

SUSSEX BOTANICAL RECORDING SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER MAY 1995

President's Message

I am very pleased to report that our membership has steadily increased, and now stands at 118. Many counties in the British Isles do not have a local recording group, and currently the BSBI is promoting the formation of local groups to assist with recording in general, and particularly to record for the new Atlas of the Flora of the British Isles. So, in Sussex with our many willing and competent recorders, and our thriving, friendly Society, we are among the most fortunate and well-organised of the British Counties.

Chairman's Notes

Vanessa and I returned at the end of March after three memorable months in Australia and some other places in the Southern Hemisphere. We were away of course for the AGM, but I am very pleased to hear that it was as successful as ever and the members attending were a record.

Just after getting back, I received from English Nature at Lewes, details of the possible Special Areas of Conservation (SAC's) in Sussex. These are among a large number of SAC's being submitted by the U.K. Government to the European Commission as part of the initiatives being undertaken under the European Habitats Directive. If accepted, it means that the SAC's will get special protection and hopefully also some funding to assist in their management. The candidates in Sussex are as follows :

Castle Hill and Lewes Downs
Solent including Chichester Harbour
Ebernoe Common, Kingly Vale and the Mens.

Apart from the fact that we can see two of these from our house, I am pleased with the selection as they are all of importance to plants. However, I am disappointed that the sites at the western end of the South Downs such as Heyshott and Didling Downs have not been submitted as they are of international importance for the lower plant groups, bryophytes and lichens. I have written to English Nature about this and to ask if we can be consulted over any future selection (none of the voluntary bodies has been consulted about this exercise).

Now that we have the BSBI Handbook on Roses, we should be happier at identifying them, and for some time now of course we have had Tim Rich's admirable crucifera book, so there is no excuse for walking past those yellow-flowered crucifers without examining them. Perhaps I may remind you that I am prepared to help with Hieracium from Sussex and adjoining counties. We could do in the SBRS with one or more members who would be prepared to have a go with brambles or dandelions - any volunteers?

Rod Stern.

AUTUMN GET-TOGETHER

SATURDAY 28TH OCTOBER 1995

10.30 A.M. - 4.00 P.M.

At the Autumn Get-Together we have for many years had a lecture of local interest given by one of our members. We have now arranged two lectures, with slides, one for 1995 and one planned ahead for 1996. After consulting the volunteer lecturers, this year it will be :

Orchids of Sussex by David Lang

and in 1996

Ferns of Sussex by Rob Cook

(not Ferns in 1995 as announced at the AGM in March)

Both talks will be very welcome and we warmly thank both speakers for these good offers.

P R O G R A M M E

Reports on 1995 plant records and field meetings

Orchids of Sussex - David Lang

Lunch available - Soup, Jacket Potatoes, Coffee

Bring & Buy - Books, plants etc.

Members slides

Tea and cakes

SBRs Field Meetings in 1994 - W.Sussex

The season started at Copsale on a sunny April day with an inch or so of snow on the ground. The old railway and adjacent woods produced a number of interesting species including *Ribes nigrum*, *Lathraea squamaria* and the hybrid between Primrose and Cowslip - *Primula x polyantha*. Our next meeting at Rewell Wood started wet and continued in the same vein. Despite this, Rod Stern's claims about the richness of the area were amply confirmed with a range of records including *Ophrys insectifera*, *Monotropa hypopitys* (in the form of last year's remains) and, most pleasing, the refinding of *Platanthera chlorantha* in an area where Rod had known it some years ago. The evening meeting at Pulborough Brooks produced the usual wide range of spring annuals and added one new species - *Montia fontana* ssp *minor*. During our return visit later in the year to examine the ditches we again saw large quantities of *Potamogeton acutifolius* in both the North and South Brooks together with the usual wide range of wetland species, for example *Sium latifolium* and *Butomus umbellatus*. Our division into 2 groups to examine the 2 halves of a very attractive meadow during the Ebernoe meeting led by Frances Abraham introduced a certain competitive spirit to see who could produce the larger count of species. The meadows produced an interesting array of species including *Carex pallescens*, *Trisetum flavescens*, and *Lychnis flos-cucculi* but the find which required the sharpest eyes was probably *Isolepis setacea*. At the end of the afternoon we were able to look at Furnace Meadow which has been acquired by Plantlife and has a wide range of species including *Ononis repens* and *Trifolium medium*. The season ended with a very enjoyable joint meeting with the Hampshire Flora Group. We started in Sussex where aliens in the form of *Papaver atlanticum* on Linchmere churchyard walls and masses of *Rubus parviflorus* (which produced much head scratching and was only finally identified later) provided most of the interest. The move to Short Heath Common in Hampshire in the afternoon was made memorable by the sight of vast quantities of Cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccus*) stretching over hundreds of square yards and also by seeing the alien, *Sagittaria subulata*, in its only UK locality.

