



Sussex Botanical Recording Society

Newsletter

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President's Message

This being my first President's message I have been searching past contributions for inspiration and enlightenment as to what kind of thing is expected from our Newsletter introduction. It soon became evident that I couldn't hope to emulate the inspirational pieces penned by our much-loved Mary. However, I was also reminded that this time last year the Chairman wrote that the Editor was standing over him, 'the cold barrel of her pistol pressed to his temple as the deadline for copy approached'. Now with that I can empathise. To paraphrase a more than usually hubristic political claim, I also feel the hand of Abraham(s) on my shoulder!

This time last year Nick also asked in this column 'What does the botanist do in winter?'. I have to say that it is not a question that occurs to me very often. The reason can be traced back to a cold, damp and gloomy December 27th in 1954 when a teenage sixth former cycled to Nutley to meet a certain Dr Francis Rose to search for mosses around Ashdown Forest. It turned out to be a memorable experience! Suffice it to say that we ended the day below the waterfall of the Duddleswell ravine as the light faded, looking for a particularly rare but minute moss with the aid of lighted matches, a performance that I was soon to learn was a well-known Franciscan behaviour pattern (he found the moss, of course). However, it is an interesting fact that the numbers of flowering plant, moss and lichen enthusiasts whose interests spread over more than one group are surprisingly small. Of about 2,700 UK members of the BSBI, 450 members of the BBS and 360 members of the BLS, how many people do you think that there are who belong to all three? (answer on page 12). In order to help relieve the winter doldrums and to stimulate people to try their hand I suggested at the Autumn Get-together that I would run a moss 'taster' trip for anyone interested. The details are on page 13. February 15th is the day, and the idea is to base it at Woods Mill so that we can use a classroom, and I can give a short illustrated introduction before going out. We will concentrate just on the common larger species

that are easily identified in the field. By the end of the day I promise you that you will be able to do better than the Chairman's 'five species that he can misidentify with confidence'!

One of my best memories of the past year was the AGM of the Linnean Society on May 24th, when I was lucky enough to be present when Howard Matcham was presented with the Society's H.H. Bloomer Award given 'to an amateur naturalist for an important contribution to biological knowledge'. Congratulations, Howard, we are proud of you.

For the New Flora Working Group the past year has been dominated by the exciting business of finalising the arrangements for the publication of the Flora. As you know the present plan is for a publication date early in 2018. We will then have to start thinking about 'What next?'. One of the things that we might consider is how can we do our bit to encourage the next generation of botanists. With only six universities now offering first degrees in botany or plant science, the onus is very much on bodies like the Field Studies Council and societies like ours to

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help plug the gap in providing experience in identification and survey skills.

In the meantime, there is much to do, such as the new churchyard survey that we launched at last year's AGM. If you haven't yet signed up, do get in touch with Helen Proctor, who is co-ordinating the project. Finally, if you are searching for ammunition with which to convince family and friends of the importance of plants, and you like a good read, I suggest that you could not do better than curl up with a copy of David Beerling's riveting *The Emerald Planet*. Happy New Year!

David Streeter

Secretarial Notes

Saturday 4th March 2017

The Annual General Meeting will be held at 2.00 p.m. at Staplefield Village Hall. After the AGM, dates and information will be given about this year's field meetings and there will be details of interesting records found in 2016. There will be a report on the New Flora. Please bring your digital photographs of Sussex plants to show to the meeting, which will finish with tea, biscuits and cakes. The hall will be available from 1.30 p.m. if you wish to bring any books or plants for sale.

Saturday 28th October 2017

The Autumn Get-together will be held at Staplefield Village Hall. The doors will be open from 10.00 a.m. and the meeting will start promptly at 10.30. Please remember to bring a packed lunch; tea, coffee and cakes will be available. Members are invited to bring books and plants for sale, any items of interest or specimens for display, and digital photographs to show in the afternoon. Offers of homemade cakes are always welcome.... They are greatly enjoyed.

SBRs Committee

Long-term committee members Arthur Hoare and Howard Matcham have indicated that they will not seek re-election at the forthcoming AGM. We are also without an Honorary Secretary. Nominations for the committee (in writing and with the agreement of the nominee) should reach the Chairman no later than ten days before the AGM.

Treasurer's Note

Welcome to 2017. Following preparation of the Society's Accounts for 2016 I shall update you more fully, in the May 2017 Newsletter, as to the state of

the Flora Fund. However, I can tell you that we have had preliminary discussions with a prospective publisher and the excellent news is that due to the generosity of many of you it appears that we have sufficient funds to finance the production of the Flora.

It is likely that subscriptions for 2017 will remain as for 2016 i.e. £8 for an individual and £11 for two people at the same address and receiving one copy of the mailings as they arise. Subscriptions may be sent to me at my home address, paid at the AGM in March or at the Autumn Get-together in October. If anyone has not paid their subscription for 2016 - please now so do if you wish to remain a member. If you are uncertain of your subscription status please contact me, and I shall let you know.

Trevor Lording

Obituary: Ernie Sears

by Nick Sturt

Something of an SBRs character, what you saw was what you got with Ernie. He was passionate about natural history, with birds probably being a little closer to his heart than plants – certainly he had travelled widely to train his eagle eye upon a very long list of avians. At our indoor and outdoor meetings, however, his genuine enthusiasm for botany was evident, although he was no lover of botanical Latin, and if speakers neglected to translate the species into English it was not long before Ernie spoke up. Among our membership it was Alan Knapp who first recognised Ernie's extraordinarily acute vision and he used him regularly as a 'spotter'. I recall in particular Alan's field meeting on the Downs near Fulking, which I had to lead as by then he was already debilitated by his illness. The task was to find the scarce and elusive Field Fleawort (*Tephrosia integrifolia*, as Ernie would have preferred not to call it). Ernie had already found some plants on a 'recce' and was able to lead us to them, but when on the day we pointed out some other likely slopes he was off like a rocket and before long returned with further sightings of our quarry. I also remember being with him on one of Dawn's meetings near Rogate on the A272. While we were standing in the middle of a vast sandy field he was able to pick out interesting plants in the far distance, not to mention one or two good birds! Several years ago Ernie was diagnosed with a severe form of Parkinson's Disease and before long this was cruelly compounded by the onset of Alzheimer's Disease. His wife Glenda tended him devotedly during his illness and we send our sincere condolences to her and to their children, Helen and Colin.

