



Sussex Botanical Recording Society

Newsletter

No. 70

<http://www.sussexflora.org.uk>

May 2010

Chairman's Message

Looking back at my message in Newsletter No 68 last year, I referred to the late flowering of *Prunus cerasifera* (Cherry Plum) resulting from the 'very cold spell we had'. Little did we think that in a year's time we would have to suffer an even longer and colder spell. It has seemed that this *Prunus* would be even more reluctant to come into flower. For the future of this year a few members may remember the vile winter of 1947 which, however, was followed by one of the hottest summers in the 20th century. We live in hope.

Elsewhere in this Newsletter, there is a report on the latest situation in respect of the *New Sussex Flora*. Members should be very pleased at the excellent progress and we should thank the Flora Working Group for their splendid work. They meet two or three times per year but are in constant touch with emails (how did we manage without?).

The Working Group now has to deal with the financial position. They have from three or four sources already amassed a considerable sum towards the cost of publishing the *Flora*. However, an even larger amount will be needed, particularly if a professional publisher is to be employed. Various sources of finance are to be tapped. One of these is donations by members and I am taking this opportunity of asking members to contribute generously. This is more important than ever as some organisations that provide finance for this type of project are themselves having to cut back because of the credit squeeze. The Working Group will ensure that significant donations are acknowledged in the *Flora*. I am sure that the *Flora* will be much appreciated and will be something of which the SBRS will be justifiably proud.

Rod Stern

Newsletter Editor:
Frances Abraham
The Old School,
Ebernoe,
Petworth, GU28 9LD

Secretary's Note

Dates for your Diary:

Saturday 6th November 2010

The Autumn Get-together will be held in Staplefield Village Hall. The doors will be open from 10.00 a.m. and the meeting will start promptly at 10.30 a.m. There will be reports of field meetings and interesting records and an illustrated talk. Please remember to bring a packed lunch; tea, coffee and biscuits and cakes will be available. We would especially like members to bring old photographs or slides taken on field meetings. We are hoping to include copies of some of these in the introductory chapter on recording in the new *Flora*. Please also bring books and plants for sale, and any items of interest or specimens for display.

Saturday 5th March 2011

The Annual General Meeting will be held at 2.00 p.m. at Staplefield Village Hall followed by a showing of members' photographs or slides, and finishing with tea and cake or biscuits. The hall will be available from 1.30 p.m. if you wish to bring any books or plants for sale.

Rita Hemsley

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IMPORTANT NOTICE!

FIELD MEETINGS 2010: CORRECTIONS & UPDATES

Saturday 24th July. Meeting in TQ51 led by Helen Proctor. Meet at Waldron church at TQ549192 and park by the roadside. We hope to record two or three tetrads in the north of TQ51 in the morning and move on in the afternoon.

Saturday 31st July. Multi-tetrad recording in TQ22. NB that the date in the January 2010 Newsletter was incorrect. All other details are as previously published.

Sunday 5th September. Chapel Common. Leader: Bruce Middleton. Meet in small car park beside St Luke's south of Chapel Common SU82382828. We may move on later to look at the golf course with the *Lycopodiella inundata* and *Rhynchospora alba* site.

Details of any further field meetings will be given on the website or can be obtained from the Field Meetings Convenors.

Treasurer's Note

The subscriptions for 2010 should now be paid if not already settled. Please send cheques to me at my home address or, if more convenient, payment may be made at the Autumn Get-together. The subscription rates were stated in the January 2010 Newsletter.

We are now considering ways in which to raise the money for the publication of the new *Flora*, so if any member knows of possible sources of funds I should be very grateful to hear of them.

Trevor Lording

Electronic Newsletter

With rising postal costs, the Society trying to save a bit of money, and with many members now being on line, it has been agreed by the Committee that members can opt to have their newsletter sent by electronic mail rather than by post. For those who wish to receive the newsletter by email, all they need to do is contact Arthur Hoare stating that they wish to accept this option.

ahoare@sweethaven.biz

Bioblitz: June 5th & 6th

Sussex Wildlife Trust and Brighton and Hove City Council are running another huge Springwatch event this year (last year 6000 attendees). As part of this event the Record Centre is running a 'Bioblitz'. This is where the public and experts work together to see how many species they can record over the day in Stanmer Park.

