



Sussex Botanical Recording Society

Newsletter

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President's Message

Looking back I see that this time two years ago I wrote 'Following the success of Helen Proctor's churchyard survey should we now also be thinking about other similar subjects to target. One that comes to my mind are village greens. Regular grazing of villagers' animals produced a very distinctive flora that is now very rare. Some fine examples survive, for example, in the New Forest. We know that remnants also survive in Sussex, if only as Chamomile on the cricket square!'

Later in the Newsletter Jacqui Hutson reports on the encouraging results of the first season of village green recording, including eight with *Chamaemelum nobile* (Chamomile). Chamomile is just one of several plants that were once characteristic of the short sward of grazed village greens that have become very scarce as a result of villagers no longer putting their animals out to graze. It is primarily a plant of mildly acid winter-wet sandy soils that dry in summer so it is not surprising that the work for *The Flora of Sussex* found that the most frequent surviving colonies were on the Lower Greensand in the north-west of the county. To gardeners the plant is most familiar as the non-flowering cultivar 'Treneague', the traditional constituent of chamomile lawns. To others it is a soothing infusion as Peter Rabbit would attest after his fraught confrontation with Mr McGregor.

Another plant that often turns up with Chamomile as it prefers similar soils and a really short sward is *Montia fontana* (Blinks); diminutive and early flowering it is easily overlooked when scattered among the turf, but on the other hand it can also occur as extensive and distinctive mats. The floras divide it into four subspecies separated on the sculpturing of the seed coat. Recent Sussex records all appear to be ssp. *chondrosperma* but there are old records for ssp. *amporitana*, which it would be worth looking out for. One almost forgotten part of the traditional village scene is geese. All grazers attack the sward in characteristic and distinctive ways. For

(continued on page 2)

Dates for your Diary

Saturday 7th March 2020

As usual, the Annual General Meeting will be held at 2.00 p.m. at Staplefield Village Hall. After the AGM there will be information on this year's field meetings, and details of interesting records received in 2019. The hall will be available from 1.30 p.m. if you wish to bring any books or plants for sale. Members bringing digital photographs of Sussex plants are asked to include captions. The meeting will conclude with tea and cakes.

Saturday 31st October 2020

The Autumn Get-together will also be held at Staplefield Village Hall. The doors will be open from 10.00 a.m. The meeting will start promptly at 10.30 and will include a talk. 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.

Contents

President's message	1
Dates for your diary.....	1
Treasurer's note.....	2
Recording in 2020.....	2
Village greens survey progress.....	3
Churchyard survey.....	3
Photo competition 2019.....	4
SBRS Committee	5
<i>Ludwigia palustris</i> in Sussex.....	5
Wolley-Dod's <i>Flora</i>	5
Michael Cadman paintings	6
Field meeting reports 2019 W. Sussex...	8
Field meeting reports 2019 E. Sussex....	11
Field meetings 2020	14
SBRS Officers & Committee members...	15

Treasurer's Note

Welcome to 2020. As to the *Flora*, I may report that we have now sold approximately 75% of the print run and have circa 300 copies unsold. Please continue to promote the *Flora* and, if possible, sell further copies. I shall report on the financial position in the Accounts for 2019 in due course.

It is likely that subscriptions for 2020 will remain as for 2019 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 2019 - 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

(continued from page 1)

instance, the different effects that sheep and cattle have on chalk grassland are familiar to all nature reserve managers. The loss of several high-profile species has long been laid at the door of the disappearance of goose grazing but, it has to be said, without a great deal of evidence to support it.

Two of these species that have experienced the most dramatic decline are *Pulicaria vulgaris* (Small Fleabane) and *Mentha pulegium* (Pennyroyal). Both are plants of short wet grassland and pond margins on mildly acid soils and were once widespread on grazed village greens and commons over most of lowland England. Small Fleabane is now restricted to the New Forest. Pennyroyal has shown a similar decline but that is now being masked by the spread of alien varieties. The Fleabane was last seen in Sussex on Broadmere Common near Henfield in 1958 whilst Pennyroyal still hangs on as a native in a handful of sites. However, anyone wishing to see fine examples of this element of lost village life can still find it on some of the New Forest commons and lawns where pony grazing maintains the traditional sward and which can also include such choice scarcities as *Persicaria minor* (Small Water-pepper).

In the meantime, who knows what exciting and unexpected plants lie waiting discovery in some corner of an old Sussex village green.

Finally, I feel that I must pay tribute to my old friend David Bellamy who died recently. A larger than life, effervescent personality, in the 1970s and 80s, through his extraordinary television series and work

with children, Dave was an inspiration bringing plants to the people and raising the profile of botany from which we shall for ever be beneficiaries.

A happy New Year to all.

David Streeter

Recording Vascular Plants in 2020

Nick Sturt

The Society's major project on village greens continues and I would encourage the membership to seek out at least one site in their neighbourhood which has not yet been surveyed. You can read Jacqueline's report on the first year elsewhere in this newsletter and her instructions are available on the web-site and were also published in the May newsletter. To avoid duplication of effort do contact her to check that your chosen site has not already been bagged. Helen, too, has unfinished business in the churchyards of the county. The village green and churchyard records should be sent to Jacqui Hutson and Helen Proctor respectively. All other records should be sent to either Nevil Hutchinson (VC14 East Sussex) or to me (VC13 West Sussex). The relevant email addresses are given in the list of Officers and Committee Members on page 15. It would help us both if you could include 'SBRS' in the email subject. Information on the submission of paper records will be given in the May newsletter. Which brings me to inform the membership that Matthew Berry has reluctantly stepped down as Assistant BSBI Recorder feeling that he no longer has sufficient time to carry out his duties of checking incoming records for VC14. We thank him for all his hard work over the years – he was originally head-hunted by Paul Harnes who recognised his exceptional qualities. Matthew's interest in Sussex botany is undiminished, however, and he will continue to take a specialist interest in aliens. Thus members are encouraged to report to him any exciting alien finds and seek his help with tricky specimens. His public will be relieved to hear that Matthew will continue to write his popular 'Adventures and Aliens' note for *BSBI News* and he will certainly wish to keep Sussex well represented therein. Finally, I should ask members not to send in their record cards more than once since this can cause confusion and extra work. You are, however, advised to keep copies of your record cards for extra security. Nevil Hutchinson is currently mastering the IT for handling records with the assistance of the experienced Mike Shaw. We are more than a little grateful to both gentlemen!

Mike and Nevil have also been working on a new SBRS database for records submitted from 1/1/2020 in line with the end of the BSBI's Atlas 2020 project and the start of a new 'date class'. Coinciding with this, members will receive an email detailing a new version of the Electronic Recording Card developed by Mike which will be available to download from the SBRS website before very long. The most significant change will be the use of names for recorders rather than initials. This and other refinements are all aimed at more efficient handling of what is a large volume of data. Any information needed by members who do not have access to email or the website will be given in the May Newsletter.

Village Greens project progress

Jacqui Hutson

We have got off to a good start with surveying village greens in East Sussex. Six recorders have, between them, surveyed 46 Greens. Of these, 32 are Registered Greens and fourteen are not registered. Some others have been allocated to recorders but surveys are not yet complete. There are still ten Registered Greens and an unknown number of unregistered Greens that have not yet been allocated to recorders. Most of these are in the eastern and northern part of the county.