The Churchyard Project

by Helen Proctor

The new Churchyard Project got off to a flying start in 2016. Thank you to everyone who took part with such enthusiasm! The table below includes data for the churchyards and cemeteries which were surveyed throughout the year. Several more churchyards were visited once or twice only so will need more visits in 2017 in order to record early or late appearing plant species.

	East Sussex	West Sussex
Churchyards/cemeteries visited throughout the year	75	77
Average number of records per churchyard/cemetery	107	104
Highest number	226 (Seaford Cemetery)	172 (Milland Church)
Total records	8,047	7,990

In East Sussex, Seaford cemetery had an unusually high number of taxa recorded. Not only is the cemetery very large, it has varied habitats on chalk, and two members recorded the plants. The recording and the survey forms have provided evidence of the churchyards with the most interesting flora and indicate those which are well managed. Danehill had a carpet of *Anacamptis morio* (Green-winged Orchid). Alciston had three orchid species. Spithurst churchyard is well known for its grass-heath flora. It was a delight to find *Succisa pratensis* (Devil's-bit Scabious) in quantity as well as *Solidago virgaurea* (Goldenrod) and *Serratula tinctoria* (Saw-wort). Hadlow Down churchyard is recognised as a Local Wildlife site. *Filago vulgaris* (Common Cudweed) in Barcombe churchyard is a new tetrad record. Bexhill and Battle cemeteries are well cared for and produced interesting records.

In West Sussex, too, there are exceptionally interesting churchyards. Milland churchyard supports heathland and grass heath species, including *Carex muricata* ssp. *pairae* (Prickly Sedge) as well as a rich grassland flora. Coolhurst and West Lavington are both small, but also have interesting plants of heathland and acid grassland. Staplefield has a wonderful flora with hundreds of *Anacamptis morio*, a little *Achillea ptarmica* (Sneezewort), many more species characteristic of old unimproved grassland. It was cheering to find an unexpected number of Wealden churchyards with numerous grasses, including *Danthonia decumbens* (Heath Grass) and *Briza media* (Quaking Grass). Loxwood has *Ophioglossum vulgare* (Adder's-tongue) and *Chamaemelon nobile* (Chamomile), the latter a new discovery.

The completed survey forms illustrate very different forms of management which affects the quality of the habitats and whether the species thrive or barely survive. In some churchyards, the grass is frequently mown, preventing plants from flowering and setting seed. If grass cuttings are left in situ, the decomposing mulch enriches the soil, encouraging vigorous grasses to become tussocky and preventing seeds from germinating. In other churchyards and cemeteries, so-called 'Conservation areas' become rank for lack of maintenance. However, a small minority of churchyards and cemeteries resemble nature reserves and are lovingly cared for by a Churchwarden or another Parishioner. Analyses of the records are being carried out as well as assessments of the changes since the 1980s surveys.

I would like all churches to have a copy of their records. Lists of English names are available for the asking. Optionally, if you feel that management could be improved for our native flora, the charity, 'Caring for God's Acre' has freely downloadable leaflets in their Action Pack, including 'Caring for Grassland' which could be shared with churches. <http://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/>

A list of churchyards needing visits in 2017 will be published soon. As shown with the recording at Seaford Cemetery, there is a considerable advantage in working in pairs. The sharing of identification skills leads to a higher number of records being achieved.

Records need to be entered on the Excel spreadsheet ver.1.6 so that they can be entered into the BSBI database and for compatibility with other Excel functions. It is much quicker than typing species names individually and very

easy once you know how! If you are new to this recording system or if your computer does not accept macros, please ask for help from another member. The full instructions are on the website, under the tab, 'Get Involved' and 'Recording'.

PLEASE:

1. Register your interest in recording a churchyard or cemetery with Helen.
2. Make at least three visits in the year, comprising a Spring visit up to May 31st, a mid-summer visit in June and/or July and a late summer visit in August or September.
3. Record species **once** only. Entering records on a hard copy of the downloadable recording card in a different colour at each visit avoids duplication.
4. Enter the status of non-native species in the 'Status' column, whether casual (C) or established (E). Planted trees, and shrubs if described as very large are being included but **not** planted garden plants which have not become established.
5. Use the 'Comments' column for notes on frequency and habitats of interesting species.
6. Take a six figure grid reference at the **centre** of the churchyard or cemetery. If the churchyard falls into two tetrads, two lists and two, centred grid references will be needed. Enter the grid reference in the 'Comments' column **below** the records.
7. Note the grassland management, as before on the survey form or, if it is easier, in the 'Comments' column below the records on the Excel form. The charity, 'Caring for God's Acre' has a freely downloadable booklet, 'The Burial Ground Botanical Companion' which suggests methods of assessing grassland quality.
<http://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/images/uploads/botanical-companion/Burial%20Ground%20Botanical%20Companion%20Booklet.pdf>
8. Send records very soon after each visit.

We hope you will look forward to many hours of happy botanising in churchyards in 2017!

Mike Shaw: an appreciation

by Nick Sturt

Elsewhere in this issue you will read in full the news about the BSBI county Recorders. There you will see that Paul, after a mere 26 years in office, has decided to throw in the towel at the end of March 2017. We thus have a month or two in which to prepare a fitting tribute to this gentleman, but Mike's appreciation must come here and now, as he will have stepped down by the time this issue reaches you.

The first thing to say is that when we come to Mike it would be easy to make a comparison with Paul in terms of years' service. This would do Mike a grave injustice since, as every SBRS member must be aware, he has packed a quite staggering volume of work into his six years as BSBI Recorder for West

Sussex; and not only in vc13 for he has covered in vc14, (latterly with the sterling assistance of Matthew) when Naturetrek banished Paul to distant lands; and in particular Mike has shouldered more of the burden of the IT administrative tasks. In vc13 he has worked well on his own initiative to make plant recording thorough and rigorous, proving himself – and this is high praise indeed – a worthy successor to Alan Knapp... who, I recall, was one of the first to recognise Mike's qualities. It was natural when he took on vc13 that we should want him on the Flora Working Group, and here again his capacity for sheer hard work has proved invaluable. Mike has done some important research upstairs in the Booth Museum (often in freezing temperatures!) on the herbarium of 'Wilberforce' Jones, and in the field he has the rare distinction of having come to grips with

both *Hieracium* and *Rubus*. Of the two critical genera *Hieracium* is rather nearer to his heart and he is already working on a volume about *Hieracium* in SE England.

