

# Cambridgeshire Flora Group

## Newsletter 2024

2<sup>nd</sup> Edition

### News

Cambridge was one of the two locations in England that staged the launch of the BSBI Plant Atlas 2020. The British Antarctic Survey (BAS) hosted the event, and there was a good attendance, both in person and on line. Astrid Biddle produced a magnificent pair of iced cakes showing the covers of the two volumes, and one was duly cut by Pete Stroh (BSBI Science Officer and Atlas author) and Daniel Zeichner (the local MP who just happened to be the shadow Environment Secretary). Those assembled didn't manage to consume the other volume and it was duly appreciated the following Monday by the BAS students!



Pete Stroh and Daniel Zeichner cutting the Plant Atlas 2020 cake [Peter Leonard].

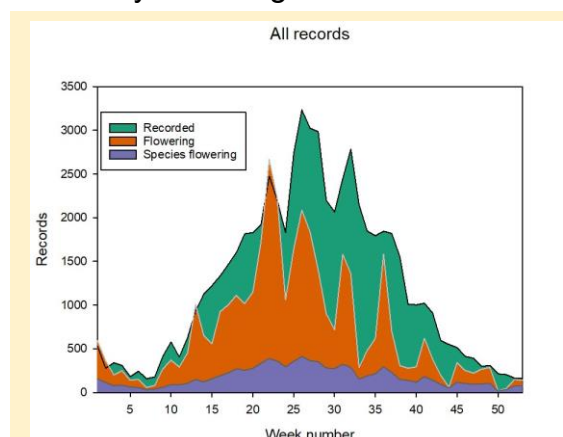
"Star finds", those species new to the county, those re-found after a long absence, or rare plants found in a new location continue to be made. Some are the results of deliberate searches whilst others are accidental finds by groups or individuals. Alan Leslie describes some of these exciting finds in his section.

The Cambridgeshire County Wildlife Sites Panel (covering most of v.cc.29 and 31 and some bits of v.cc. 19, 26, 28, 32 and 53) met twice during the year and considered several new sites in v.c.29. A new criterion for designating sites as Important Arable Plant Areas on the basis of their arable plant flora was agreed. Somewhat coincidentally the Wildlife Trust has just purchased a section of the Fleam Dyke as a new nature reserve and the new site includes an arable margin, parts of which are of county significance for its arable flora. The most significant area will hopefully be designated in due course, with the rest being allowed to become chalk grassland.

On the BSBI front I continue as the Hon. Field Meetings Secretary and Chair of the Committee for England (CfE) and do various other odds and ends as well. Both roles keep me pretty busy, particularly when you add in organising the BSBI Annual Summer Meetings (ASM), Recorders' Meetings and the England launch of the new Atlas. 2024 has a Recorders' Meeting aimed at botanists wanting to start recording more formally, which is at Preston Montford near Shrewsbury and the ASM is in Guernsey. You don't have to be a member of the BSBI to participate in these, although being one does make them cheaper.

# Recording News

Although I seem to say this every year, the BSBI's local logging software, "MapMate" has still not been updated to use Stace 4 names, although it may happen "soon". Therefore when submitting species lists, please continue to use the Stace 3 names. I have received at least one list that used a mix of Stace 2, 3 and 4 names, which then required some editing! The BSBI has now updated all names in the main database to Stace 4 and in a few cases to post Stace 4 names. The BSBI is working on producing a new recording app, and hopes to have this operational by the spring. Work is underway in ironing out the few remaining bugs and "features".



Flowering and recording by week. The number of plant records (green) is divided by ten to allow easier comparison with the number of plants (orange) and species (purple) in flower. Taken from the NiC paper.

Cambridgeshire recorders continue to make a huge number of records and the total for 2023 is nearly 28,000. It is these records that really help to know which species are doing well, which are becoming problems and which are in decline. The BSBI is planning a new science strategy and this may result in some new projects to study some of the changes. It could, for example, include an expansion of the New Year Plant Hunt to monthly hunts, though I record if a species is in flower or not whenever I make a record. This probably gives a more continuous distribution and I discussed the phenology of Cambridgeshire species in a recent paper in *Nature in Cambridgeshire (NiC)*. This is

currently only available to subscribers, but a conclusion is that the end of June gives you the best chance of seeing the most species in flower.