In West Sussex we have records for fifteen Greens (eight Registered and seven unregistered). There are 81 Registered Greens and probably many more unregistered ones so there is lots of scope here for surveys next year.

Many of the Greens surveyed so far have a good range of grassland species with three in East Sussex and five in West Sussex having *Chamaeaelum nobile* (Chamomile). Some recorders have supplied additional information on species abundance in the form of DAFOR values. While these values are rather subjective they do give more of an idea of the quality of the habitat than a simple list of taxa. It is a bit of extra work and not easy to allocate scores but it is worth doing if at all feasible. Not all Greens are green, though: of those surveyed to date, one is a pond, another a shingle beach and another is a well-established woodland.

Details of management are really valuable. According to the information received to date, many Greens are not managed in the most appropriate way for wildflowers and their pollinators. Eventually we would like to be able to advise and encourage bodies responsible to manage their Greens to benefit wildlife as well as the people who use them for recreation.

Thanks to all the recorders who have submitted records so far and to all those who have volunteered to take on a Green, or more than one. Updated details will be available on the website and I will also bring along these to the AGM in the hope of encouraging more surveys.



Chamomile on Lindfield Common in September 2019
(photo: John Pilkington)

Churchyard recording progress

Helen Proctor

Recording has now been completed at 392 churchyards and cemeteries throughout West and East Sussex (Vice Counties 13 and 14) thanks to the efforts of 53 members as well as others whose eyes at field meetings resulted in more records!

Vernacular names (Stace, edn. 3) and the scoring of unimproved grassland indicators (UGI) have now been added to all these files where sufficient seasonal visits have been made. Thanks are due to Helen Dignum who did a huge amount of this work. These site records have been sent to the Sussex Biological Record Centre for anyone to access:

<http://sxbrc.org.uk/services/dataRequests.php> .

The files include a huge amount of data. The scoring of unimproved grassland indicators illustrates the quality of the grassland. The status column shows the number of native and alien species. In due course, it may be possible to calculate the percentage of native to alien species. This could indicate the management methods and impact of human intervention. It is hoped that the records from the 1980s surveys can be digitised. It will then be possible to compare them.

Many thanks too to the members who submitted survey forms. These give further useful information about the habitats and management methods. Any

historical information about burial grounds and past parishioners would be appreciated too, especially relating to the burial grounds of Victorian churches. Historical records or information, passed down by ancestors on how the land was managed before they became burial grounds, would add further to our knowledge of habitat changes.

There are now just a handful of sites which may be worth recording. These include:

Bunton, All Saints

Chidham, St. Mary

Middleton, St. Nicholas

Moulescoomb, St. Andrew

Rye, St. Mary the Virgin

Selsey, St. Peter

Recording has been promised in three other churchyards. Also, a few churchyards lack recording at a certain time of year, especially in Spring. Further details will follow at the AGM in March.

2020 will be the final year of recording, so I am asking members to commit to making at least three recording visits at different seasons to the sites, ideally one or two visits up to the end of May, a visit in June or July and one in August or September. Instructions for recording are on the website. If you have difficulty with electronic recording, please ask! Good luck and happy botanising!

SBRS Photo Competition 2019

Peter B. Smith

Our by-now almost traditional photographic competition took place during the Autumn Get-together. Classes this year were for a close-up of a flower and for a plant in fruit. The high quality of the entries is illustrated by the spread of votes for which should be the winner. Among the 20 entries in the close-up category, twelve received at least one vote. Similarly, among the fifteen entries to the fruit class, eleven received at least one vote. So, no reason to be shy about entering the 2020 competition. Artistic creativity and botanical interest were both in evidence, with particular ingenuity shown in identifying photogenic fruits. The winning (very close) close-up of *Briza media* (Quaking-grass) was submitted by Kate Gold. Kate was also the winner of the second class with her attractive portrait of fruiting *Typha latifolia* (Bulrush).

The winning photos 2019:



Winner of Class 2, for a plant in fruit:
Typha latifolia by Kate Gold



Winner of Category 1, for a plant in close-up:
Briza media by Kate Gold

SBRS Committee

Nick Sturt

Whenever the laptop is refusing to have anything to do with the projector or the file containing the next item has slipped into a crevice in the circuitry Judith is always able to wave her e-wand and save the day. She stands no nonsense from machines. I should also mention that Judith played a major part in unlocking the secrets of Alan Knapp's ingenious recording software, thus putting the Flora project back on track and enabling SBRS activities in general to continue. Latterly Judith was coaxed onto the Committee where she also proved her worth in terms of ideas and common sense, but she has now sadly decided to resign. We thank Judith for her input and keep our fingers crossed that she will continue to be there at Staplefield when the IT threatens to overwhelm the Chairman. Judith's departure leaves a gap on the Committee and I thus invite nominations to reach me with the signature of a proposer and seconder by 7th February 2020; the nominee should, of course, be willing to stand.

***Ludwigia palustris* in Sussex**

Brad Scott

Always rare in the UK, where it is on the northern edge of its range, *Ludwigia palustris* (Hampshire-purslane) occurs on the edge of pools on basic clay, and was first recorded by John Goodyer (1592–1664) in Petersfield in 1645. There have only ever been a small number of records, and it is now known from the New Forest and Dorset. It was first reported from Sussex by William Borrer (1781–1862) 'who found it growing in a pool at Buxstead' in July 1827 (*Supplement to English Botany*, 1831, tab. 2593), and it was still there in 1876. Wolley-Dod notes a second site, at Little Ease Mill Pond, near Cuckfield, giving the date of 1848, and attributes it to William Bromfield, adding that 'there is no other record from here, where [C.E. Salmon] searched for it in vain in 1903. Bromfield's records were not regarded as trustworthy by Watson.'

However, it is worth looking at the original published source for the latter record, Bromfield's article 'Notes and Occasional Observations on Some of the Rarer British Plants Growing Wild in Hampshire' in *The Phytologist* in 1848 (p. 367). In it, Bromfield notes that the plant had been rediscovered at Goodyer's site, and that Borrer had also found it at another Hampshire location. For the Sussex record, Bromfield gives the additional information: 'it has lately been detected by Mr. Mitten, in a second station many miles from the original one at Henfield

[sic], namely at Little Ease mill-pond, near Cuckfield, where Mr. Borrer kindly showed it to me, growing amongst reeds, early in the present month (October), the panicle, as usual, wholly included within the sheath'. William Mitten (1819-1906) was a pharmacist from Hurstpierpoint, who had benefitted from the teaching of Borrer, and routinely had access to Borrer's books and herbarium. In 1845 he had already demonstrated his acute field skills, having found the first British occurrence of *Carex montana* at Eridge, and is now remembered as the foremost British bryologist of the second half of the nineteenth century.

Practically, then, since both Mitten and Borrer saw it, there is no reason to doubt that *Ludwigia palustris* did occur at Little Ease Mill Pond 170 years ago.