Bioblitz is over two days...the first day (Saturday 5th June) is just for recorders. Any SBRS member would be very welcome and will be contacted by Penny nearer the time. This will be a recording day, which simply involves bringing recorders together and having a good day and evening out recording. The second day (Sunday 6th June) is part of Springwatch at Stanmer Park and is about recording and public engagement. This is the day that we specifically would like help from any SBRS member who would like to be involved and help us make this a really fun event for everyone.

Here is a bit more about it:

Brighton **Bioblitz** is going to consist of a series of mini-events including butterfly walks, looking at creepy crawlies, guided wild flower walks, walks in the woods to look at trees, looking at the moths from moth traps etc.

Maybe you would like to be involved in any of the following:

Perhaps you have a particular recording interest and you would like to lead your own mini-event (we very much hope that SBRS members will help lead one or more wild flower walks throughout the day). Helping the mini-event leaders to co-ordinate the groups of participants to make sure that everyone is engaged and having fun (all help really welcomed). Attending mini-events and taking notes of what species were found (this will then all get collated in the main arena later). Help take bookings for each of the mini events (so that we can keep numbers under control). Or a mixture of all the above.

We really hope some SBRS members will want to be involved in **Bioblitz** with many hands making light work. We want it to be really fun and to excite lots of people about wildlife!

If any SBRS members are interested in being involved in any way please let us know.

Henri Brocklebank and Penny Green
Sussex Biological Record Centre 01273-497521

Obituary: Dr. Derek Hill FLS

by Rod Stern

Derek Hill died on 22nd December 2009 aged 84. Although he was not known to a number of SBRS members, those who did know him were very sorry to hear that he had died after a long illness.

Derek was brought up in Surrey until the outbreak of war in 1939, when he moved to North Wales with his mother. There he developed an interest in chemistry and botany. When he returned to Purley in Surrey he gained appropriate qualification in science and started his career in scientific research, for which he became well known.

He joined the Surrey Flora Committee in 1984 and became an active and enthusiastic botanist. In due course he became Chairman of that organisation, which had metamorphosed into the Surrey Botanical Society. He also developed an interest in bryology.

Derek was an active member of the SBRS, being a familiar face at indoor meetings even when he had to give up some of his other interests because of ill health. He really enjoyed the SBRS meetings and continued to attend accompanied by his wife Pam (they were married for 58 years) with great enthusiasm in spite of illness. He was a charming colleague and will be much missed.

Peter Donovan

We were extremely sorry to hear that Peter Donovan had died earlier this year. The SBRS owes Peter a great debt in that he was the first person to computerize our botanical records. He did this during the 1980s, when the rest of us had no idea of how computers would revolutionize the way in which we store and exchange data. We send our warmest sympathy to Pat and their family.

Meeting Gwyneth Parsons

by Nick Sturt

I have never seen x *Festulolium holmbergii* but I know someone who has. The story either starts last year when four lady members of the Society went to the Rye area to do some early Summer recording, or perhaps we should go back to 1970, the date given by the *Sussex Plant Atlas* for the inter-generic hybrid mentioned above.

Jenny, Beryl, Elisabeth and Judy stayed a mile up the road from Rye at a most hospitable B&B called The Corner House in Playden. Learning the purpose of their visit, the proprietor, Yvonne Turner, mentioned that her aunt had worked on the *Sussex Plant Atlas* and often went out in the company of the much-missed Breda Burt. The geographical distribution of botanists in Sussex was rather different in those days and in particular in the 'Far East' we miss the expert eye and local knowledge of Breda and Gwyneth.

This August Elisabeth took me to The Corner House to enjoy the comfort and five-star breakfasts, and, of course, to do some recording, including a couple of tetrads about which Alan had dropped hints of the heavier kind. Apart from enjoying the town of Rye and its environs and the three best days of the Summer, we also asked our hostess if we might make contact with her aunt.

So it was we found ourselves sitting in the front room of Mrs G. Parsons in the house in which she had lived for the majority of her life. There we were invited to view notebooks and other souvenirs from plant recording in the 1970s, while her memories of the time and her anecdotes of Breda and Ernie Burt seemed to turn back the years. Gwyneth told us that the x *Festulolium* used to grow in a neighbouring drive. It was exterminated some years ago when this was given a hard surface – a small piece of information but who else could have provided it?

The tetrads around Iden, we noted, had been worked very thoroughly for the *Plant Atlas*, and now we had met the recorder-in-residence. Coincidentally, Elisabeth and I had a similar experience when we were working in the Worthing area in July. After a number of visits we realised that it was going to be no easy task to get the TQ10M square anywhere near its 271+ *Plant Atlas* score. Elisabeth then worked out that it was the tetrad in which Charmandean School had stood – the school at which Betty Bishop had taught Art for a number of years. Naturally, she had known the territory extremely well.

