such rarities as Slender Marsh-bedstraw (*Galium constrictum*).

The morning's activity centred around a bog habitat. As multicoloured umbrellas were unfurled we were not to be disappointed. Crossing various streams and wet hollows and negotiating fen and bog (both rain

and spring waters contributed to the hydrology of the area), one of our number thought we were like 'buffalo in a wallow'.... an image not to be forgotten.

In one stream Bladderwort (*Utricularia* sp.) was spotted.

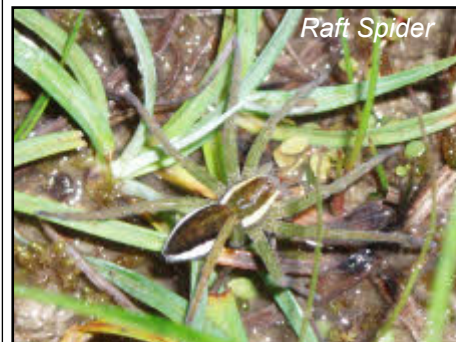


Other plants included Marsh St. John's-Wort (*Hypericum elodes*), the tiny pairs of leaves along the stems of Bog Pimpernel (*Anagallis tenella*), Round-leaved Sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*), Hard-fern (*Blechnum spicant*), Bristle Bent (*Agrostis curtisii*), the alien Slender Rush (*Juncus tenuis*) the purple-flushed leaves of Water-purslane (*Lythrum portula*), actually related to Purple-loosestrife, Bog- myrtle (*Myrica gale*), Lesser Skullcap (*Scutellaria minor*), the scattered orange seedheads of Bog Asphodel (*Narthecium ossifragum*), Yellow- sedge (*Carex viridula*), Fen Bedstraw (*Galium uliginosum*) Dorset Heath (*Erica ciliaris*) in flower (as its name implies, *E. ciliaris* has distinctive hairs on the flower which help identification), Narrow buckler- fern (*Dryopteris carthusiana*), Floating Club-rush (*Eleogiton fluitans* – formerly in genus *Isolepis* with the other Club-rushes), Marsh Lousewort (*Pedicularis palustre*), Bulbous Rush (*Juncus bulbosus*) identified partly by its habit of proliferating, that is, sprouting fresh growth from its flowers.

The delicate Slender Marsh-bedstraw (*Galium constrictum*) was found, and could easily have been missed without expert eyes on the task.

Personally, the descriptions in the floras I have don't help either! Obviously more practice needed....

Non-botanical species we saw included an interesting spider with bright green legs, identified by Arachnological Society as a Raft Spider (*Dolomedes fimbriatus*), which apparently can have green legs, though the books usually refer to brown ones. The Society did request a record as their New Forest ones are not up to date ...



We also noted Angle Shades moth, a green and yellow striped caterpillar (as yet unidentified) and a harvestman (identified as a male by Rosemary, due to its pedipalps)

As usual on these outings, the time



flew, and we arrived back at the car park ready for lunch and bush visits. I think we caught a glimpse of sun at one point.... Thanks to Sharon for a great morning

Cars then proceeded to the site of the afternoon's botanising.

Jane Brown

New Forest – Hatchet Pond

Saturday 6th September 2008

Leader – Sharon Pilkington

Our group still numbered seventeen people for the afternoon leg of our New Forest Saturday, despite the weather. Having lunched and dried out a little (with the aid of the car heater!) we all eventually arrived at Hatchet Pond, having driven over from Stony Moors – the scene of our morning trip. We were amazed to have a dry afternoon after 36 hours of almost continuous rain, and we set off north eastwards towards what I believe is called Little Hatchet Pond.

By the side of the road we examined various fungi – a wavy wax-cap and a candle-snuff type fungus and a similar orange one. On this road verge we also saw Goldenrod – *Solidago virgaurea*.

Jean and I were in the second of two groups we'd split in to, when Richard (from the first group) called us over to the opposite verge to look at two Autumn Lady's Tresses *Spiranthes spiralis* – a bit out of place in this habitat.



Autumn Ladies Tresses

We wondered where the first group had gone until we heard them call "we're down here", so descended through some scrub to find a pond where Hampshire Purslane – *Ludwigia palustris* was growing, beside it was the invasive alien Australian Swamp Stonecrop – *Crassula helmsii*.