On Wolley-Dod's *Flora* and Sussex botany's rich past

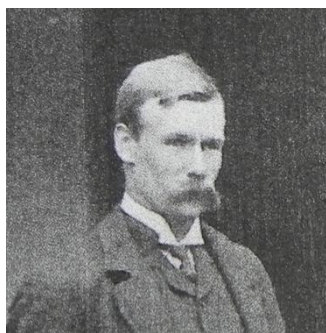
Nick Sturt

Chenopodium glaucum (Oak-leaved Goosefoot) is a plant which has seemed to pursue me ever since my encounter with it on the first SBRS field meeting which I attended, probably in the Summer of 1979. The venue was The Severals, some damp, sandy fields just outside Midhurst which had the look of corners of the New Forest. Local boy Tim Rich was due to be leading but he had been called away by work at the last minute and so it fell to Mary Briggs to take command and interpret the sketch-map and detailed notes which he had provided. Almost before we entered upon the said fields we came upon the Goosefoot, reclining in its typically nonchalant manner upon a dung heap.

Referring to my copy of Wolley-Dod's *Flora of Sussex*, I am reminded that the first formal Sussex record of *Chenopodium glaucum* is that of E.S. Marshall in 1901, 'Calloway's Farmyard, Graffham'. I see I have annotated the page with '8.93: near Wiblings Farm', which is very close to Marshall's find and could suggest that the plant can hang around in one area for years. These days it is fairly regularly spotted outside Arundel around Warningcamp and Burpham where heaps of manure also support lush stands of its relatives, *Chenopodium album* (Fat-hen), *C. ficifolium* (Fig-leaved Goosefoot), *C. polyspermum* (Many-seeded Goosefoot) and *C. rubrum* (Red Goosefoot). However, its most recent ambush of me was in June at Sidlesham in a flowerpot at a remarkably good nursery for ornamental grasses. The proprietor seemed only too

happy to part with it and so Elisabeth took it back to her vegetable patch and we eagerly await the progeny this Summer. (I should mention as a warning to members of a horticultural bent that the last species Elisabeth introduced, *Galinsoga parviflora* (Gallant-soldier) from a Petworth allotment, triumphantly overran the whole of the vegetable plot and sent out raiding parties into outlying flower-borders.)

I have mentioned the *Flora* of the great Wolley-Dod. With regret I must report that a direct connection with Lt-Col Anthony Hurt Wolley-Dod has recently been lost. A few years ago one of those unlooked-for but happy coincidences put me in touch with the great man's great-nephew, Kirk Wolley-Dod. Our esteemed orchidologist David Lang has a son Robin who lives on the Isle of Wight. He happened to fall into conversation with a stranger and when the stranger revealed his double-barrelled surname it was one which Robin recognised. He hastened to convey the news to his father who in turn hastened to pass on to me the contact details, and very soon I was on the telephone speaking with Kirk. 'You mean Great-uncle Tony!' he exclaimed with evident glee. Further telephone conversations followed and also letters with information about the family into which Anthony was born, together with copies of old photographs. Kirk remembered his relative very fondly and also Anthony's daughter Mabel whom he described as vivacious and adorable. Kirk died in August after a short illness, severing a small link with Sussex botany past. Kirk had enthusiastically given his permission for the use of the family photograph that is featured in the historical chapter in our new *Flora* and he lived long enough to appreciate a copy of the text commemorating his distinguished relative.



A.H. Wolley-Dod
as a young man

It happens that the SBRS has come into possession of two copies of Wolley-Dod's *Flora* which we should like to offer for sale to members. One is the original edition of 1937: it shows signs of wear but is in good condition for its age. The other is a 1970 reprint complete with its dust jacket, again in good condition. I always have my Wolley-Dod to hand here in my study for reference or for a pleasurable dip into, for it remains a work full of interest and

relevance. For the more imaginative reader it also affords a glimpse into a past world of tweeds and sturdy vascula. Contact me to secure either on a first come first served basis. The Treasurer and I feel that a price of £20 and £10 respectively is fair.

Returning to that field meeting near Midhurst some 40 years ago, I also remember that at one point I found myself in the company of the late Rene Folkard on the edge of a muddy pond. She showed me some subtle differences in leaf features between *Sparganium erectum* (Branched Bur-reed) and *S. emersum* (Unbranched Bur-reed). Only many years later did I realise that my impromptu tutorial would have come down directly from that great teacher Oliver Buckle (1903-1989) since Rene had been one of his star pupils. Another small link with the rich past of Sussex botany.

Michael Cadman's botanical watercolours

Brad Scott

Michael Cadman A.R.C.A., R.I. (1920–2010) was a well-known watercolourist who, in the early part of his life, taught at the Epsom School of Art and at Juniper Hall. Exploring the countryside from an early age, in 1956 he started painting wild flowers, an activity that he continued until a few years before his death. Initially living in Surrey, he subsequently resided in Dorset and Cornwall, and in south-west France. Over that time, he produced about 400 studies of plants, which are often in exquisite detail, and richly annotated.

David Streeter first met him in the late 1950s or early 1960s when he was a regular tutor on the Juniper Hall art courses, and they occasionally corresponded until quite soon before Michael Cadman's death. David notes that "during one of [Cadman's] Juniper Hall courses he painted a beautiful large watercolour of a bunch of typical chalk downland flowers among which were five or six stems of Bee Orchids which, at the time, didn't attract anything like the disapproval that it would now evoke." That painting is still at Juniper Hall.

The earliest works date from the spring of 1956, beginning with familiar plants around Reigate, *Oxalis acetosella* (Wood-sorrel) and *Ficaria verna* (Lesser Celandine), and quickly extend further afield on and around the chalk downs, until by the end of the year he had produced about 140 watercolours. At the same

time he assembled a collection of about 170 dried plants, stuck into a large bound ledger, many of which are clearly the specimens he painted. This collection of drawings and pressed flowers has not previously been widely known, yet contains many relatively early records for some locations, and also includes details of sites where some species have not otherwise been recorded.

There are only four drawings which are from Sussex plants, the earliest of which Cadman found on 24 March 1957, and is *Primula vulgaris* (Primrose), though no location is given other than "Sussex". Two months later, on 19 May, he was back in the county as his drawing of *Tephroseris integrifolia* ("Field Fleawort (Cambridge Ragwort)") testifies. This he describes as "Found in short turf on the downs near Seaford, Sussex", adding one of his characteristic descriptive notes: "Petals \approx 12–14. Flowers – 4 to 7 in umbel clusters. Leaves long, narrow & pointed, alternate, clasping the stem. Stem leaves and underside of calyces downy. Rosette of leaves at the base." Among his dried plants, the specimen of *Tephroseris integrifolia* has no location information written beside it (other than the note "Now Absent from Surrey"), but it is quite clearly the plant in the



Tephroseris integrifolia,
Seaford, 1957.

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drawing. It is most likely that this was found in tetrad TV49Z, since it was recorded there in the *Sussex Plant Atlas*, and Bexhill herbarium has a Seaford specimen from the young Phyllis Stockdale dating from June 1912. However, it was not found in the area during the recording for *The Flora of Sussex* (2018).