Since the 1970s when data was being gathered for the *Sussex Plant Atlas*, social trends have continued to change, particularly with regard to the mobility of the population. Who now works or lives in an area for so many years that they know its plants as well as a Betty Bishop or a Gwyneth Parsons? Who is able to tell us when a species was lost as well as when it was found?

A Letter from Henry Salt

Mary Briggs has found, tucked into a book, a charming letter dated 1926 from the well-known botanist, author, and early conservationist Henry Salt. His name will be familiar to those using Wolley-Dod's *Flora of Sussex* (1937), as will be those of Miss Pickard and Mr Plowden, since they all contributed numerous records.

Here it is:

19 Highdown Rd. Brighton
July 7 '26

Dear Miss Pickard

*Just a line to tell you that I went to Birling Gap yesterday with Mr & Mrs Plowden in their car; and with the help of your directions we found the Bupleurum. I doubt if I could have found it without your directions, as it is so tiny, another Dwarf Spurge being rather like it (superficially) tends to conceal it.
I am off to Letchworth presently.*

Yrs. sincerely

Henry S. Salt

We had to search some time; & the mocking laughter of the gulls, as we knelt on the edge of the cliff, was rather trying, as long as our fortune hung in the balance. But the day was a notable one in the end!

Note on change to web site

The News page on the web site can now be accessed immediately, i.e. without having to log on. Please keep a regular eye on this page as we hope to arrange some extra field meetings and also there are likely to be requests to record particular areas or species.

Recording Notes by Alan Knapp

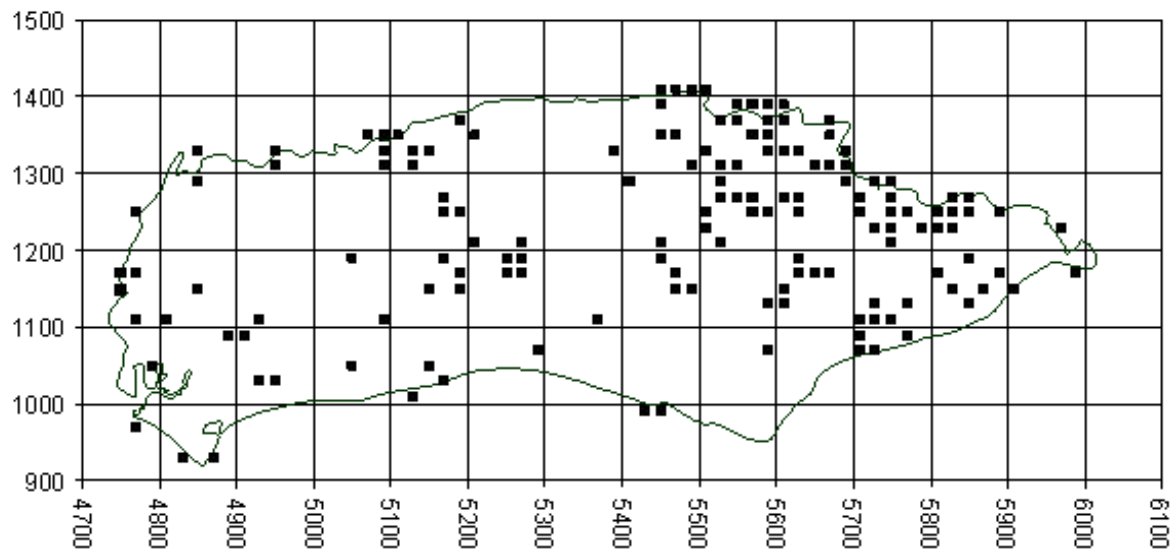
Please remember that we now have only two years or, by the time you receive this, just over one and a half years, left to complete our recording for the new *Flora*, and we really want to get the bulk of the remaining work done this year, leaving 2011 to fill in gaps and re-find missing species. So please go out and record as much as possible. The basic information on our main priorities was given in the January Newsletter so it is worth taking another look at that. One important request: please send in your records as soon as possible. Can I make a special appeal to those people who normally save up their records for the end of the year before sending them in not to do so this year and next year - let us have them as soon as you can.

As you will probably have noticed the conditions so far in 2010 have not exactly encouraged recording so the situation with regard to the recording levels in various tetrads has hardly changed since the January Newsletter so the maps shown there still give a good indication of the current status. Remember, that you can look on the web site for the very latest situation. The total number of records has now reached just over 287,500.