The group then spent some time looking at a Rose – Sweet Briar – *Rosa rubiginosa* – a species where the hips retain calyx parts (unlike Dog Rose). Shortly after this the sun came out and I saw my first butterfly



Hampshire Purslane

of the day – a Grayling. Jean also saw two Common Darter Dragonflies. At this point Sharon saw her first Slender Marsh Bedstraw – *Galium constrictum* – a real rarity and a New Forest speciality, confirmed by its forward pointing prickles on its leaves.

This area revealed a number of unusual species including Pillwort *Pilularia globulifera*, Lesser Water Plantain *Baldellia ranunculoides*, Bladderwort *Utricularia sp.* and Eared Sallow *Salix aurita* as well as rather surprisingly *Nardus stricta* or Mat grass – a species usually found on upland areas where they turn the hills white. We moved on seeing a Meadow Brown butterfly and another mushroom *Amanita citrina* before discovering two more Autumn Lady's Tresses and much more Hampshire Purslane.

After crossing the road we headed back to the car park and on the way there we saw a Fox Moth caterpillar and Heath Milkwort *Polygala serpyllifolia*. Then the grand finale to this trip was provided by a profusion of Coral Necklace *Illecebrum verticillatum* at the edge of Hatchet Pond where we also found Marsh Cudweed *Gnaphalium uliginosum*.



Coral Necklace - very small

My species list for this visit:

Cross-leaved Heath – *Erica tetralix*
Round-leaved Sundew – *Drosera rotundifolia*
Oblong-leaved Sundew – *Drosera intermedia*
Marsh St John's Wort – *Hypericum elodes*
Eyebright (Pink Version) – *Euphrasia sp.*
Goldenrod – *Solidago virgaurea*
Autumn Lady's Tresses *Spiranthes spiralis*
Slender Marsh Bedstraw – *Galium*

constrictum
Lesser Water Plantain – *Baldellia ranunculoides*
Bladderwort – *Utricularia sp.*
Slender Club-rush – *Isolepis cernua*
Marsh Arrowgrass – *Triglochin palustris*
Coral Necklace *Illecebrum verticillatum*
Royal Fern – *Osmunda regalis*
Pillwort – *Pilularia globulifera*
Mat grass - *Nardus stricta*
Star sedge – *Carex echinata*
Eared Sallow – *Salix aurita*
Wild Service Tree – *Sorbus domestica*
Lesser Skullcap – *Scutellaria minor*
Chamomile – *Chamaemelum nobile*
Marsh Cudweed - *Gnaphalium uliginosum*
Heath Milkwort - *Polygala serpyllifolia*

Tom and Jean Smith



Lunch in front of Fawley Power Station - Lesley Wallington

Calshot, Southampton Water

Sunday 7 September 2008

Leader: Martin Rand

The second day of our Hampshire weekend provided a complete contrast with the first and not only because the weather was much kinder and we escaped with only one short shower. Our walk took us along the coast of Southampton Water and past the power station. The views were not perhaps the most beautiful, but there was plenty of botanical interest in the mudflat, saltmarsh, and brackish marsh habitats, not to mention the made ground associated with the power station. We had, in fact, only walked a few yards across the car park when Martin spotted *Conyza sumatrensis*, the so-called Guernsey Fleabane, actually a native of South America, but obviously suffering from some geographical confusion! Martin told us that this is the commonest alien *Conyza* in Hampshire.

We then walked along the edge of a mown field next to an extensive area of brackish marsh, dominated by *Phragmites australis* (Common Reed). The brackish conditions were indicated by the abundance of Sea Club-rush (*Bolboschoenus maritimus*) and both Sea and Saltmarsh Rushes (*Juncus maritimus* and *J. gerardii*). More familiar plants to Wiltshire botanists included *Pulicaria dysenterica* (Common Fleabane) and the fruiting heads of marsh orchids. The field margin yielded fruiting *Lathyrus nissolia* (Grass Vetchling) spotted by an eagle-eyed Dave, but

fruiting blackberries proved more popular with participants! Rose enthusiasts also found *Rosa stylosa* (Short-styled Field Rose) or possibly a *R. stylosa* hybrid; its leaves were not in a good enough condition to show the characteristic features, so we could not be sure of its identification.