Michael Cadman's drawing of *Phyteuma orbiculare* (Round-headed Rampion) illustrates another valuable element of the collection, namely his frequent description of the plant community in which his specimen was found. Exploring the South Downs on 27 July 1961, he collected this iconic Sussex plant, and painted it two days later, recording that it was 'Found on Sussex chalk (mostly short turf, Ditchling & Lewes, Sussex) in Company with Small Scabious, Self-Heal, Carlina Thistle, Eyebright, Common Milkwort, Wild Thyme, Harebell, Common Hawkbit, Red Clover, Bird'sfoot Trefoil. Prolific and Abundant both on grassy slopes, banksides and along pathway borders.'

The final Sussex drawing is of *Teucrium scorodonia* (Wood Sage) collected 9 September 1965 and 'Found on chalk downs near Beachy Head (E. Sussex) in longish grass with Carlina Thistle, Burnet Rose, brambles, gorse etc'. Again, his artist's eye for detail further added in pencil a note capturing its 'Paired leaves at right angles and twin stems from these points (normally only top pair) plus a large central flower-spike. Slightly hairy. Stem and leaf undersides. Very crinkly and minutely-veined leaves'.

It is unsurprising that a professional artist would have painted such high quality illustrations, though they are quite different from most of his commercial works, which often include landscapes and village scenes. Even so, as indicated above, among his watercolours there are some which focus on specific parts of the natural world, both animals and plants, and his notebooks periodically record the birds he saw on his frequent walks. When we look at his botanical paintings we can appreciate that, in a very real sense, his approach to landscape started from the ground up.

Many thanks to Judith Coomber for the loan of the collection. Once it is fully indexed, the details will be shared with the relevant county recorders, and more extensively described before being deposited in a suitable archive.

Field meeting reports 2019

West Sussex VC13

(Reports by Nick Sturt unless noted otherwise)

March 10th Henfield bryophyte meeting

(Leader & report: Brad Scott)

The first meeting of the year was an opportunity to combine botany and history as we explored the area that would have been well known to the great Sussex botanist William Borrer (1781-1862). Though he published little, Borrer was a major figure in British botany in the first half of the nineteenth century, described by Joseph Hooker as "the Nestor of British botanists". With his expertise spanning vascular plants, lichens, bryophytes and algae, Borrer supplied specimens and information to James Edward Smith for *English Botany*, and to Dawson Turner and Lewis Dillwyn for *The Botanist's Guide Through England and Wales*. At present, we have very few of Borrer's own records in the Sussex bryophyte data, and Henfield was very poorly recorded, so a visit enabled us to introduce many members to this group of plants and at the same time improve our data for the county. The circuit took us on a route past Potwell, where Borrer was born, and then south of the town, and back via the site of the house where he lived for most of his life. In all, we recorded 64 taxa, including a few small arable species, though many common ones still remain to be discovered in Borrer's home square.

April 27th Widewater Lagoon

(Leader: Sue Denness)

Any cobwebs adhering to non-bryologists over the winter were swiftly blasted out to sea by an exhilarating gale. The first vascular plant meeting of the season attracted in excess of 20 keen members in a congenial mix which included vegetative shingle aficionados like Jacky, new faces Chris and James, and some Brighton celebrities less frequently seen in recent years, Ady Symon and Tony Spiers. In charge, Sue Denness orchestrated splendidly slow progress along the top of the shingle beach with the less experienced learning classic seaside plants such as *Crambe maritima* (Sea-kale) and *Glaux maritima* (Sea-milkwort) in a non-flowering state and some more rarefied discussion of the subtleties of *Cerastium diffusum* (Sea Mouse-ear) and *C. semidecandrum* (Little Mouse-ear). There was much pondering over the clovers present with the aid of Poland and Clement and some line drawings by Elisabeth, though in the end specimens had to be taken home to a more sheltered environment for confident determination. *Trifolium scabrum* (Rough Clover) was the most common trefoil encountered but there was some *T. dubium* (Lesser Trefoil) and a

little *T. striatum* (Knotted Clover), not to mention *Medicago lupulina* (Black Medick): in the end careful examination of both leaflets and stipules revealed all.

Along the lagoon edge there were reminders of the meeting of July 2018 in the form of the skeletal remains of last year's *Salicornia ramosissima* (Purple Glasswort) and the new reddish growth of *Frankenia laevis* (Sea-heath). But last year's ice-creams at the kiosk under a summer sun seemed a distant memory! A section of battened-down beach-huts afforded some cover for lunch while wind- and kite-surfers shot about in the distance and the blades of the Rampion wind farm pumped power into the Grid.

More of the same pleasurable activity in the afternoon, moving from TQ20C to TQ10X and focusing on the western portion of the gravelly lagoon beach where among the gems were *Myosotis ramosissima* (Early Forget-me-not) and some *Silene uniflora* (Sea Champion), both in flower. The party acquired familiarity with the basal leaves of *Crepis vesicaria* (Beaked Hawk's-beard) and *Picris hieracioides* (Hawkweed Oxtongue), while Tony picked out a lone plant of *Brassica oleracea* (Wild Cabbage). At length the leader called time and we made our way back along the top of the beach where the surfers were still flying by and occasional sunbeams lit up the chalk cliffs as far as Beachy Head.

June 2nd Leith Copse, Harting

(Leader: Dawn Nelson)

Dawn had arranged to survey this piece of woodland on the chalk scarp near Harting and eleven members and Alison's guest Judy were joined by owner Andrew and ranger Scotty who has been advising on management. Although part of the site was used 40 years or so ago for motorcycle scrambling the bulk of it had avoided the disturbance and a large number of mature Field Maples and much Wych Elm suggested antiquity, which was amply borne out by the ground flora recorded on the day. Local ancient woodland indicator specialities included *Paris quadrifolia* (Herb Paris) and *Polygonatum multiflorum* (Solomon's-seal), plus two spikes of *Platanthera chlorantha* (Greater Butterfly-orchid) discovered by Elisabeth when she ventured off-piste – whether intentionally or in a bit of a dream has not been established. Wherever there had been management intervention *Atropa belladonna* (Deadly Nightshade) had sprung up and there were some truly magnificent specimens on show, prompting one of Richard's splendid anecdotes which are earning him something of a following (they are even more irresistible than the honey described in his Heyshott Common note

below!). There was botanical aplenty to interest the party on the progress around the hillside but Scotty was also able to supply interesting snippets about some of the insects, for example the Black-headed Cardinal Beetle which has increased in recent years. There were roses to identify – Frances is one of those special individuals who can detect the fragrance of *R. rubiginosa* (Sweet-briar) and *R. micrantha* (Small-flowered Sweet-briar) at fifty paces and sure enough both were tracked down after a while. At length we found ourselves back at the owner's house where to great delight sandwiches, cake and beverages were laid on. After this Dawn whisked off those not sated by the botany of the long morning to view some more Herb Paris in its stronghold at the extreme western end of the county.