Alan Knapp

Potamogetons - A cautionary tale

The fine leaved *Potamogeton* species are known to be difficult to identify but it is worth reminding you that the separation of *Potamogeton berchtoldii* and *Potamogeton pusillus* can be especially difficult. We have records for both species from a number of areas but, unless they have been confirmed by an expert, they need to be regarded with some suspicion. I experienced this problem last year when I sent two specimens from E.Sussex to Dr.Chris Preston of the Biological Records Centre, Monks Wood for checking. I felt fairly sure that one of them was *P.berchtoldii* but it was identified as *P.pusillus*. The difficulty arises because the only reliable character for separating the two species is the difference in the stipules. *P.pusillus* has stipules which are fused in a tube around the stem **when young**, whereas, in *P.berchtoldii*, the stipules are not fused into a tube but simply overlap. The problem is that the stipules of *P.pusillus* soon split and then look like *P.berchtoldii*. The distinction can therefore only be made on the very young leaves close to the growing tip of the stem and really requires examination under a microscope. It is therefore strongly recommended that you have any finds of these species checked by Chris Preston if you wish to have them accepted by Paul and Mary. To be accepted by the BRC, records of these species must be seen by Chris Preston. For identification to be possible a number of pieces are required with young stems including the growing tip and they should not be stuck down as you might normally mount a pressed specimen - simply lay the plants between sheets of paper.

Alan Knapp

Field Meetings 1994

The purpose of three of the year's meetings, all led by Tim Rich, was the gathering of records for the Ashdown Forest Flora.

Despite the weather (very wet) 8 good cards were completed by the 16 members present at Nutley in May. Finds included *Dryopteris aemula* in two sites, *Smyrnium olusatrum* in a hedgebank in the village and *Ranunculus omiophyllus*.

By contrast July 3rd was very hot. It was also Wimbledon finals day which may have accounted for the poor turnout. *Dryopteris aemula* and *Osmunda regalis* (in a root plate) were found in one square. The afternoon was spent in a hot, fruitless search for *Genista pilosa*.

Suitably dressed for the part, Tim also led the joint Surrey Flora meeting "In the Steps of W. H. Coleman". Sadly, but not surprisingly perhaps, many of Coleman's sites have long since disappeared; the rich meadows and bogs that he knew with *Myrica* and *Thelypteris* have been drained and improved. Hedgcourt Pond no longer contains *Damsonium alisma* or *Mentha pulegium* and a search of bogs near the Goat crossroads failed to re-find *Lycopodiella inundata* or *Rhynchospora alba*.

167 species were recorded in the woodlands and meadows around Rushlake Green in June, including several plants of *Phyteuma spicatum* by the Flitterbank Stream.

In the afternoon, Dennis Vinall took members to Cox's Mill and, in the half-mile of the lane from the B 2096 to the mill, 156 species were recorded, including *Carex spicata*, *C. laevigata*, *Frangula alnus* and *Salix aurita*. In a boggy area there was a large clump of *Lathraea clandestina* parasitic on willow.

Rubus specialist David Allen led the joint BSBI meeting on Chailey Common where beginners were introduced to some of the more 'common' species of brambles. The Common did not yield as many types as was hoped so the afternoon was spent at Chailey Warren, a somewhat different habitat. Although even the experts disagreed on occasions a total of 14 species was recorded.

To the accompaniment of traffic roar on the M 23, five members explored part of the Paddockhurst Estate with Arthur Hoare at Old Lodge Warren. *Anagallis minima* was one of the more interesting plants found.