Our route then took us between abandoned brackish grazing marsh and saltmarsh. The mudlarks amongst us, at least those wearing wellies, were able to venture out into the lovely squelchy mud and take a closer look at some of the saltmarsh plants. These included Common Cord-grass (*Spartina anglica*), a hybrid between *S. maritima* and the North American *S. alternifolia*, first recorded at Lymington in 1892. We also saw Common Orache (*Atriplex patula*), Sea Purslane (*A. portulacoides*), and *Suaeda maritima* (Annual Seablite), all members of the Chenopodiaceae or Goosefoot family. Several Glasswort species, also in the same family, were discovered and Martin helped us to distinguish between them. The first was *Sarcocornia perennis*, the only perennial species and now placed in a separate genus. He was also confident that one with three flowers, the central one of which was larger, could be assigned to *Salicornia europaea* agg., while one with distinctive reddish-purple coloration was *S. ramosissima*. Since the meeting, he has confirmed that the yellowish species with three flowers all of equal size, was *S. fragilis*, a new record for the site. (There is a key with good illustrations in the BSBI Plant Crib 1998, for anyone who is interested). Other saltmarsh plants included *Limonium vulgare* (Common Sea-lavender) and the grasses *Puccinellia maritima* (Common Saltmarsh-grass) and *P. fasciculata* (Borrer's Saltmarsh-grass). Sue

identified the seaweeds *Fucus spiralis* and *F. vesiculosus* (Bladder Wrack) that were also found on the mud in places.

Above the saltmarsh, there was plenty of interest too; Greater and Lesser Sea-spurreys (*Spergularia media* and *S. marina*), Sea Couch (*Elytrigia atherica*) and Grass-leaved Orache (*Atriplex littoralis*) all occurred. A 'funny' *Senecio erucifolius* (Hoary Ragwort) proved to have some of the characteristics of var. *viridulus*, recorded from coastal locations. We also found, amongst other things, *Blackstonia perfoliata* (Yellow-wort), *Carex muricata* ssp. *pairae* (Prickly Sedge), *C. otrubae* (False Fox-sedge), *Picris hieracioides* (Hawkweed Oxtongue) and *Trifolium arvense* (Hare's-foot Clover). Shingle banks by the power station yielded *Crambe maritima* (Sea-kale), *Crithmum maritimum* (Rock Samphire), *Atriplex glabriuscula* (Babington's Orache) and *Tripleurospermum maritimum* (Sea Mayweed).

We had aimed to reach Ashlett by lunchtime, but succumbed to hunger and found a convenient spot by the power station. Made-ground grazed by horses nearby was covered with short turf. The flora included Common and Lesser Centaury (*Centaurea erythraea* and *C. pulchellum*), *Erigeron acer* (Blue Fleabane), *Euphrasia nemorosa* x *micrantha* (Eyebright), *Sedum acre* (Biting Stonecrop), *Senecio viscosus* (Sticky Groundsel), *Solanum nigrum* (Black Nightshade) and abundant Hare's-foot Clover and Yellow-wort. A single spike of *Spiranthes spiralis* (Autumn Lady's Tresses) in better condition than those seen the previous day, was growing right by the track. The non-native *Hirschfeldia incana* (Hoary Mustard) and *Conyza*

bilbaoana (Bilbao Fleabane) were also found. The latter was first recorded in England near Southampton in 1992.

Our route took us on a path just above the saltmarsh, with *Aster tripolium* (Sea Aster) on the seaward side and *Sonchus palustris* (Marsh Sow-thistle), *Lactuca virosa* (Great Lettuce) and Common Reed to the landward. This soon became too muddy for those without wellies and we retreated to drier ground, walking through a mosaic of grassland, scrub and trees with lots of roses, including *Rosa arvensis* (Field-rose). Venturing back towards the saltmarsh, we were rewarded by the sight of *Triglochin maritimum* (Sea Arrowgrass) and *T. palustre* (Marsh Arrowgrass) growing together. *Glaux maritima* (Sea milkwort) and *Trifolium fragiferum* were also seen. Inland again, Martin spotted the creamy yellow flowers of *G. x pomeranicum*, a rare hybrid between *Galium mollugo* and *G. verum* (Hedge and Lady's Bedstraw). He also showed us abundant *Potentilla recta* (Sulphur Cinquefoil), a naturalised garden escape, in the same area of grassland. We then

headed towards the promised pub at Ashlett, but alas this proved to be boarded up, so we walked back unrefreshed. The return journey was somewhat faster than the outward, since the latter part of it involved retracing our steps. Initially we followed paths through areas of made-ground covered in open scrub, much of which had a ground flora dominated by grey *Cladonia* lichens with abundant Biting Stonecrop. Our final finds were *Epilobium lanceolatum* (Spear-leaved Willowherb), uncommon in Hampshire and *Polypodium interjectum* (Intermediate Polypody), unusually growing on the ground.