Mike has also helped propel the SBRS forward: after losing first Alan Knapp and then Mary Briggs (and Rod Stern through retirement), we needed to think carefully about the Society and its future. Mike has been a moderniser, and he has also ensured that he has brought interesting and sometimes challenging contributions to our indoor meetings, as well as regularly leading field meetings. On a personal level I must acknowledge the considerable help and support that he has given me since I became Chairman. Thus we thank Mike for all he has done not only for botanical recording in Sussex but also for the SBRS itself, and we are relieved that he has indicated that he wishes to continue to play a prominent part in our activities.

Field meeting: Firehills, Hastings Country Park

Judy Clark, Ellen Campbell and Jacqueline Rose would be really grateful for extra help with a heathland survey to monitor the effects of recent clearance of overgrown Bracken and Gorse at Firehills. Wonderful views are guaranteed and interesting plants are highly likely! From Hastings, take the A259 eastwards to Ore. Turn right by the Co-op onto Fairlight Road. Turn right just before Fairlight church on Battery Hill and follow the signpost. By bus from Hastings Station, take the 101 bus and alight at the Coastguard Lane stop. Meet at the visitor centre at Hastings Country Park. There is a car park charge of £2, which goes towards the upkeep of the park.

Freshwater algae and a bryophilous fungus: rarely recorded species by Howard Matcham

SEED. A botanical acronym I have coined for achievement. Serendipity, experience, expertise, diligence. Over time those of us who achieve SEED in one or more botanical disciplines will find exciting additions to the county, country or even a continent, as has happened to me. It applies the instant you

leave the house or your place of residence and step out into the natural world.

On a pouring wet day in March 2016 I opened the back door and, on damp concrete where for the past 35 years my wife Louise has had various pots and troughs filled with bedding plants that are frequently watered, is a carpet of moss and liverwort. I like mosses and liverworts so they have never been scrubbed away as an unwanted annoyance; pouring with rain, too wet to venture far, so I removed a small segment of moss and looked within, what will I find? I found four species of desmid, unicellular microscopic 'mirror image' algae covering the common moss *Amblystegium serpens* (Creeping feather-moss): this in itself was a 'first discovery' as desmids had not been seen as an abundant associate of moss previously. Looking further I found a fungus on the tips of the rhizoids, which I eventually identified as haustoria caused by appressoria of the bryophilous ascomycete *Octospora wrightii*, a species only known to grow host specific to *A. serpens*. This was the first occasion that these rhizoidal swellings associated with *O. wrightii* have been seen in Britain; previously known from Austrian material (Döbblers 1979). Images of these structures have been taken by Dr Silvia Pressel at The Natural History Museum and will be published in *Field Bryology*, a British Bryological Society publication, entitled 'Backdoor Botany' I will not go into this extraordinary collection further. However, it does whet the appetite.

Leaving the house and crossing the road into an arable field, turning sharp right and heading west to the only above ground drainage in the village, a winterbourne ditch that is filled with groundwater and rain run-off from a nearby road; as with many ancient ditches it separates two individually owned farms, one in the village of Strettington, the other in the village of Maudlin. On 1st May 2016, with water still flowing in the ditch, I waded into six inches of water to a deeper and expanded depression where in the distant past cattle would have entered the ditch to drink. Now surrounded by willows, it affords a light shade with a stand of *Mentha aquatica* (Water Mint) the only vascular plant growing in the water. Entwined around the mint were wefts of filamentous algae; using a x10 hand lens I thought I could see fertile oogonia spaced along the filaments and later on looking at the sample under the microscope I was able to confirm my initial observation and that I had collected the genus *Oedogonia*. Puzzled that I could see dwarf male filaments attached above and below the oogonia with intermixed monoicous filaments, I suddenly began to realise that I had collected three species. The species within the genus *Oedogonia* can

only be identified with certainty if fertile and, as this is seldom so, it is reflected by the sparse knowledge of the species' distribution in Britain.

The three species collected were *O. vaucheri*, monoicous and macrandrous (male and female filament of approximately the same diameter) which I had first collected in West Sussex near Fishbourne in May 2014, and prior to that collection last seen in England in 1900; *O. cardiacum* monoicous and macrandrous, last seen in England in 1933 and, most extraordinary, *O. idioandrospermum*: the second British record, the first collected in Cambridgeshire in 1899. As the name suggests this is an idioandrospermus species, i.e. species in which the spores giving rise to dwarf males (androspores) are on different filaments from those bearing oogonia. The species is also nannandrous, i.e. referring to the condition where the male filament, which is a much reduced structure, is attached to the significantly larger female filament.

Perhaps the most extraordinary fact is that within a distance of approximately 1000 metres were four species in the genus, including *O. pachydermum* which I collected in April 2014: this species was new to Europe, and all four species were found in temporary water bodies, floodwater and a winterbourne ditch. What else awaits discovery? Hence SEED!

Reference

Döbblers, P. (1979). Nova Hedwigia Band XXXI, 4, Braunschweig. Untersuchungen an moosparasitischen Pezizales aus der Verwandtschaft von *Octospora*. pp. 844-46. Pl. 8: ill. 1-4, p. 845.

Glossary

Appressorium: a specialized cell typical of many fungal plant pathogens that is used to infect host plants.

Haustorium: a slender projection from the hyphae of a parasitic fungus, enabling the parasite to penetrate the tissues of its host and absorb nutrients from it.

Oogonium: a female gametangium producing an egg or egg cells

2016 Field Meetings reports

by the Convenors unless noted otherwise

West Sussex VC 13

April 30th Clapham

(Leader: Nick Sturt)

Emerging from hibernation, seventeen members enjoyed the sunshine and, at the edge of Patching Pond, the *Zizania latifolia* (Manchurian Rice-grass), an exotic rediscovered in the 1990s by Michael and Olwen Hollings. Mike and Dawn spotted other good plants, however, with the BSBI vice county recorder casually pointing above heads to two mature specimens of *Salix triandra* (Almond-leaved Willow) while Dawn determined *Poa infirma* (Early Meadow-grass) at our feet. There followed some very profitable verge and hedge inspecting within beer-splashing distance of The World's End and it was surprising to observe how the Linnaean binomials – even the Stace 3 ones – tripped off tongues after the winter recess... perhaps members had already adopted multiple churchyards!

By underpass and across sliproad eventually Clapham Common was reached, where the sun continued to shine as lunch was taken. By this time some 160 species had been entered on the TQ00X card including a duo perhaps more at home near the sea, *Stellaria pallida* (Lesser Chickweed) and *Cerastium semidecandrum* (Little Mouse-ear). And so on to TQ00Y, processing north up to Clapham Church where Andrew spotted the distinctive rosettes of *Plantago media* (Hoary Plantain). Clapham Woods provided a new set of species, including a quantity of *Daphne laureola* (Spurge Laurel) and a single plant of *Ranunculus auricomus* (Goldilocks). One further habitat was attempted, chalk grassland. Being rather early, some subtle vegetative identification was in evidence, although Mike resorted to the tried and tested method of detecting *Cirsium acaule* (Stemless Thistle) through the seat of his trousers. It was Sue who delivered the *coup de grace* here with a single stem of *Carex caryophyllea*.