23 June Heyshott Common

(Leader: Nick Sturt. Report: Richard Robinson)

On a hot and humid morning the usual suspects from West Sussex gathered south of Midhurst. They were joined by a friend of Ady's called Erica which, given that it was an exploration of lowland heath, seemed entirely appropriate. Plants came thick and fast so that by lunchtime 165 species were determined, including eight sedges and five *Veronicas*, and Sue Denness was kept busy with her GPS. A fine suite of heathland plants were represented but the roadside patch of *Convallaria majalis* (Lily-of-the-valley) was suspected to be an introduction.

The wooded areas were, with the exception of one bush, mercifully clear of *Rhododendron ponticum* (Rhododendron). The nectar of *Rhododendron ponticum* is toxic to bees which die within a few hours of delivering it to the hive. This allows the opportunity to fertilise other nearby Rhododendron bushes but less so other plants, thereby reducing the local competition. Its effect on humans is less drastic but well known to honey gatherers in Nepal whose mental state is pleasurably altered during the pursuit of their calling. Although not common knowledge now, it was well known in antiquity. Darius IV, when invaded by the Ptolemy of the time placed hives rich in Rhododendron honey along Ptolemy's line of march. Unable to resist this, his soldiers became happily stuporose and fell easy prey to the swords of Darius' forces.

No hives being available to us we continued diligently, identified seven different species of rush, and came upon *Dryopteris carthusiana* (Narrow Buckler-fern). For me, the grass of the day was *Festuca filiformis* (Fine-leaved Sheep's-fescue) a plant of which I have hitherto not been sufficiently aware. The prize for the smallest plant of the day went to Helen who spotted *Ornithopus perpusillus*

(Bird's-foot) – a thing of beauty viewed through a x10 lens. Guernonprez recorded *Wahlenbergia hederaceae* (Ivy-leaved Bellflower) at the roadside by a railway arch in 1909. It was still there in 2010 but has not been seen since. He noted that it had been introduced from Devon and in the days of gentle narrow wheeled carriages this might have been a not unreasonable thing to do. We, as others before us, only found heavily impressed tyre tracks and no sign of *Wahlenbergia*.

Arising from lunch Dawn discovered she had been sitting next to *Frangula alnus* (Alder Buckthorn), something those of us immersed in sandwiches had failed to spot. The post prandial plan was to explore some of the damper areas of the common previously referred to as bogs. Bogs hardly any longer – only a little moisture being expressed by the most heavy footed amongst us. Nevertheless *Drosera rotundifolia* (Round-leaved Sundew) and *D. intermedia* (Oblong-leaved Sundew), *Narthecium ossifragum* (Bog Asphodel) in bud and *Eriophorum angustifolium* (Common Cottongrass) just coming into flower were hanging on. Clumps of *Trichophorum germanicum* (Deergrass) were looking robustly healthy and there was a small colony of *Dactylorhiza maculata* (Heath Spotted-orchid). As all wise leaders do, Nick had saved the best to last and took us to admire *Juncus compressus* (Round-fruited Rush) just outside the boundary, being across the road, of the old cricket field at Heyshott Green where it was known to Francis Rose. It takes the eagle eye of a prepared mind first to spot it and then to distinguish it from *Juncus gerardii* (Saltmarsh Rush) – although the habitat provides a clue. Thanks are due to Nick not only for guiding us through this special habitat but also for rescuing bands of Duke of Edinburgh expeditioners who had become disorientated on the heath.

July 13th Drovers Estate, Singleton

(Leader: Nick Sturt)

The second meeting of the year arranged by Dawn but a family event meant that it was down to the author to try to recreate what had been a most enjoyable recce a few days earlier with Dawn herself and Elisabeth. The company on the day proved just as congenial, with the welcome return of NT Ranger Fiona Scully to the SBRS scene (she later posed for a picture under a Foxglove easily twice her height), Sue Denness (doyenne of the grasses), Helen Dignum (sporting an enviably stylish hat), Alison Minns (ever a lovely companion in the field) and Mike Shaw (taking a breather from working on his *Hieracium* treatise). A meadow was the first subject of inquiry and yielded a good selection of species including *Orobancha minor* (Common Broomrape) and

Anacamptis pyramidalis – it seems to have been a wonderful year for Pyramidal Orchids. It was two stabled horses and some busy hens which next attracted attention as the party passed Broadham House, rummaged for ruderal weeds and moved on into woodland where *Galium odoratum* (Woodruff) was conspicuous and fine old beech trees lined the way. Into a damp forestry ride various representatives of *Juncus* (the Rush genus) appeared along with *Carex leporina* (Oval Sedge) and pristine Silver-washed Fritillaries. At a junction later on lunch was taken beside *Centaureum pulchellum* (Lesser Centaury) and we reflected on the six species of *Hypericum* collected: *androsaemum*, *hirsutum*, *humifusum*, *perforatum*, *pulchrum*, *tetrapterum* (Tutsan, and Hairy, Trailing, Perforate, Slender and Square-stalked St. John's-worts). Then it was out into the sun again and onto chalk grassland for a finale of choice plants: *Asperula cynanchica* (Squinancywort), *Scabiosa columbaria* (Small Scabious), *Silene vulgaris* (Bladder Campion), and much more *Anacamptis pyramidalis*. At the end of the day we found that our tour had recorded 225 species.

July 24th The Trundle

(Leader: Elisabeth Sturt)

This perfect summer day unfolded against the background of the coastal plain with Chichester cathedral spire and views across the Solent to the Isle of White. As usual, Richard was in historical mode and as the party of nine worked their way through a field towards the top of St Roche's Hill those Iron Age men who created The Trundle earthworks were conjured up with their antler picks... and indeed Elisabeth, our leader, with her sturdy staff and eccentric hat, could almost have passed as one of their number. The three essential woody plants of the chalk were ticked off early – *Sorbus aria* (Whitebeam), *Rhamnus cathartica* (Purging Buckthorn) and *Viburnum lantana* (Wayfaring-tree) – as the turf became more interesting with quite plentiful *Campanula glomerata* (Clustered Bellflower) a highlight. Working around the ramparts in a clockwise direction soon filled the card with many other of the desired calcicoles but it was Dawn who bagged the best plant in the form of *Coeloglossum viride* (Frog Orchid) – all of 5cm tall – and then Frances pointed out next to it *Carex caryophyllea* (Spring Sedge), even smaller.

As lunchtime approached the species which had not been seen became the subject of discussion – *Blackstonia perfoliata* (Yellow-wort), *Carlina vulgaris* (Carlina Thistle) and *Gentianella amarella* (Autumn Gentian). In fact the first two of these were found later in relative abundance on the banks which line the top of Chalkpit Lane but the third somehow

remained incognito; it was too early to locate the Eyebright *Euphrasia pseudokernerii* which is known there. Finally, attention was given to arable weeds in adjoining fields. These had supported some very special plants in the past and Mike's view was that several years of Flax cultivation was responsible for the disappearance of some. Nevertheless a good number of species was still present, including *Euphorbia exigua* (Least Spurge), *Kickxia elatine* (Sharp-leaved Fluellen) and *Anisantha diandra* (Great Brome). It was nearly the hottest day of the year and after this last prize thoughts turned towards shade and long, cool drinks. Most had time to repair to the Weald and Downland café to review the day and enjoy the sort of random conversation that springs up on such occasions. Those Iron Age men may well have laid down their antler picks and done something similar.