We had a very interesting day full of plants and habitats that Wiltshire, with all its treasures, does not have: a successful conclusion to our weekend in Hampshire. Many thanks once again to Martin for sharing his enthusiasm and expertise with us and to other participants for their contributions botanical and otherwise, which help to make our excursions so enjoyable.

Anne Appleyard

BSBI Threatened Plant Pilot Project 2008

Results of the survey are still coming in but the early indications are that it has been a considerable success in Wiltshire. Thank you to everybody who has taken part. I now have a much clearer picture of how some of our rarest plants - such as fly orchid, spreading bellflower, yellow bird's-nest and flat-sedge - are doing and some new populations have been recorded in the process. Some of these plants hadn't been recorded for two decades so it's good to know they're generally doing well.

I don't have details yet but it's likely that the BSBI will extend the survey in 2009 to include more species and populations across the country. I hope to be able to unveil details at the AGM in March and give every WBS member the chance to get involved. Watch this space!

Sharon Pilkington



Mud flats, Southampton Water

Recorder's Corner

By Sharon Pilkington

Once again it's been a busy year, despite the weather; I shall say no more about that. My work commitments this year have meant that I haven't managed to get out recording as much as I had hoped (a now-familiar refrain!) but I'm delighted to say that many others have been very busy and I've been delighted to hear about many of the finds. It's also been very nice to make contact with a few new recorders, in particular Tim Kaye who is now a familiar face despite only joining the society in March. The youngest recorder is currently Leif Bersweden, who, despite being only fourteen, is already making his mark in the world of botany.

Recording schemes

The BSBI's new Director of Development, Kevin Walker, has been getting his feet firmly under the table this year. His first initiative was the BSBI Threatened Plant Pilot Project 2008, which some Wiltshire botanists participated in (see article elsewhere in this newsletter). This project encouraged specific searches for species populations that in some cases hadn't been recorded for a long time in Wiltshire. Ironically, one of my hopes when the Wiltshire Rare Plant Register was published last year was that recording interest would be stimulated in some of the species that

hadn't been seen for many years. For example, a targeted survey for Flat-sedge *Blysmus compressus* in July revealed that it is still thriving at Pike Corner SSSI in the Cotswold Water Park, a relief as I had no records for it there later than 1986 when Dave Green recorded it. This particular survey also enabled us to see and record a wonderfully healthy population of Downy-fruited Sedge *Carex filiformis* at the same site. Surveys for species such as Fly Orchid *Ophrys insectifera* and Yellow Bird's-nest *Monotropa hypopitys* had mixed results, with a number of old sites no longer extant, while some new ones were found.

Notable records

New to Wiltshire was Sea Pearlwort *Sagina maritima*, found with other halophytes on the edge of the A350 near Chippenham. This is a common enough species in coastal habitats, but is rare inland. I wonder whether we will see more of it in the future, as we have already seen with our resident saltmarsh species like Lesser Sea-spurrey *Spergularia marina* (which spread into VC7 for the first time in 2008) and Reflexed Saltmarsh-grass *Puccinellia distans*?

Miles Hodgkiss found an unusual orchid at Cley Hill which turned out to be the cross between Common Spotted-orchid and Fragrant Orchid. This is the first recent record of the hybrid X *Dactylodenia st-quintinii*. Unfortunately the inflorescence didn't persist long and was possibly

browsed off by deer, rabbits, or even molluscs.

Barbara Last sent me a specimen of an unusual composite found by Penny Theobald in a car park in Salisbury. This turned out to be the first record of Guernsey Fleabane *Conyza sumatrensis* for the county. This species is quite common as a ruderal in the London area, but in Wiltshire we normally have the very similarly unglamorous-looking Canadian Fleabane *C. canadensis*.