The outing had been billed as a 'gentle beginning to the season' but in terms of the intensity of recording and the amount of ground covered it felt more like a serious work-out. It was especially good to welcome back nearly new members Alison and Tom, and two very recent signings, Andrew and Gary; once again we were nobly supported by Surrey, and it was a long time since we had had the great pleasure of Arthur in the field. As a postscript, Dawn later sent in *Taraxacum wallonicum*, her emailed photographs having been instantly confirmed by Prof. Richards.

June 5th Bignor Park

(Leader: Peter Jones)

It had been another remarkable day in the field. Driving back, Elisabeth and I debated as usual what ranked as Plant of the Day. Under normal circumstances it could have been *Carex pallescens* (Pale Sedge), which was present in some quantity in the slightly heathy part of the estate covered in the morning, and then *Lathyrus linifolius* (Bitter Vetch) is a perennial favourite of ours, and the *Hypericum pulchrum* (Slender St. John's-wort) was particularly fine. The meadow in which lunch was taken provided further candidates: it is always good to come upon *Briza media* (Quaking Grass) off the chalk and here it was present with *Schedonorus pratensis* (Meadow Fescue), *Carex panicea* (Carnation Sedge), *Silene flos-cuculi* (Ragged Robin) and *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* (Southern Marsh-orchid) as evidence of very pleasing old grassland which was much appreciated by the eight members present. Even better was to come. A pond provided plenty of botanical interest plus, in a gorse bush, the nest of a long-tailed tit beautifully crafted out of fragments of lichen and feathers. After this we proceeded towards the House and were astonished to be examining classic ancient meadow. The first clue was on the mown area where extensive sheets of *Chamaemelum nobile* (Chamomile) were spotted: surely this should be nominated Plant of the Day? On three sides of the lawn, however, the sward had been allowed to grow up and here was an assemblage of genuine plant celebrities – among more *Carex panicea* and *Schedonorus pratensis* there was *Silene acaulis* (Pepper Saxifrage), *Succisa pratensis* (Devil's-bit Scabious), *Danthonia decumbens* (Heath Grass) and – surely Plant of the Day – *Carex pulicaria* (Flea Sedge). We are very grateful to Viscount Mersey for permission to roam his estate.

June 22nd Weavers Down

(Leader: Bruce Middleton)

Eight members assembled in several large puddles in Hampshire to be whisked back over the border to the safety of Sussex by Bruce in his trusty Land Rover. Inevitably there was much dithering around the vehicle at first and this yielded the first wonders of the day, *Crassula tillaea* (Mossy Stonecrop) and *Carex muricata* ssp. *pairae* (Prickly Sedge). Then the glorious expanse of Weavers Down – rolling acid grassland – beckoned, with characteristic species such as *Erodium cicutarium* (Common Stork's-bill), *Vicia sativa* ssp. *nigra* (Common Vetch) and *Holcus mollis* (Creeping Soft-grass) and little patches of *Calluna vulgaris* (Ling) and *Erica cinerea* (Bell Heather). Damper conditions here and there yielded handsome spikes of *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* (Southern Marsh-orchid), sometimes in company

with *D. fuchsii* (Common Spotted-orchid) and populations of hybrids; a few striking specimens gave themselves away as *D x grandis*. All was so absorbing that there were few complaints about the occasional misty drizzle, although Steven did mention more than once that his socks were wet through. Sue meanwhile was engaged on her grass quest and tutting at specimens of *Agrostis* insufficiently mature to be identified. Lunch was a relaxing affair, particularly Bruce's account of his extravagant adventures at the Harry Potter Experience. A genuine wizard he is, however, since with his virtual wand he proceeded to conjure up several flowering plants of *Parentuccellia viscosa* (Yellow Bartsia)! The afternoon was completed by further and bigger drifts of *Dactylorhiza*, this time in the company of *Dryopteris carthusiana* (Narrow Buckler-fern), *Carex nigra* and *C. panicea* (Common and Carnation Sedge) and *Ranunculus flammula* (Lesser Spearwort). The contented company bumped back in the Land Rover aware that Bruce had once again produced for the SBRS pure magic.

July 13th East Head

(Leader: Mike Shaw)

It could not just have been the prospect of a day at the seaside that brought out 15 members to this meeting, including several from vc14. It must also have been the special lure of the good plants offered by the long, rolling, sand-dune spit couched at the entrance to Chichester Harbour and ably protected by the National Trust. Arthur was with us again, and even that *rara avis* Trevor flew in from his eerie in Crowborough... and before Mike had completed a head-count the numbers swelled further to nineteen plus three NT Rangers and Simeon who was on work experience with them. (Alas, we could not match Helen's recent East Sussex record of 27!). The large party moved off and gently fragmented into separate groups, one of which was discussing the mealiness or otherwise of *Atriplex portulacoides* (Sea Purslane) while, in another, Steven was finding an unexpected *Euphorbia helioscopia* (Sun Spurge). Another satellite group found a nice patch of *Eryngium maritimum* (Sea Holly) and next to that *Honkenya peploides* (Sea Sandwort). Matthew was able to demonstrate the differences between *Elytrigia atherica* and *E. juncea* (Sea and Sand Couch) which were obligingly growing side by side. Moving slowly northwards, *Oenothera x fallax* (a local hybrid Evening Primrose) was encountered along with the clovers *Trifolium arvense* and *scabrum* (Hare's-foot and Rough). Lunch was taken among the dunes and then Mike set us recording again, with the re-find of *Puccinellia distans* (Reflexed Saltmarsh-grass) a highlight, and much *Centaureum pulchellum* (Lesser Centaury) and *Trifolium fragiferum* (Strawberry

Clover) in the dune-slacks. Meanwhile Elisabeth looked critically at *Epilobia* (Willowherbs) and Trevor with eagle eye pounced upon the wizened remains of a lonely *Hypochaeris glabra* (Smooth Cat's-ear). Then the rain came... hard... and there was an unseemly rush for the distant cars. A total of 143 species were seen on the day, with fourteen of those new to the tetrad since 2000 and three SPA re-finds. Total records for SZ79U numbered 402. Our thanks go to Mike for leading and to Lisa and her NT colleagues who helped us on the day.