As the spring is rather late there should still be time when you receive this newsletter to do useful recording of spring species which are under-recorded in some areas - see map in January newsletter. In addition there are a number of tetrads which need to be visited in mid summer (i.e. from late May to July) as they have been hardly visited in that period (in a few cases they may have had visits but the records carry only a year and no month so the dates of visits are unknown). The map below shows these tetrads so please try to get to as many as possible during this critical period.

Finally, you may like to know that we have now completed draft species accounts for the Flora for almost all species except *Rubus* and *Taraxacum*.

Tetrads needing a mid summer visit



A selection of interesting species found or confirmed in 2009

West Sussex (VC13)

Species	Location	Grid ref.	Rec.	Comments
<i>Calystegia pulchra</i>	Aldingbourne	SU9205	MMS	
<i>Campanula glomerata</i>	Nore Down, West Marden	SU7712	MMS	Exceptionally fine colony
<i>Chenopodium chenopodioides</i>	Bracklesham Bay	SU8295	APA/JCA	On RSPB reserve, 1st VC13 record for over 30 years
<i>Dipsacus laciniatus</i>	Strood Green	TQ1332	FA	Many plants, 1st VC13 record
<i>Dipsacus x pseudosilvester</i>	Strood Green	TQ1332	FA	Several plants by path near both parents
<i>Eleocharis uniglumis</i>	Amberley Wild brooks	TQ0414	FA	Damp grassland. Found in 2008 by JCA (RSPB) but not confirmed at that time
<i>Eriophila vaginata</i>	West Heath, Harting	SU7822	DNE/MMS/EJC	Many plants in 9 patches close to edge of the sandpit
<i>Galium parisiense</i>	Fontwell Services	SU9507	RHU	In a concrete cover near petrol station
<i>Limonium hyblaenum</i>	Selsey	SZ8592	RCS	2nd VC13 record, far west of other Sussex records
<i>Monotropa hypopitys</i> ssp. <i>hypophegea</i>	East Marden	SU8113	MMS	
<i>Ophioglossum vulgatum</i>	West Wittering	SZ7999	MMS/JAW/JCO	
<i>Orobancha hederæ</i>	Crawley	TQ2738	AGK	On introduced ivy in industrial estate
<i>Paris quadrifolia</i>	Hunston	SU8601	MMS	Refind of old record, well away from other known sites
<i>Ranunculus aquatilis</i>	NW of Partridge Green	TQ1819	FA	Many plants in field pond. First recent confirmed record
<i>Rubus tuberculatus</i>	Pagham	SZ8797	MMS	

<i>Rumex sanguineus</i> var. <i>sanguineus</i>	Bognor	SU9100	MMS	
<i>Rumex scutatus</i>	Didling	SU8318	DNE/MMS	Among mass of other aliens in disused pit
<i>Salix purpurea</i>	Bepton	SU8620	FA	One bush by stream, refind of old record
<i>Scandix pecten- veneris</i>	Tangmere	SU9005	MMS	Edge of cornfield on Tangmere airfield
<i>Torilis arvensis</i>	Fontwell	SU9507	N&ES	Road verge, recently excavated area
<i>Trifolium incarnatum</i> ssp. <i>incarnatum</i>	Pagham	SU8799	MMS	

East Sussex (VC14)