CONTRIBUTORS

ACL	Alan Leslie	J&PCF	Joyce & Peter Flinch
AGH	Arthur Hoare	JRM	John Manning
AGX	Alan Knapp	JW	Judy Wilson
AS	Alan Showler	LP	Laura Ponsorby
B&GP	Betty & George Bishop	M.MCF	Malcolm McFarlane
BE&RC	Beryl & Ron Clough	MB	Mary Briggs
BS&BI	Botanical Society of British Isles	MH	M. Harrison
CAS	Clive Stace	MM	Mike Mullin
CDP	Chris Preston	NJHS	Nick Sturt
DJC	David Curry	PAH	Paul Harries
DMD	David Donovan	PD	Pat Donovan
DV	Dennis Vnall	PDLM	Paul Maurice
E.M-R	Edgar Milne-Redhead	RC	Rob Cook
E&B	Breda Burt	RCP	Richard Palmer
EJC	Jean Clunes	RCS	Rod Stern
ER	Elizabeth Rich	RH	Ray Harley
FA	Francis Abrahams	RN	Rachel Nicholson
FD	F.Dougharty	SC	Sheila Corden
FPP	Frank Penfold	SM	Steve Munyard
FR	Francis Rose	SS	Silva Simkin
GHF	George Forster	TCGR	Tim Rich
GR	Graham Roberts	TS	Tony Spliers
HE	Hilary Englefield	V&SH	Vera & Stan Heyward
HH	Hilder Horder		
HWM	Howard Matcham		

NEW PLANT RECORDS FOR VC13 1994

Species	Location	Record by	Con/Det by	Comments
<i>Platanthera bifolia</i>	Rewell Wood	RCS		This species was suggested as extinct in 1994 newsletter
	Bedham	SS&PD		
	Duncton	B&RC		
	Beeding Brooks	FA&FPP		
<i>Hottonia palustris</i>	Henfield Brooks	B&RC		Not reported for some years.
<i>Dactylorhiza praetermissa</i>	Amberley Wild Brooks	FPP&MB		80 flowering spikes, not seen since 1960's.
<i>Ranunculus circinatus</i>	Amberley Wild Brooks	MB et al		More floriferous than ever seen previously.
<i>Butomus umbellatus</i>	River Arun	MB&DJC		Abundant.
<i>Sium latifolium</i>	Amberley Wild Brooks			Many new plants.
	Henfield Brooks			Many new plants.
<i>Leersia oryzoides</i>	Amberley Wild Brooks	MB et al		Poor year, no flowering spikes recorded.
<i>Potamogeton berchtoldii</i>	Amberley Wild Brooks	V&SH J&PCF, EJC,MB	CDP	
<i>Neottia nidaus-avis</i>	Duncton	SC		150+ flowering spikes.
<i>Thalictrum flavum</i>	Bury	FA		c.100 flowering plants.
<i>Moenchia erecta</i>	Easebourne	FA		

Species	Location	Record by	Con/Det by	Comments
<i>Drosera intermedia</i>	stedham Common	FA		Following recent conservation clearance.
<i>Elatine hexandra</i>	Milland	FA		Several square yards carpet of pinhead pink flowers
<i>Euphorbia platyphyllos</i>	Wineham	FA		100+ plants following disturbance.
<i>Conyza sumatrensis*</i>	Pagham	ALC		First West Sussex Record
<i>Toriiis nodosa</i>	Shoreham Old Fort	B&GB		Enormous spread.
<i>Anthemis cotula</i>	Shoreham	B&RC		Old railway line.
<i>Ranunculus arvensis</i>	Wineham	B&RC		Two plants.
<i>Ceratocarpus claviculata</i>	Ambersham Common	J&PCF et al		Sandy woodland and bracken, locally common.
	Pulborough	DJC		
<i>Dipsacus pilosus</i>	Arundel	EJC, MH and B&GB		In quantity.
<i>Teline monspesalana</i>	Littlehampton	DMD		Native to the Mediterranean and Western Turkey.
<i>Polypogon monspeliensis</i>	Chichester	HE		
<i>Polypogon viridis</i>	Chichester	GHF	CAS	Herb. PAH.
<i>Hypocharis glabra</i>	Pagham	HH&GHF		On sand at edge of scrub.
<i>Cannabis sativa</i>	Bracklesham	HH&JW		Garden weed.
<i>Poa subcaerulea</i>	Linchmere	AGK		Church yard walls.
<i>Lysichiton americanus</i>	Nr Horsham	AGH		Increasing in wood.