July 27th Arundel Park

(by Frances Abraham, Leader)

Ten members succeeded in gathering at the eastern corner of Arundel Park at Offham, despite the leader's half-witted muddling of the grid reference. Entering the Park, we recorded the chalk flora on the banks of the track running NW up the east-facing slope, which included *Helianthemum nummularium* (Common Rockrose), *Thymus polytrichus* (Wild Thyme), *Asperula cynanchica* (Squinancywort) and other species of this habitat. Several species, such as *Koeleria macrantha* (Crested Hair-grass), had not been recorded previously in this less visited part of the Park in TQ00J. Crossing into TQ00E, we turned into the dry valley which runs down to Swanbourne Lake. On the east-facing slope it was a pleasure to find *Thesium humifusum* (Bastard-toadflax) where rabbits and sheep had grazed down the sward. Patches of disturbed soil supported numerous plants of *Marrubium vulgare* (White Horehound).

We picnicked at the western end by Box Copse, overlooking the Lake with its large colonies of *Hippuris vulgaris* (Mare's-tail). On the upper slope around Box Copse were species typical of disturbed chalk: *Inula conyzae* (Ploughman's-spikenard), *Cynoglossum officinale* (Hound's-tongue), *Verbascum thapsus* (Common Mullein), *Atropa belladonna* (Deadly Nightshade), *Calamintha ascendens* (Common Calamint), *Lithospermum officinale* (Common Gromwell) and more *Marrubium*. We then followed the path by the Lake out of the Park to Mill Road, stopping to admire *Cladium mariscus* (Great Fen-sedge) on the shore. *Cladium* is native in the UK but an introduction to Sussex, where this is its only known site. We wandered back to Offham along Mill Road. The chalky river cliff above the road supports much *Buxus sempervirens* (Box) in what may be one of its few native sites in Sussex. *Rubia peregrina* (Wild Madder) scrambles over scrub, and a few plants of *Arum italicum* ssp. *neglectum* were seen. We turned off into the car park of the Black Rabbit pub to inspect a fine specimen of *Verbascum lychnitis* (White Mullein). There were also several plants of *V.*

thapsus, plus a possible hybrid. *V. lychnitis* is yet another species of disturbed chalk, usually found where woodland has been cleared recently or trees have fallen: here, work on the car park had done the trick.

August 13th Cissbury Ring

(Leader: Nick Sturt)

The SBRS had not been to Cissbury since 1998 on which occasion the matchless Alan Knapp bagged an Eyebright determined as *Euphrasia confusa*. Armed with an antique vasculum which had belonged to John Cole's father and keys from Chris Metherell, Elisabeth prepared to do battle with the genus while the seven other members preferred less taxing taxa. It was a glorious day in the field and the chalk ramparts supported large areas of fine sward where most of the specialities eventually revealed themselves – *Asperula cynanchica* (Squinancywort), *Blackstonia perfoliata* (Yellowwort), *Carlina vulgaris* (Carline Thistle), *Cirsium acaule* (Stemless Thistle), *Hippocrepis comosa* (Horseshoe Vetch), *Pimpinella saxifraga* (Burnet Saxifraga); and Sue D. was on hand to add the accompanying grasses such as *Avenula pratensis* and *A. pubescens* (Meadow and Downy Oatgrass) and *Koeleria macrantha* (Crested Hair-grass). Not even the leaves of *Carex caryophyllea* (Spring Sedge) escaped Frances but she was foiled in her ambition to find the rosettes of *Tephrosia integrifolia* (Field Fleawort) which she had learned to recognise on a previous recce of Kithurst Hill. So the morning sped by happily enough and eventually Elisabeth, her samples of *Euphrasia* and the author's lunch caught up with us. New member Michael also found us and we enjoyed his company until he had to dash off to a wedding. The view south towards the blue sea was blissful over our picnic, and then a sweep of the flint mines completed work on TQ10I.

Across the hill to the less well-worked TQ10P and the new card was soon marked up with a selection of some less calcicolous species (eg *Rumex acetosella* Sheep's Sorrel) before a return to the ramparts reunited the party with most of the plants of the morning and yet more *Euphrasias*. In the end there were some target species which were not refound – *Coeloglossum viride* (which had been seen in 1998), *Juniperus communis* (Juniper), *Thesium humifusum* (Bastard Toadflax); also neither *Campanula glomerata* (Clustered Bellflower) nor *Phyteuma orbiculare* (Round-headed Rampion) had made themselves known. Elisabeth returned home with an embarrassment of samples of Eyebrights with subtly varying characters, including, it turned out, the not inaptly named *Euphrasia confusa*.

September 4th Shoreham Beach

(by Jill Oakley)

On a bright, breezy morning twenty six people gathered in the car park at the eastern end of Shoreham Beach LNR where they were greeted by Jacky Woolcock and Nick Sturt. Jacky had thoughtfully provided exactly the right number of parking permits for us all. SBRS had been invited by The Friends Of Shoreham Beach (FOSB) to survey the plants. FOSB is a voluntary organisation founded in 2006 when the beach was designated as a Local Nature Reserve and is dedicated to preserving and protecting its habitats. Jacky gave us a brief introductory talk and explained that Shoreham Beach LNR lies on the seaward side of a shingle spit at the mouth of the river Adur. The spit is formed of pebbles washed down after the last ice age and transported along the coast by longshore drift; the shingle supports many interesting plants and a wide range of wildlife. We began our survey on the stable shingle by the fort and worked our way westwards along the spit. There were many of the species to be expected in this habitat such as *Crambe maritima* (Sea Kale), *Glaucium flavum* (Yellow Horned-poppy), *Beta vulgaris* ssp. *maritima* (Sea Beet), *Atriplex glabriuscula* (Babington's Orache), *Atriplex prostrata* (Spear-leaved Orache), *Armeria maritima* (Thrift) and *Silene uniflora* (Sea Campion). Even though it was late in the season there were a fair number of plants still in flower and many more in fruit. On the gravelly shingle we found plentiful plants of *Polygonum oxyspermum* ssp. *raii* (Ray's Knotgrass) with black shiny fruits. Interesting clovers included *Trifolium stellatum* still in flower, *T. scabrum* and *T. arvense* (Starry, Rough and Hare's-foot Clovers). We were able to compare four *Sedum* species; *S. acre*, *S. album*, *S. anglicum* and *S. spurium* (Biting, White, English and Caucasian Stonecrops) and a patch of *Euphorbia cyparissias* (Cypress Spurge) was a nice surprise. Invasive plants were being successfully kept under control by FOSB, only one specimen of *Rosa rugosa* (Japanese Rose) and a small patch of *Carpobrotus edulis* (Hottentot Fig) were evident. Some of us enjoyed a bracing lunch looking out to sea while others chose a sheltered spot to keep out of the wind. Walking on shingle was quite hard going so we were glad to retrace our steps along the boardwalk. Jacky led us to the north side of the spit to a site near the Harbour Club overlooking the River Adur where, on a small area of relic dune, we were rewarded by a good number of plants of *Petrorhagia nanteuilii* (Childing Pink), many still in flower. Over one hundred different species were recorded during the day and another visit planned for early summer next year should add to our tally. Thank you, Jacky and Nick, for arranging such a great meeting, we were

promised a "seaside treat" and this trip certainly lived up to expectations.