Rather unexpectedly, given the time of year, I found one plant of Great Brome *Anisantha diandra*, again new to the county, in flower by a metalled track in Grovely Wood in January. Like the fleabane, this is likely to be a casual and will probably not persist there for long.

Many new 10km square records have been sent my way. For example, Jane Brown noted the most easterly site in the county to date at Burbage for Keel-fruited Cornsalad *Valerianella dentata* earlier in the year. I also found it in Marlborough town centre and at Lockeridge, so I'm sure it's moving east. It would be good to have more records from north of the county.

At Bratton, near Westbury, Paul Skelton drew my attention to an unusual tree that grows by a stream near his house. I was stunned to see a gigantic and very beautiful native Black-poplar pollard *Populus nigra* ssp. *betulifolia* there. Paul tells me it bears scarlet catkins in the spring so it must be a male. My personal interest in these scarce trees has been stimulated this year by some survey work I was contracted to do in the Cotswold Water Park. Despite their size, I rarely receive records for native black-poplars although many trees are known from the CWP and Wylve valley areas in particular. Perhaps this is because people consider them difficult to distinguish from other poplars. However, there are some reliable ways of doing so, and I hope that Ken Adam's talk in January will do much to stimulate recording of these beautiful trees.



Native Black Poplar - Sharon Pilkington

One of our most beautiful yet elusive orchids, Violet Helleborine *Epipactis purpurata* seemed to have a good year and several recorders noted healthy populations at places in Savernake Forest and at Westonbirt Arboretum.

Finally, along with many others in the Society, I was very sad to hear of Jeremy Wood's death recently. Even this year, he participated in the BSBI Threatened Plant Pilot Project, and he was also involved with other recent recording initiatives (Local Change and recording for the WRPR). I have only been recorder since 2004 but I was consistently impressed by Jeremy's energy, enthusiasm and drive. Wiltshire recording owes him a great debt of gratitude and I shall miss him.



Violet Helleborine - Sharon Pilkington

Forthcoming publications

A number of new botanical publications are nearing release, including the following:

- **BSBI Water-starworts handbook:** A welcome addition to the respected range of BSBI handbooks, Water-starworts is due out in November. It will enable much more accurate identification of this difficult group.
- A **BSBI Grasses handbook** is in preparation and will probably be on sale by early 2009.
- John Poland's long-awaited **Vegetative Key** is due out in May 2009. This carefully-planned book will include much previously-unavailable material and should be a boon to those of us who frequently need to identify species in vegetative condition.

For the bryologists, two new publications are of note:

- **British Mosses and Liverworts: A Field Guide.** A major new field guide produced by the British Bryological Society. It contains simple, jargon-free descriptions of species and their habitats, as well as photographs and drawings to aid identification in the field. This will hopefully be published in spring 2009.
- **Arable Bryophytes: a field guide**, by Ron Porley. This new book includes accounts of the much-overlooked group of bryophytes of cultivated ground, and should be available from e.g. Summerfield Books in November 2008.

I also have a few copies of the **Wiltshire Rare Plant Register** for sale so please contact me if you would like one. Price £12 plus £1.50 post and packing.

Record Ancient Savernake Forest Hawthorn

Peter Andrews has discovered a giant *Crataegus monogyna* on the southern edge of Savernake Forest. This extraordinary tree has a rather *Welwitschia*-like shape, with a low but living huge base from which large limbs radiate. This central base has a girth of over six metres. The largest of the four radiating thick limbs itself has a girth of two metres. Re-rooted at intervals, these spreading trunks form a large circular grove of 36 metres diameter, which gives an area of just over 0.1 hectares.



How to find it

Here is some information from Peter Andrews if you want to visit this remarkable tree:

“The large hawthorn occurs on the southern edge of Savernake and is hidden between the planted group of rhododendrons and beech/mixed woodland. The site is just south of the pond with the yew and south east of the large cedars, west of a winding path leading south at approx grid ref SU237650.”

Photos - Peter Andrews

This type of **natural** re-rooting is unusual in hawthorn; as assessed by the quantity of timber, spread, and basal circumference, this tree is a record for Wiltshire, a probable record for Britain and a possible record for Europe. Peter Andrews has suggested that the tree and its immediate area should be protected as a mini-nature reserve.