10th Medmerry RSPB Reserve

Gradually the Met. Office forecast warned of higher winds and rain until, with gusts predicted to be in excess of 50mph, it seemed the only sensible course was to cancel the meeting. I looked back to the sunshine of a few days earlier when Elisabeth and I had walked the route, starting over from the Easton Farm entry point to sample Ruth's Marsh. The lines of poplars here are succumbing to the ingress of the salt water and already there are establishing on the tidal flats *Suaeda maritima* (Annual Sea-blite), *Atriplex portulacoides* (Sea-purslane) and other familiar saltmarsh species. We did not notice, however, any *Frankenia laevis* (Sea-heath) which formed a broad swathe last September when we visited with the RSPB warden. Rejoining the track that runs down this western side of the reserve we enjoyed both freshwater and brackish conditions, supporting a good array of species but we were unable to spot the dramatic new dragonfly, the Green-eyed Hawker. The soil here is mainly clay and there was abundant *Juncus inflexus* (Hard Rush), sporadic *J. articulatus* (Jointed Rush) and quite a lot of *Lathyrus nissolia* (Grass Vetchling) in fruit. The horizons are wide and as we proceeded past Marsh Barn the sound and then the sight of the sea – pounding in as it was a decidedly windy day. It is a brisk half-hour walk from the start until the shingle bank is reached. There the usual specialists are to be found and behind it the flat gravelly strip revealed some browning *Trifolium scabrum* (Rough Clover) with many more treasures to be discovered among the long grass and in the rife. The warden is happy for us to arrange a date to put in our 2020 programme and so I hope that at about the same time next year we shall secure conditions which will permit the enjoyment of a very special site.

East Sussex VC14

(Reports by Helen Proctor unless noted otherwise)

April 12th & July 6th Moulsecomb Forest Garden, Brighton

(Leader: Rachel Bicker. Report: Tony Spiers/Helen Proctor)

Our first field meeting of the year was led by Rachel Bicker, an ecologist, volunteer from Brighton University, and trustee of the Moulsecomb Forest Garden in Brighton. Rachel gave us an introduction to the site, which is run by the Moulsecomb Forest Garden Wildlife Project, a registered charity which provides educational qualifications and volunteer experience for those with learning difficulties. Rachel had organised a range of community wildlife activities at the site throughout the summer, to compile a database of species found here and also to help with writing a new management plan. The two SBRS meetings formed an important part of this biodiversity assessment.

The site is on quite a steep chalk slope and mostly comprising organic allotments, but with some small ponds, an educational area, an outdoor clay oven, beehives, a bee garden, a straw bale eco-cabin and a compost loo.

We explored the allotments where numerous weedy species are respected as wild flowers. A plant of *Valeriana officinalis* (Common Valerian) occurred at the top of the site as well as *Origanum vulgare* (Marjoram). After an optional vegetarian lunch, we walked uphill through secondary woodland noting *Sanicula europaea* (Sanicle) by the path. Further on, a small area of chalk grassland, also managed by the Moulsecomb Forest Garden, displayed scattered clumps of *Primula veris* (Cowslip).

On 6th July, six members attended and were again welcomed by Rachel Bicker. Most of the day was spent looking at the allotment gardens which, despite having been weeded regularly, still had common weeds of cultivation. Allotment weeds included *Valerianella carinata* (Keeled-fruited Cornsalad) and more interesting species such as *Kickxia elatine* (Sharp-leaved Fluellen), and *Fumaria densiflora* (Dense-flowered Fumitory). Some members thought they had made a mistake after keying out *Scrophularia auriculata* (Water Figwort) until it was confirmed and pointed out to them that, despite its name, this species is quite at home on dry chalk soils. The greenhouses hosted a different assemblage of garden escapes while the bee garden had species such as *Scabiosa colombaria* (Small Scabious) and *Centaurea scabiosa* (Greater Knapweed). On the chalk grassland site, we found *Linum catharticum*

(Fairy Flax), *Anacamptis pyramidalis* (Pyramidal Orchid), *Cotoneaster lacteus* (Late Cotoneaster), and the hybrid between *Galium album* (Hedge Bedstraw), and *G. verum* (Ladies' Bedstraw). There was also a small patch of *Mentha x smithiana* (Tall Mint), probably an allotment escape.

Although the day didn't result in any unusual finds it provided an opportunity for newer members to practise their identification skills and use of keys with the recently published flower guides by David Streeter and Francis Rose. The Moulsecomb Forest Garden Wildlife Project was very pleased with the outcome as, over the two meetings, SBRS members recorded a total of 230 higher plants and 33 bryophytes.

April 30th Standen Estate

(Leaders: Trudie Jacob/Elaine Boot)

The objective of the meeting was to help Standen's Ecology Group with plant recording, mainly in the two areas of the Estate's woodland. Trudie and Elaine welcomed nine members including our honourable Chairman and his wife. Four members of Standen's Ecology Group accompanied us.

Hollybush Wood is a south-facing ancient semi-natural wood which leads down almost to the shore of Weirwood Reservoir. We walked mainly on board walks, admiring the *Orchis mascula* (Early-purple Orchid) which were scattered through the top of the wood. Several other ancient woodland indicator plants were noted including *Crataegus laevigata* (Midland Hawthorn), *Tilia cordata* (Small-leaved Lime), *Moehringia trinervia* (Three-veined Sandwort), *Melica uniflora* (Wood Melick) and *Oxalis acetosella* (Wood Sorrel). The wood was wetter lower down and a stream supported *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium* (Opposite-leaved Golden Saxifrage). Six sedges including *Carex strigosa* (Thin-spiked Wood-sedge) and *C. laevigata* (Smooth-stalked Sedge) were recorded. We gathered for lunch in the sunshine on the green. Two distinguished ladies were able to sit in deck chairs, overseen by Hobby Horses!

The afternoon's destination was Rockingsgill Wood further north on the estate. This is also ancient semi-natural woodland, with *Lysimachia nemorum* (Wood Pimpernel) and other indicator species. There are two small ponds. Although these were mainly inaccessible, *Alisma plantago-aquatica* (Common Water-plantain) and *Callitriche obtusangula* (Blunt-fruited Water-starwort) were added to the records. *Impatiens parviflora* (Small Balsam) and *Neottia ovata* (Twayblade) were seen.

11th May Montague Farm, Pevensey Levels

(Leaders: Jacqueline Rose/Judy Clark/Ellen Campbell)

We had a wonderful day at Montague Farm. Despite a rather dodgy forecast, about fifteen members came. Montague is an all-grass livestock farm, with three-quarters of the land falling within the Pevensey Levels SSSI. We were accompanied by Martin Hole, the farmer. He and his wife Gundrada are passionate about wildlife. He has installed sluices to control the water levels, producing areas of wetland that attract birds and where really nice species of plants move in. He gave us a brief introduction before we squeezed ourselves into a couple of all-terrain vehicles to be transported to the best bits, botanically speaking.