East Sussex VC14

May 7th Great Gotely Wood and Brickwall Park, Northiam

(Leaders: Ellen Campbell and Judy Clark)

By 10.45 a remarkable nineteen people had gathered in Northiam car park to undertake a survey of Great Gotely Wood. Much ferrying to the wood ensued and we split into two groups, one for each tetrad (TQ82H and 82M). Great Gotely turned out to be highly diverse; by the time we regrouped 92 different species had been recorded, including 26 ancient woodland indicators. We stopped for lunch amongst the abundant Ramsons (*Allium ursinum*) where a number of spikes of *Neottia ovata* (Twayblade) were seen. Other interesting species included *Quercus petraea* (Sessile Oak), a huge *Malus sylvestris* (Crab Apple) in full flower, and a cultivated Pear tree marking human habitation, now gone. After lunch we trundled in convoy to Brickwall Park (TQ82G), about 41 hectares of small woods and trees in open pasture, and another of the gems of the eastern end of East Sussex which we like to show off. We headed for an area of acid grassland where we hoped to refind both *Ophioglossum vulgatum* (Adder's-tongue) and *Viola canina* (Heath Dog-violet). We were not disappointed. There was less Adder's-tongue than was remembered but *Viola canina* was found in good numbers, along with *Viola riviniana* (Common Dog-violet). We couldn't find the hybrid, but we did record 60 species in all.

Sunday 15th May Scotney Castle Estate

(Leaders: Geoffrey Kitchener/Helen Proctor)

27 botanists crowded into the car park at Scotney Castle for the customary Sussex/Kent cross border meeting on a dry, mild and sunny morning. A circumnavigation of the Estate was planned in order to add to Sussex records and help the KBRG with their monad recording. The River Bewl forms the Vice County boundary. We set off up the lane where a bank provided eye-level botany. A rich sandstone flora included an attractive pink-flowered form of Bitter Vetch (*Lathyrus linifolius*). We continued downhill through a field where *Ophioglossum* was spotted. We passed through pasture with a single stem of *Orchis mascula* (Early Purple Orchid). The second field had a much more diverse flora with *Conopodium majus* (Pignut) and masses of *Lotus corniculatus* (Common Bird's-foot Trefoil). The highlights though were finding *Viola canina* (Heath Dog Violet) and the hybrid with *V. riviniana* (Common Dog-violet), *Viola x intersita*. Geoffrey gave an impromptu workshop on the features which identify the hybrid. We retraced our steps, stopping

to admire a patch of *Ranunculus hederaceus* (Ivy-leaved Water Crowfoot) on cattle-churned mud by the stream. We crossed the Bewl to the Kent side where restoration has brought about the return of heather and associated heathland species.

May 18th Cherry Garden Farm, Ashurstwood

(Leader: Helen Proctor)

We returned at the kind invitation of Philip and Pam Glyn, the owners of the estate, in order to add Spring-flowering taxa to last year's survey. Seven members were not deterred by the forecast of heavy rain. Unfortunately the forecast was correct! Armed with umbrellas and swathed in waterproofs, we set off for Berry Wood. No murmurs of complaint were heard - perhaps they were deafened by the torrential rain! *Carex strigosa* (Thin-spiked Wood-sedge) grew by the main ride and one stem of *Orchis mascula* (Early Purple-orchid) was flowering. When the rain eventually stopped, we ventured out again to explore the meadow and Sandstone rock outcrops. *Festuca altissima* (Tall Fescue) was thriving, thanks to the measures taken to protect it from deer. A single plant of *Vaccinium myrtillus* (Bilberry) had arrived on the estate. Fourteen taxa were added to the list for the farm and seven to the records for TQ43D.

June 4th Rowland Wood and Park Corner Heath

(by Roy Wells, leader)

Could this cold grey morning really be in early June? That's what we asked ourselves as we gathered at Rowland Wood, the Butterfly Conservation Reserve at East Hoathly. Well, there had been no really warm weather to date, just a slow damp spring easing into a cool start to summer. What plants would have benefitted from these conditions this year? We found the answer: sedges, they were doing splendidly, looking confident and healthy. We found ten species, with five of them, *Carex demissa* (Yellow Sedge), *C. laevigata* (Smooth-stalked Sedge), *C. leporina* (Oval Sedge), *C. pallescens* (Pale Sedge) and *C. pilulifera* (Pill Sedge) being new records for the reserve. We made our slow way along one of the rides, seeing many common woodland plants, and then searched an open area that had been clear felled of close planted conifers a couple of years ago. This is now recovering and we found *Silene flos-cuculi* (Ragged-Robin), *Polygala vulgaris* (Common Milkwort), *Vicia sativa* ssp. *segetalis* and subsp. *nigra* (Common Vetch) and *Vulpia bromoides* (Squirreltail Fescue). A search in this area for *Viola riviniana* (Common Dog-violet) a food plant of the Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary found some encouraging re-occurrence. We made 140 records for the day. After lunch the sun came out and it began to feel like summer. A visit then to Park Corner Heath, another part of the reserve was disappointing as *Platanthera bifolia* (Lesser

Butterfly Orchid), *Comarum palustre* (Marsh Cinquefoil) and *Ranunculus tripartitus* (Three-lobed Crowfoot), previously known to be there, were not found.