Jack Oliver



Wessex Bryology Group

This is a new group that has been set up to record sites in Wiltshire, Dorset, and parts of Somerset. A key aim of the group is to encourage those who are new to the subject to become more experienced and confident at identifying bryophytes. There is no formal membership or constitution and each person goes out at his/her own risk. Beginners are always very welcome; the only equipment needed is a hand lens (x10 or x20) and some paper packets for collecting specimens. Many of the sites we plan to visit include wet and muddy areas so wearing boots is advisable. We will usually eat a packed lunch on site. All meetings start at 10.30am and finish between 3pm and 4pm.

Contacts:

Andrew Branson tel: 01747 838223; e-mail andrew@britishwildlife.com or
Sharon Pilkington tel: 01225 775945; e-mail:
sharon.pilkington1@btinternet.com

Bryology Meetings

Sunday 2nd November 2008

Wareham Forest, Dorset.

Leader: Bryan Edwards (e-mail:
b.edwards@dorsetcc.gov.uk).

A joint meeting with the BBS Southern Group to visit the recently discovered *Sphagnum fuscum* site and also to see a good range of other mire species.

Park at Stroud Bridge (SY 888916) on the Wareham - Bere Regis road.

Saturday 6th December 2008

East Knoyle, South Wiltshire.

Leader Andrew Branson.

A meeting primarily to introduce beginners to a range of common woodland and grassland species.

Park at layby opposite windmill on Wise Lane between East Knoyle and The Green (ST 872310).

Sunday 15th February 2009

Asham Wood, Somerset.

Leader: Sharon Pilkington.

An extensive area of ancient ash-maple woodland with a stream and the possibility of visiting an adjacent disused limestone quarry.

Park by the factory buildings (do not park in the factory car park itself) at the junction of the Old Wells Road and the minor road to Leigh upon Mendip (Leigh Road) at ST 701467.

Sunday 15th March 2009

Fyfield Down NNR, North Wiltshire.

Leader: Sharon Pilkington.

A chance to survey the famous sarson stones.

Park at car park near Preshute (west of Marlborough) at SU 159700.

Sunday 26th April 2009

Silk Hill, Salisbury Plain, South Wiltshire.

Leader: Sharon Pilkington.

Chalk grassland and disturbed open ground.

Meet at Milston at the tank crossing at SU 164460. We will then drive on in convoy to the site.

Other Events

Lichen Meeting

Saturday, 21st March 2009

All Saints Church, Broad Chalke, Wiltshire, 10:30am – 1pm

An introduction to lichen identification and ecology. Join Tim Wilkins on a churchyard ramble exploring the wondrous miniature world of these intriguing organisms. A partnership event with Plantlife. Afterwards, lunch may be taken in The Queen's Head Inn (North Street). Bring a x10 or x20 hand lens if you have one. As numbers are limited, please book by phoning Plantlife on 01722-342730.

Meet in the church car park at SU040254 – entrance from The Causeway.

Wiltshire Botanical Society meeting, 6 December 2008, Langford Lakes

A correction:

Barbara Last's talk will be on

Flowers of Spitzbergen

and not

Pink Elephants and Ladies of the Night

as listed in the Botanical Society's meetings programme

Apologies for this error

Books for sale

Barbara Last is offering some botanical books to the society. We propose to sell these by silent auction at the AGM (7 March 2009), with 50% of the proceeds going to WBS funds.

The titles are:

Alien Grasses of the British Isles; Ryves, Clement and Foster.
Aquatic Plants in Britain and Ireland; C.D.Preston and J.M. Croft
British Mosses and Liverworts 3rd ed; E.V.Watson (pristine state)
Introduction to British Lichens; U.K Duncan
Lichens An Illustrated Guide; Frank Dobson (pristine)
Pondweeds of Great Britain and Ireland; BSBI Handbook No.8. C.D. Preston
The Liverworts of Britain and Ireland; Smith (pristine state)
The Moss Flora of Britain and Ireland; A.J.E. Smith (a bit battered)

Jeremy Wood

It was with much sadness that we learnt of Jeremy's death on 22nd August 2008. He died of heart failure, having recently recovered from pneumonia.

Although he avoided smoking, Jeremy spent much of his professional life working as a biochemist for British American Tobacco. When he was due to retire his wife Jane was worried that he might find it difficult to fill all those spare hours, but rarely have such concerns been so unfounded! First he became involved with the Flora Mapping Project, recording numerous tetrads in SU21 and 22 and, once this task was completed, he moved to other ventures such as BSBI Local Change, Atlas 2000, arable weed surveys and threatened plant recording.