Species	Location	Grid ref.	Rec.	Comments
<i>Alopecurus aequalis</i>	Weirwood Reservoir	TQ3734	AGK/DW	>100 plants in dense masses of <i>Crassula helmsii</i>
<i>Alopecurus aequalis</i>	Weirwood Reservoir	TQ3831	AGK/DW	Many plants scattered on drying edge of reservoir
<i>Anagallis minima</i>	Upper Hucksteep Wood	TQ7318	MBE/JLI/ RPW	Damp woodland track. Recently coppiced
<i>Anoda cristata</i>	Falmer Pond	TQ3508	AS	One plant on exposed mud at pond edge
<i>Cerinthe major</i>	Burgess Hill (SE)	TQ3218	AGK/KK	Est. in edge of grassy area
<i>Chenopodium giganteum</i>	Whitehawk Hill	TQ3204	AS	100+ plants self seeded on cleared, fallow allotment
<i>Coriandrum sativum</i>	Weirwood Reservoir	TQ4035	AGH/AGK	On exposed margin
<i>Coronilla valentina</i>	Holywell	TV6097	RPW	Six young shrubs by path
<i>Cotoneaster hjelmqvistii</i>	Chapel Hill, Lewes	TQ4210	PAH	Not planted
x <i>Dactylodenia legrandiana</i>	Ashdown Forest	TQ4332	LWI	One plant, among parents. 1st Sussex record & 1st for southern England
<i>Elaeagnus umbellata</i>	Eastbourne	TQ6402	RPW	Growing in shingle at Sovereign Harbour
<i>Epilobium palustre</i>	Whatlington area	TQ7518	JAR/JVC/ EMC	Wet area in farm field
<i>Erigeron acer</i> x <i>Conyza sumatrensis</i>	Patching	TQ3009	AS	Many plants with parents, N side A27. 2nd UK record
x <i>Festulolium loliaceum</i>	Foulride Green	TQ5803	MBE/RPW	Locally abundant in meadow
<i>Glyceria x pedicellata</i>	Lewes Levels	TQ4008	PAH	In drying drainage ditch
<i>Gnaphalium luteoalbum</i>	Hastings	TQ8210	JAR	2nd site for very rare species
<i>Himantoglossum hircinum</i>	Seaford	TV5099	CLB	One plant, also there in 2008
<i>Littorella uniflora</i>	Weirwood Reservoir	TQ4035	AGH/AGK	c. 30 plants on exposed stony edge of reservoir
<i>Lonicera henryi</i>	Eastbourne	TV5899	MBE	Well naturalised among trees & scrub near Old Town
<i>Orobanche hederæ</i>	Ditchling	TQ3215	RIH	First of several new records in Ditchling area
<i>Persicaria campanulata</i>	Standen Wood	TQ3935	AGK	Beside pond in wood
<i>Phormium tenax</i>	Cockshut Road, Lewes	TQ4109	PAH	Garden throw out that has become established

<i>Polycarpon tetraphyllum</i>	Eastbourne, Sovereign Harbour	TQ6301	RPW	1st Sussex record, long way east of other UK records
<i>Polygonum rurivagum</i>	S of Battle	TQ7514	JAR/JVC/EMC	Edge of arable
<i>Potamogeton perfoliatus</i>	Rover Rother, E of Metherham	TQ8727	RPW/MBE	Extensive along southern edge of river. Decreasing species (only 2009 record)
<i>Rosa obtusifolia</i>	Harveys Lane, Ringmer	TQ4715	PAH	Hedge, NE side of bridle path, by Mount Farm.
<i>Rosa x nitidula</i>	Sandhill Lane, Halland	TQ4917	PAH	Laneside hedge
<i>Rumex cristatus</i>	Lewes	TQ4010	PAH	Several large plants, Prince Edward's Road
<i>Rumex x dufftii</i>	Palehouse Common	TQ4918	PAH	Corner of derelict pasture
<i>Sibthorpia europaea</i>	Coneyburrow Wood N of Broad Oak	TQ6023	MBE/RPW/HMP	Several colonies, woodland path. May be same site as in Wolley Dod, "N of Heathfield"
<i>Silene noctiflora</i>	NW of Tollhurst Farm	TQ4940	AGK	Unusual habitat - not on chalk
<i>Stipa tenuissima</i>	SE of Glynde	TQ4608	PSM	1st record of naturalised colony, chalk pit
<i>Verbascum blattaria</i>	Seaford	TV4999	NKM	Grass verge, one plant
<i>Vinca difformis</i>	Alfriston area	TQ5103	MBE	Bank below garden wall
<i>Xanthium strumosum</i>	Falmer Pond	TQ3508	AS	One plant on exposed mud at pond edge

Recorders' initials

AGH	Arthur Hoare	JLI	J. Linnell
AGK	Alan Knapp	JVC	J. V. Clark
APA	A. Parker	KK	Katherine Knapp
AS	Tony Spiers	LWI	L. Wilson
CLB	C. Brewer	MBE	Matthew Berry
DNE	Dawn Nelson	MMS	Mike Shaw
DW	D. Washington	N&ES	Nick & Liz Sturt
EJC	Eric Clement	NKM	Keith Maybury
EMC	Ellen Cambell	PAH	Paul Harmes
FA	Frances Abraham	PSM	P. B. Smith
HMP	Helen Proctor	RCS	Rod Stern
JAR	Jacquerline Rose	RHU	R. Hutchinson
JAW	Judy Wilson	RIH	Rita Hemsley
JCA	James Cadbury	RPW	Roy Wells
JCO	John Cole		