Our first stop was a marshy field where for some the star species were undoubtedly two sedges that are scarce in East Sussex – a large stand of *Carex acuta* (Slender Tufted-sedge) and frequent *C. disticha* (Brown Sedge). For others it was the white patches of water-crowfoot's delicate flowers - we saw both *Ranunculus baudotii* (Brackish Water-crowfoot) and *R. trichophyllus* (Thread-leaved Water-crowfoot). Then it was back to the vehicles to visit the field with the *Anacamptis morio* (Green-winged Orchid) for which the farm is famous. Where you find these orchids you often find *Ophioglossum vulgatum* (Adder's Tongue) growing alongside, which indeed it was. There was also a scattering of *Silaum silaus* (Pepper-saxifrage), but it was too early for flowers.

After lunch the promised rain arrived. We tumbled out of the vehicles to look at ditch vegetation, wet all round! With many typical species not yet in flower this proved a good place to test vegetative ID skills. We didn't have to test them on *Hottonia palustris* (Water-violet), still in flower *en masse* in several places. A further excitement there was spotting *Oenanthe lachenalii* (Parsley Water-dropwort), and finally Evan Jones showed us the huge egg case of the Great Silver Diving Beetle that floats near the surface of the water and has a snorkel-like device for air!

With many thanks to Ady and Ellen, who did an amazing recording job in the difficult circumstances of a spread-out group shouting species names from all directions on a windy and sometimes wet day! We recorded 30 species in TQ60H, 27 in TQ60M and 63 in TQ60L.

June 8th Normans Bay

(Leaders: Jacqueline Rose/Judy Clark/Ellen Campbell)

The sun shone so it was never really cold despite the increasing wind. Eight members came despite the weather warning and possibility of cancellation.

Despite having to examine often tiny plants in most difficult conditions, everyone remained cheerful throughout! Evan Jones gave us a brief history of the area. First we looked at some remnant saltmarsh, where large tussocks of grass made walking difficult. *Limonium vulgare* (Common Sea-lavender) was showing signs of flowering. *Plantago maritima* (Sea Plantain) and *Triglochin maritimum* (Sea Arrowgrass) were growing helpfully side-by-side for comparison. *Puccinellia distans* (Reflexed Saltmarsh-grass) was on two 'islands' in the brackish ditch alongside, which was edged by *Aster tripolium* (Sea Aster) and *Atriplex portulacoides* (Sea-purslane).

Then we moved over the road to the large shingly and grassy area. We had made a recce a few days before and were dismayed that many species looked very browned off, but it's amazing what a bit of rain will do. Despite our misgivings *Glaux maritima* (Sea-milkwort) did perform, though it wasn't flowering as splendidly as it did in 2018. There were lots of clovers for us to hone our ID skills on, including the uncommon *Trifolium striatum* (Knotted Clover) and the even more uncommon *T. squamosum* (Sea Clover). The distinctive neophyte *Cynosurus echinatus* (Rough Dog's-tail) was abundant though many of the plants were stunted. *Galeopsis angustifolia* (Red Hemp-nettle) has long been known from the eastern end of Norman's Bay but it was good to find lots of seedlings on an area of bare shingle where we hadn't seen them before. *Carex distans* (Distant Sedge) was growing beside a patch of saltmarsh, where we saw the remains of *Salicornia* (Glasswort), and *Spergularia media* (Greater Sea-spurrey) in flower.

Shortly after 2pm the wind became so strong, considerably stronger than forecast, that it interfered with what we were doing, so we dispersed. Everyone had seemed to enjoy it, and we hope they will be persuaded to return to this very rich site.

We recorded 115 species in this relatively small area. Thanks to Judy, who must be congratulated for keeping a detailed list, and keeping hold of it, in strong winds that whipped people's voices away!

June 16th Bates Green Farm

(Leader: Helen Proctor)

Six members were met by the farmer, John McCutchan, who gave us a brief introduction to Beatons Wood. We sheltered in the barn during the last heavy rain shower of the day. This ancient semi-natural woodland has been opened to the public to view the bluebells for 47 years and raised over £1 million for charities.

The objective of the meeting was to record vascular plant species in the wood, but also to record special areas to increase the interest for the visiting public. Tony Whitbread had carried out an assessment of the National Vegetation Classification in the 1980s. No particularly rare plants were seen. However, several ancient woodland indicator species were noted, although some were sparse. We observed the variations in the composition of the flora in different parts of the wood. Six *Veronica* species were seen. *Oxalis acetosella* (Wood-sorrel), an Atlantic species, grew in fairly large numbers in the west side of the wood, as did *Moehringia trinervia* (Three-veined Sandwort).

A good mix of beginners and more experienced botanists led to a sharing of knowledge. We admired the hay meadows in the sunshine on the way back to the farm. We enjoyed tea and chocolate biscuits in the lovely garden of John and Carolyn and thanked them for making us so welcome.

June 29th West Firle Beacon

(Leader & report: Peter Smith)

Every year that I agree to lead a field meeting it turns out to be the hottest day of the year, and this year did not disappoint. Eight brave souls arrived with hats and sun cream for an exploration of the chalk downland flora around White Lion Pond and Ellman's Combe. Scrub clearance in recent years has been beneficial. Overall we recorded 142 species, of which four were new tetrad records. We noted particularly good populations of *Calamintha acinos* (Basil Thyme), *Phyteuma orbiculare* (Round-headed Rampion), *Lithospermum officinale* (Common Gromwell) and *Gymnadenia conopsea* (Fragrant-orchid). Those who lasted the full day were rewarded with the anomalous presence of *Erica cinerea* (Bell Heather) on this downland site.

July 7th Plaw Hatch Farm, Forest Row

(Leader & report: Brad Scott)

One of two biodynamic community farms in the parish of Forest Row, Plaw Hatch is a mixed farm on the Ashdown Sandstone with some woodland and a lake. Nine of us gathered together in the car park, of which two lived on the farm, and one was a visiting botanist from Herefordshire. The main focus of our recording was the small arable area near the polytunnels, which contained abundant *Spergula arvensis* (Corn Spurrey) and *Lamium hybridum* (Cut-leaved Dead-nettle). It also proved to be a useful lesson in determining Amaranthaceae. The stream running through the farm wasn't particularly accessible, but where it crossed one of the tracks there was a small clump of *Glyceria declinata* (Small

Sweet-Grass) and some *Veronica beccabunga* (Brooklime). A few hybrids caught our attention too; a *Hypericum* revision session introduced us to *Hypericum x desetangsii* (*H. perforatum* x *maculatum*), and *Mentha x villosa* (Apple-mint) lined one of the paths. In total, 188 taxa were recorded, of which 5 were missing SPA species and 32 (17%) new tetrad records. The site will definitely benefit from repeat visits over the coming years.