Jeremy's enthusiasm and determination were insatiable; I have often been astounded at how much he and Jane could pack in to a day or

week. As well as frequently attending WBS meetings they both also regularly joined us on our residential visits and in 2006 Jeremy organised our French trip to Lot et Garonne. In preparation he took French lessons so that he could communicate with our hosts and with the resident botanist and when, at the end of our visit, he presented gifts he showed us the extent of his diligence and attention to detail.

“a true gentleman”

Jeremy's other interests included growing cyclamen (organising at least one visit to Turkey by members of the Cyclamen Society) and, of course, developing his part of the national collection of hellebores here in Whiteparish. His love of plants probably stemmed from early years spent in Assam where he conducted research on a tea plantation. It was there that he got to know Frank Kingdon Ward who – so Jeremy told me – stated that he should have become a botanist rather than a biochemist. I think he made up for

that in later life. Music, birds and travelling were all important pleasures in his very full life; even in 2008 he and Jane spent time in Portugal and Austria. We have lost a very good botanist and plantsman and a wonderful friend. As Canon Roger Sharpe said in his eulogy ‘in all senses of the word, he was a true gentleman’.

Pat Woodruffe

*Supper, Lot et Garonne, 2006.
Jeremy is on right in the foreground*



Wiltshire Botanical Society Committee

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Jane Brown		01672 569241 janeluke@elephant87.freemove.co.uk
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Lesley Wallington	Treasurer	01225 709560 jwallington@toucansurf.com
Pat Woodruffe	Meetings Secretary	01794 884436 pmw.bentley@waitrose.com

Winter Meetings

Sat 22 Nov 2008	Urchfont, Plantlife's 'Important Plant Area' project
Sat 6 Dec 2008	Langford, Flowers of Spitzbergen
Sat 10 Jan 2009	Melksham, Flora of Essex, Black Poplars
Sat 24 Jan 2009	Devizes, Monitoring SSSIs for Natural England
Sat 7 Feb 2009	Bentley Wood, Woodland Mosses – fieldwork and ID
Sat 28 Feb 2009	Marlborough, Sawfly identification and habitats
Sat 7 Mar 2009	Devizes, AGM followed by 'Yorkshire Revisited'
Sat 21 Mar 2009	Lichen Identification and Ecology
Sat 6 June 2009 – Wed 10 June 2009	Residential trip to Devon

For details, see our meetings leaflet or the Wiltshire Botanical Society website at <http://www.communigate.co.uk/wilts/wiltshirebotanicalsociety/>

Future meetings

Please suggest ideas for meetings or talks. Contact me by writing to:

Anchorsholme, Hop Gardens
Whiteparish, Nr. Salisbury
Wilts SP5 2ST

or by phone or e-mail (01794 884436, pmw.bentley@waitrose.com)

Pat Woodruffe

From the Editor

Our indoor meetings are scattered around the county this year. Please do come along to be entertained and exchange news. We are now asking for a modest contribution of £1 per meeting towards room hire. If you are interested in our activities, but not yet a member, feel welcome to come and sample a meeting or two.

Thank you again to the authors who sent in meeting reports and other articles. The photographs and artwork have also been most welcome. Photos without credits were taken by the editor (do let me know if I have unjustly left out your name). I would be glad to have more photographs from members.

The next newsletter should be sent out in April 2009, so **all copy to me by 31 March 2009 please**. Please send material by post to:

84 Goddard Avenue
Swindon
Wilts SN1 4HT

or even better, by email: richardaisbitt@yahoo.co.uk

Richard Aisbitt

Membership

We welcome new members, beginners and experts alike. If you are interested, please feel free to come to a meeting or two before you commit yourself. Subscriptions and contact details go to:

Lesley Wallington
6 Radnor Place, Melksham, Wiltshire SN12 6DJ
Telephone: 01225 709560
Email: jwallington@toucansurf.com

Subscriptions:

Ordinary Member	£10.00 per year
Joint Membership	£15.00 per year
Life Membership	£100 (Family £150)

Cover picture: *original artwork* - *Snakeshead Fritillary* - Katie Oliver