June 15th Moat Farm, Salehurst

(Leaders Judy Clark/Ellen Campbell)

The owner of Moat Farm is being threatened with a compulsory purchase order from the Rother Valley Railway which wants to extend the railway from Bodiam to Robertsbridge and would go through unimproved meadows down to the River Rother at the farm. Our visit was in response to the owner's request for a botanical survey of the land in question. Cherry the farmer welcomed eight of us in her lovely old farmhouse kitchen. We were transported to the meadows in a Land Rover, known as the 'Mushy Pea' because of its pea soup colour. We bounced and lurched around field edges and through rutted gateways, sometimes on two wheels, sometimes seeming to leave the ground completely. Stephen followed valiantly behind, and this rather ridiculous entourage eventually arrived at the meadows, shaken but not deterred! We split into two groups to record plants in a large field where 15 species of grass were recorded and frequencies of all taxa were estimated on the DAFOR scale as required by Natural England. The field showed considerable variation in the distribution of species in different areas. We visited two more fields which were wetter but less diverse, *Filipendula ulmaria* (Meadowsweet) being abundant. A closer search in one of the fields revealed a small amount of *Myosotis scorpioides* (Water Forget-me-not).

July 2nd Rathfinney's Farm, Alfriston

(by Peter Smith, leader)

July 2nd proved to be a very windy day and eight hardy souls repaired to the Rathfinney winery. However, not a drop of the local fizz was consumed all day. The newly established winery has been created with considerable input from ecological consultants and a strong commitment to care for the downland landscape in which it is located. While the south-facing slopes are now extensively planted with grapevines, the valley bottom has been designated for reversion from arable to native flora. The scarp is to be retained in its present form. Within and around the vineyard slopes we found *Geranium columbinum* (Long-stalked Crane's-bill), *Linum bienne* (Pale Flax), *Trifolium hybridum* (Alsike Clover) and *Chaenorrhinum minus* (Small Toadflax) in a seeded area. The arable reversion zone has some way to go before downland species become established, but we noted *Origanum vulgare* (Marjoram), *Euphrasia nemorosa* (Eyebright), *Filipendula vulgaris* (Dropwort), and *Brachypodium pinnatum* (Tor

Grass). On the downland slope we found *Centaurea scabiosa* (Greater Knapweed), *Arabis hirsuta* (Hairy Rock-cress), *Phyteuma orbiculare* (Round-headed Rampion) and *Anacamptis pyramidalis* (Pyramidal Orchid). Overall we were able to record 181 species within the section of the extensive estate that we had time to monitor.

Saturday 16th July Pevensey levels

(Leader: Jane Birch)

The purpose of the meeting was to revisit ditches which had been surveyed in 2000 for the Environment Agency and to compare the results. We also added to the tetrad records for TQ60I and 60J. Four members assembled in the car park at Rickney Pumping Station. On reaching the first ditch, Jane donned her drysuit and waded into the wide ditch. She fished out and handed up a tangled length of *Potamogeton acutifolius* (Sharp-leaved Pondweed). We were pleased to see *Butomus umbellatus* (Flowering-rush). At the second ditch at Horse-eye Level, two sections were surveyed. Needless to say, with the benefit of a truly aquatic botanist, many more aquatic plants were recorded than previously. Nearby, we admired a large clump of *Scutellaria galericulata* (Greater Skullcap) which overhung the bank of Horse-eye Sewer. Other plants included *Hottonia palustris* (Water-violet), *Althaea officinalis* (Marsh Mallow), *Myosotis secunda* (Creeping Forget-me-not) and *Berula erecta* (Lesser Water Parsnip). This was a meeting of two halves! We learned later that four members had arrived late and were unable to locate the group, so held a meeting of their own, successfully keying out all the species they found.

13th August Firehills, Hastings Country Park

This additional meeting was arranged in order to assist the Hastings Botany Group with a botanical survey. A group of eight members of the SBRS and Hastings Botany Group met at the information centre where wonderful views in glorious sunshine raised our expectations of an interesting day ahead of us. The purpose was to monitor the effectiveness of the coastal heathland restoration programme, which is being managed by Hastings Borough Council as part of a Higher Level Stewardship Agreement. Surveys are being repeated every three years over the ten year period of the grant. Frequencies of taxa were recorded on the DAFOR scale. The heathland restoration on the Firehills has been quite dramatic, heavy machinery being brought in to remove the old even-aged and leggy gorse, and the whole area then scraped. The task for the day was to look at two adjacent blocks of heathland that had been scraped the previous year, and were grassing over nicely. In two groups we set about zig-zagging over our

respective areas. A corner patch more recently cleared of gorse had a splendid display of *Senecio sylvaticus* (Heath Groundsel). A surprise was a single flowering plant of *Hieracium* (Hawkweed) hidden in the long grass, almost certainly *H. sabaudum* which grows elsewhere in the Country Park. *Veronica officinalis* (Heath Speedwell) and *Potentilla erecta* (Tormentil) and *Galium saxatile* (Heath Bedstraw), which will make a wonderful frothy display as it spreads, suggested that things are going the right way. The other group found *Brachypodium pinnatum*, a grass that has puzzled us because it is supposed to grow on chalk. Wolley-Dod mentions this site, 'These stations are not on chalk'. Current thinking is that there are two separate species, *B. pinnatum* (Heath False-Brome) and *B. rupestre* (Tor Grass) but no reliable diagnostic features have yet been found to separate them. This is an obvious candidate for true *B. pinnatum*. Late last autumn *Calluna vulgaris* (Heather) cuttings were brought from Ashdown Forest, and scattered over some of the scraped areas. Small sprigs of it were found in this block. It had disappeared from the Firehills, but it is possible that these newly germinated plants are from an existing seed bank rather than from the introduced seed. Between us we recorded 54 species. A successful patch of restored heathland was colourful with *Erica cinerea* (Bell Heather), *Potentilla erecta* (Tormentil), *Ulex europaea* and *U. minor* (Common and Dwarf Gorse) and *Cuscuta epithymum* (Dodder).

August 24th Seven Sisters Country Park

(Leader: Helen Proctor)

The risk assessment for this meeting included the unusual instruction of the need for sun hats and sun cream. The meeting started with seven, increased later to eleven and later still to twelve members. We stopped frequently to inspect the vast quantities of *Rupia*. All of it proved to be *R. cirrhosa* (Spiral Tasselweed), although no spiral fruiting stems could be found. One plant of *Rumex pulcher* (Fiddle Dock), with very distinct, fiddle-shaped leaves was found. There was so much of interest that the botanically low speed of 0.8 miles per hour was recorded. In the area behind the shingle bank Jacqueline refound *Carex distans* (Distant Sedge). *Spergularia marina* (Lesser Sea-spurrey) and *S. media* (Greater Sea-spurrey) conveniently grew side by side for ease of comparison. One plant of *Spergularia rubra* (Sand Spurrey) was another SPA refind. A reconnoitre on the previous day had established that *Teucrium chamaedrys* (Wall Germander) and *Spiranthes spiralis* (Autumn Lady's Tresses) were not visible. One member ventured as far as a pillbox to see *Centaurea calcitrapa* (Red Star-thistle). Six SPA species were refound and four further records were added from three tetrads.