August 15th Bewl Water

(Joint meeting with Kent Botanical Recording Group and SBRS. Leaders: Geoffrey Kitchener/Helen Proctor. Report: Helen Proctor)

We met in sunshine on the causeway at Rosemary Lane, where we greeted Kent members. Botanising started on the causeway with *Silene coronaria* (Rose Campion) and *Rorippa palustris* (Marsh Yellow-cress) being noted on the verge and in the gutter. We then headed south-west along the shore of the southern arm of the reservoir. This section is within the vice-county of West Kent VC16. Three zones on the shore were clearly visible. Upwards from the water's edge, the middle zone was carpeted with *Crassula helmsii* (New Zealand Pigmyweed). The upper zone was floriferous with quantities of *Mentha x verticillata* (Whorled Mint) and a mixture of *Persicaria amphibia* (Amphibious Bistort), *Bidens tripartita* (Trifid Bur-marigold), *Lythrum salicaria* (Purple Loosestrife) and *Lycopus europaeus* (Gypsywort). Geoffrey gave us the benefit of his expertise on hybrid docks, soon showing us *Rumex x pratensis*. By this time, latecomers swelled the number of attendees to eighteen, including five Sussex members, a few hybrid members and a good turnout of Kentish members.

A closer inspection of the *Crassula* carpet revealed several other taxa growing amongst this invasive alien. These included *Lythrum portula* (Water-purslane), and just one stem of *Rumex maritimus* (Golden Dock). We continued through relict ancient woodland to a stream that marked our entry to East Sussex and VC14. Further on, we basked in the sunshine on a *Crassula* covered bank of the reservoir to eat lunch. Many similar taxa to those on the Kent side were recorded, including *Lythrum portula* in quantity, *Gnaphalium uliginosum* (Marsh Cudweed) and *Lycopus europaeus*. However, after some searching, we found **eight** stems of Golden Dock on our side! A large shrub by the water's edge was later named by Clive Stace and David Streeter as *Salix x holosericea*, the hybrid between *S. viminalis* and *S. cinerea*. The only floating aquatic seen was *Lemna minor* (Common Duckweed) although *Crassula helmsii* was also submerged.

Field Meetings 2020

Saturday 21 March Leader: Owen Johnson	Tilgate Forest. Conifer identification with the author of <i>The Sussex Tree Book</i> . Vehicle access from Titmus Drive, off Ashdown Drive, off Southgate Avenue which comes off the A23. Meet at TQ274345 in front of the Smith & Western pub (just above the car parks in the middle of the park).
Saturday 2 May Leader: Dawn Nelson	Woodland N of Singleton. Meet in layby N of Singleton on the W side of A286 (from the S, entry is at SU876139; from the N it is at SU875140). We shall drive on in fewer cars N to the road which serves the oil well.
Saturday 9 May Leaders: Jacqueline Rose, Judy Clark, Ellen Campbell	Flatropers Wood. We hope to find <i>Viola palustris</i> , various Woodrushes, and other springtime species of damp acid woodland. Take the A268. Just E of Four Oaks, on sharp bend, turn into Bixley Lane; there are signposts for both directions. Meet at the small car park at TQ860226. Please car share if possible as parking is very limited. NB that parts of Bixley Lane may have large potholes.
Wednesday 3 June Leader: Frances Abraham	Landfall Farm, Emms Lane, Barns Green. Recording a series of meadows near Horsham. Turn W off Emms Lane at TQ139260. After about 100m, park near the farmhouse on the corner at TQ138261, RH13 0QG.
Wednesday 10 June Leader: Helen Proctor	Abbots Wood. Checking previous locations of <i>Phyteuma spicatum</i> and searching for new sites. <i>Ceratocephalus claviculatus</i> has also been seen here. Habitats include woodland, a stream, and grassy glades created for butterflies. We may also explore part of the acid grass heath of Milton Hyde. Park at Primrose Farm, TQ558079, BN26 6SJ, by permission of the landowner. Share cars as space is limited.
Saturday 20 June Leader: Peter Smith	Cradle Hill. Scrub clearance by NT has allowed a good chalk grassland flora to develop & a former arable field has reverted to chalk grassland. The route involves steep hillsides. Meet at High and Over car park TQ509011.
Sunday 21 June Leader: Nick Sturt	Edburton Downs. Chalk grassland on the escarpment of the South Downs. Roadside parking just E of Truleigh Manor Farm at TQ225115.
Saturday 11 July Leader: Jane Birch	Pevensey Levels. Exploring the ditch flora, including <i>Potamogeton</i> and perhaps <i>Wolffia arrhiza</i> . Meet at Chilley Farm Car Park, SE of Rickney TQ638061, BN26 6SJ. We may move on to other locations.
Saturday 18 July Leader: Sue Denness	Hurston Warren, Golf Club Lane, Pulborough. Drive through the golf club car park, parking on the grass verge beyond, on the right of the lane at TQ070167, RH20 2EN. We shall record heath, acid grassland and bog on private land, not the Golf Course,
Thursday 30 July Leaders: Helen Proctor/ Geoffrey Kitchener	Sandhurst Cross. Joint with Kent Botanical Recording Group, exploring the valley of the Kent Ditch (the Kent/Sussex boundary). Varied habitats, probably including a steepish hill, covering c.3½ miles. Meet at 10.30am at St Nicholas Church car park TQ 7905 2733, Church Road, Sandhurst TN18 5NS. There are two car parks, 100m apart. Use the one nearest the church if not already occupied.
Sunday 2 August Leader: Brad Scott	Ashdown Forest. Exploring bogs & heaths around the Isle of Thorns. <i>Rhynchospora alba</i> , <i>Drosera rotundifolia</i> and <i>Eriophorum angustifolium</i> . Other species found in the last 20 years include <i>Drosera intermedia</i> and <i>Eleocharis multicaulis</i> . Park at northern end of Long car park TQ426310.
Saturday 8 August Leader: Elisabeth Sturt	Wiggonholt Common. Park at the RSPB Pulborough Brooks reserve: from entrance at TQ063165 on the A283, go along the drive, take the first left and continue to the furthest end of the additional parking. Heathland plants.
Saturday 15 August Leaders: Jacqueline Rose, Judy Clark, Ellen Campbell	Battle Great Wood. Large acid woodland with an opportunity to practise your conifer identification skills! Meet in the main car park at TQ765164 (on the SE side of Marley Lane, which can be accessed from the A2100, Battle Road, or the A21). If you plan to come by train, tell the leaders and we'll try to ferry you from Battle station, as walking along Marley Lane is not very pleasant. Contact Jacqueline 07732 116882, Judy 07724 045701 or Ellen 07709 048278.

Wednesday 26 August Leader: Nick Sturt	Medmerry. Meet in the RSPB Earnley car park, SZ81639667, signposted from Earnley Church, just past the remains of the Adult Education Centre. A variety of coastal habitats including newly-establishing saltmarsh on the W side of the Reserve. There will be some brisk walking.
Saturday 14 November Leader: Owen Johnson	St. Helen's Wood, Hastings: winter tree identification. Ancient semi-natural woodland, mostly Beech/Sessile Oak/Holly on Tunbridge Wells Sand, with areas of Ash/Hornbeam coppice. In the 19th century it became part of the parkland surrounding Ore Place, and since the 1960s a wide variety of ornamental trees has been added. Meet at the main gate into St. Helen's Wood where Langham Road, St. Helen's Park Road and St. Helen's Wood road meet, TQ 817117. Approx. post code is TN34 2JN. Roadside parking.

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.

Those attending SBRS field meetings do so at their own risk