Species	Location	Record by	Con/Det by	Comments
<i>Prunus x fruticans</i>	TQ13	AGH		Frequent. (Is it elsewhere?)
<i>Trifolium resupinatum</i>	Stretlington	HWM		Sown with roadside verge grasses.
<i>Wahlenbergia hederacea</i>	Linchmere Common	GR		Lawn blue with flowers, most westerly Sussex record.
<i>Medicago polymorpha</i>	Pagham Spit	SS		
<i>Amaranthus hybridus</i>	Billingshurst	SS		Pavement casual.
<i>Anagallis tenella</i>	Wardley, Milland	RCS		Lawn pink with flowers.
	Handcross	AGH		Boggy bank.
<i>Viola canina</i>	Westbourne	NJHS		Cricket field.
<i>Anthriscus caucalis</i>	Chichester	NJHS		Yacht basin.
<i>Medicago arabica</i>	Fishbourne Marsh	BSBI		In mounds.
<i>Chenopodium glaucum</i>	Coates	NJHS		New site.
<i>Trifolium ornithopodioides</i>	Selsey	NJHS		Good year for all <i>Trifoliums</i> .
	E Wittering	NJHS		Plentiful.
<i>Trifolium suffocatum</i>	Climping	HH, SS		On the beach.
	W Wittering	NJHS		New 10km record.
	Pagham	HH, JW		Trodden path in dunes.
<i>Trifolium glomeratum</i>	Camber	FR		Thousands.

Species	Location	Record by	Con/Det by	Comments
Groenlandia densa	Arundel	MH		
	Beeding Brooks	FA&FPP B&RC		With Holtonia.
	Henfield Brooks	FA&FPP B&RC		With Holtonia.
Monotropa hypopitys	S Harting	RW		New 10km record.
Spiranthes spiralis	Linchmere	LP		Hundred on Croquet lawn.
Ophrys apifera	Beeding	B&RC et al		2ft tall.
Coeloglossum viride	Newtimber Hill	B&RC		Re-found in hundreds after many years absence.
Crepis biennis	Small Dole	FA		By dismantled railway line.
Trifolium squamosum	Selsey	NJHS		Sparingly behind the shingle.
	Pagham	PDLW		By lagoon on clay bank.
Trifolium subterraneum	Wiggenholt	EJC et al		Widely distributed on edge of common.

NEW PLANTS RECORDS FOR VC14 1994

Species	Location	Record by	Con/Det by	Comments
<i>Falcaria vulgaris</i> *	Seaford, Tide Mills	JRM		Good colony on railway bank. New county record.
<i>Typha x glauca</i>	Scaynes Hill	RCP	ACL.	Herb.OXD
<i>Trichomanes speciosum</i> (gametophyte)	Ecclesbourne Glen	SM	RC	
<i>Cyclemas Coum</i>	Balcombe Church	AGH		Naturalised +50 plants
<i>Cardamine bulbifera</i>	Stonegate	AS		New tetrad record.
<i>Cardamine x</i> <i>haussknechtiana</i>	Five Ashes	ER&RN	TCGR	
<i>Anagallis tenella</i>	Ashdown Forest	McCF		
<i>Amaranthus cruentus</i> *	Brighton	TS	MM	New county record. Gutter casual.
<i>Amaranthus blitoides</i> *	Brighton	TS	MM	New county record. Promenade casual.
<i>Oenanthe pimpinoides</i>	Hamsey	PDLN	PAH	
<i>Conyza sumatrensis</i>	Brighton	TS	ACL	New county record.
	Newhaven	TS		Second county record.
<i>Crepis setosa</i>	Hailsham	DV	PAH	
<i>Bromus secalinus</i>	Folkington	DV	PAH	Arable margin.
<i>Potamogeton pusillus</i>	Various	AGK	CDP	
<i>Orobanches rapum-genistae</i>	Nutley	TCGR		
<i>Hydrocotyle-ranunculoides</i>	Piltdown	AGK		New county record for this rampant invader.

Species	Location	Record by	Con/Det by	Comments
<i>Thelypteris palustris</i>	Newbridge Bog	TCGR/ PD		Confirms previous record.
<i>Gentianella anglica</i>	Eastbourne	TCGR/ PDLM		Thousands.
<i>Populus nigra</i> ssp. <i>betulifolia</i>	Forest Row	TCGR	E.M-R	Four trees confirmed.
	Rushlake Green	FA/FPP	E.M-R	One tree. New 10km record.
<i>Mespilus germanica</i>	Northiam	EBB		Confirms old record.
<i>Mentha x smithiana</i>	Seaford Tidemills	PAH	RH	New 10km record.
	Hailsham	DV	RH	
	Beachy Head	BSBI		In large quantity.
<i>Medicago arabica</i>	Winchelsea	FR		In gardens - solid sheets.
<i>Canabis sativa</i>	Brighton	TS		Gutter casual.