Recording Update

Much of 2016 has been taken up with the churchyard survey and, although the project is being managed by Helen, Mike and Paul have still been processing all the records, of which there were in the region of thirty thousand. This is a magnificent effort by the membership, and thanks from us go to all of you who have undertaken recording during the past twelve months. This project will continue throughout 2017.

Whilst all this field work has been going on, the new Flora of Sussex has been moving forward. Well over half of the final species accounts are completed, as are the introductory chapters. The preparation of the maps, which are being produced by Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre, under the watchful eye of our president, is also well under way.

In addition, we have now selected a publisher and are in negotiations over contracts. It is hoped that the book will be published in 2018. If this target is met, the whole project will have been eighteen years in the making, making it the longest and most ambitious undertaking the SBRS has attempted. None of this would have been possible without the magnificent efforts of the whole membership.

With effect from 1st January 2017, a number of logistical changes will be taking place, which will directly affect the membership. On that date, Tim Rayner will be taking over from Mike as the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (BSBI) County Recorder for VC13 (West Sussex) and, with effect from 1st April 2017, he will also take over from Paul as the BSBI County Recorder for VC14 (East Sussex). This will unite the two vice counties for the first time under one recorder, with Matthew remaining as the Assistant Recorder.

From 1st January 2017, you should send all your completed electronic record cards, for both East and West Sussex, to Tim at [sussex.recorder@gmail.com], the only exception being the churchyard records, which still go to Helen first.

Mike took over as West Sussex recorder six years ago, following the untimely death of Alan Knapp. The role has been challenging but rewarding, especially in providing the opportunity to develop friendships within the society. He is very grateful for all the help and support he has received as recorder and intends to remain an active member of the SBRS and continue his involvement with the Flora project. An interest in critical species has evolved from this, and Mike wants to pursue this further by writing a book on the identification of *Hieracia* (Hawkweeds) in south-east England. Meanwhile, after thirty years on the SBRS committee and twenty-six as the East Sussex recorder, Paul has agreed to combine a role as the SBRS Archivist with that of researching all historical aspects of the botany of Sussex, and those who led the way in the past. Both of us feel that, with the imminent publication of the new Flora, now is the right time to step down. We wish Tim and Matthew every success in their roles as the society moves forward.

Mike Shaw , Paul Harmes , Matthew Berry & Tim Rayner

Answer to the President's question on page 1: it's 37!

Field Meetings 2017

Wed 15 February David Streeter	Taster Trip for Mosses An introductory day for anyone interested in trying their hand at becoming familiar with some common bryophytes. The day will consist of an introductory talk, followed by field visits to woodland and downland. As well as a x10 lens and poly bags, a selection of small paper packets will be found useful. The standard field guide is <i>Mosses and Liverworts of Britain and Ireland a field guide</i> by I. Atherton <i>et al.</i> (eds.), pub. BBS 2010. Park in the Sussex Wildlife Trust car park off Horn Lane at Woods Mill (TQ218137) and meet in the adjacent classroom at 10.30. It would be helpful if those hoping to attend would let David Streeter know by Monday 13th February: D.T.Streeter@sussex.ac.uk .
Wed 12 April Arthur Hoare	All Saints Churchyard, Crawley Down. Churchyard surveys. If time permits we will continue on to visit Turners Hill and possibly Ardingly churchyards. Meet in the church car park at Vicarage Road, Crawley Down – TQ 34283741.
Wed 10 May Geoffrey Kitchener/ Brad Scott	Cowden/Holtye area. Joint meeting with Kent Botanical Recording Group, exploring pastures and woodland on both sides of the VC boundary, the Kent Water. Meet in Chantlers Mead, off North Street, Cowden, TN8 7HU at TQ464404. On street parking or possibly village hall car park.
Sun 14 May Elisabeth Sturt	Weald and Downland Open Air Museum, Singleton, SU875128. Recording woodland and other habitats in this attractive site. We will gather in the car park. Admission charge waived for SBRS members.
Wed. 24 May Jacqueline Rose/ Judy Clark/Ellen Campbell	St. Dunstons Farm, Warbleton, TN21 9BA. A survey of the unimproved meadows for the landowner. Turn off B2096 at TQ608208. Drive down long track and park at TQ610197. Meet by barn.
Wed 31 May Jacky Woolcock/ Nick Sturt	Return to Shoreham Beach to survey the LNR, with an opportunity to get to grips with Clovers. Meet at the car park near the Fort at the East end of Shoreham Beach, TQ233046: Jacky has again kindly arranged free parking.
Wed 14 June Matthew Berry	Crumbles, Eastbourne, to survey the remaining coastal shingle for native and alien plants. Meet at TQ638022, outside cinema, Sovereign Retail Park.
Sat 24 June Mike Shaw	The Pools. Damp unimproved meadows south of Henfield. Meet on Oreham Common TQ223140, roadside parking. We may move on from here.
Sat 8 July Jane Birch	Pevensey Levels. Venue to be announced in the May Newsletter. We will explore dykes and ditches for aquatic and marginal plants.
Wed 19 July Helen Proctor	Michelham Priory, Upper Dicker. Recording of native plants in woodland, pastures and the gardens of this seven acre site. Meet in the free car park, TQ557093. No dogs. Admission charge for non-SBRS members.
Wed 9 August Sue Denness/ Frances Abraham	Amberley Wild Brooks. Exploring fields and ditches on the eastern side. Meet near the Old School, Rackham, TQ050143.
Sat 12 August Jacqueline Rose/ Judy Clark/ Ellen Campbell	Firehills, Hastings Country Park, for heathland restoration survey. From Hastings, turn right just before Fairlight Church. Meet at Visitor centre, TQ860116. £2 parking charge. See page 5.
Sun 20 August Dawn Nelson	Species-rich downland near Treyford, SU81D and E. Meeting place to be confirmed in May Newsletter.
Sat 2 Sept Jacqui Hutson	Chailey Common. Meet in Romany Ridge Car Park, TQ376207. We will look for <i>Gentiana pneumonanthe</i> and <i>Cirsium dissectum</i> , following the introduction of conservation grazing.

All meetings start at 10.45 am unless indicated otherwise
SBRS field meetings are arranged for members and their guests.
Please share cars whenever possible.
If you have queries contact Helen Proctor or Nick Sturt
Those attending SBRS field meetings do so at their own risk