The annual update of the Register of Plants of Conservation Concern (RPCC) took place at the end of 2023 to cover the period 2004-2023 and this is now available to use when searching on the DDb. An RPCC is more comprehensive in terms of species than a standard Rare Plant Register (RPR) as it includes plants that are not necessarily rare in the county, but are threatened. The Cambridgeshire one also has an appendix giving a list of plants that are showing significant increases and hence may be a concern for invasive reasons. The update revealed that a few species showed a continued decline at monad level, despite increased recording at this resolution. A few species were deleted from the RPCC because additional sites had been found: (*Dipsacus pilosus* (**Small Teasel**), *Epilobium roseum* (**Pale Willowherb**), *Quercus petraea* (**Sessile Oak**), *Rosa micrantha* (**Small-flowered Sweet-briar**), *Rosa stylosa* (**Short-styled Field-rose**)); a few were added either because of finds new to the county (though not necessarily native) or because a significant decline has occurred: (*Dasiphora* [*Potentilla*] *fruticosa* (**Shrubby Cinquefoil**), *Hippuris vulgaris* (**Mare's-tail**)). Several were moved to



*Gymnadenia conopsea* (**Chalk Fragrant-orchid**) on the Devil's Ditch [David Dives].

the regionally extinct list (*Filago pyramidata* (**Broad-leaved Cudweed**), *Helosciadium* [*Apium*] *inundatum* (**Lesser Marshwort**), *Hieracium grandidentans* (**Grand-toothed Hawkweed**), *Scleranthus annuus* (**Annual Knawel**) and *Silene gallica* (**Small-flowered Catchfly**)) as they have not been seen since 2004.

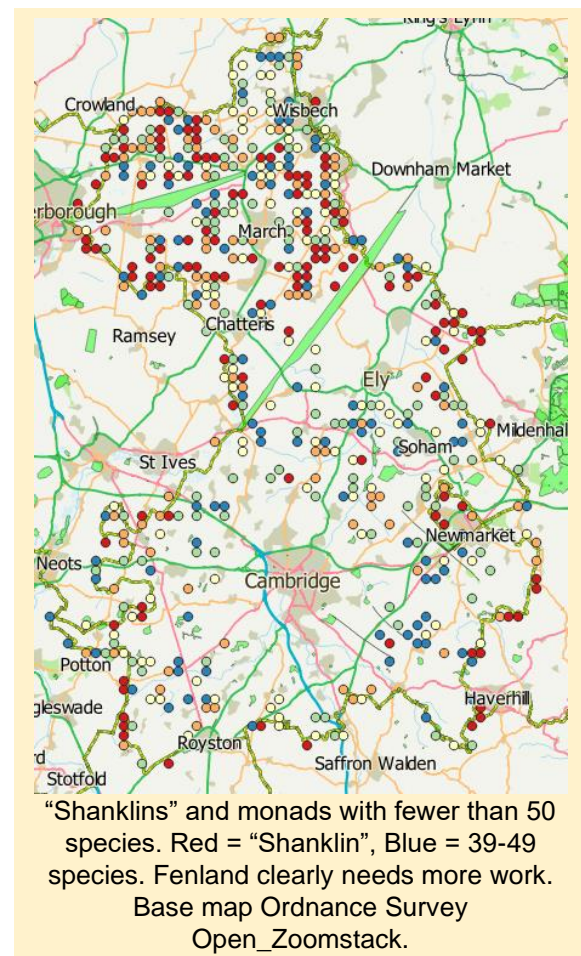
The list of those species not seen recently, which is subdivided into decades has also been updated. All of these are on the web page. The decadal listing might help people to target specific species and perhaps re-discover them. There are 47 species not seen since the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and these are perhaps the most likely to be re-found. A notable addition to those not reported for a decade is *Neottia nidus-avis* (**Bird's-nest Orchid**) last seen in Hayley Wood in 2014. The full details of the insertions and deletions are given in the Register. A further update is needed to take into account changes to the list of National Rare and Nationally Scarce species, though this will be delayed until June to avoid too many editions being produced. There is still a chance that some species thought to be extinct will be re-found in the county, either as casuals, or as returning natives.

There have been several re-finds of species that had not been seen for some years or in some locations for over a century and a few of these are described by Alan in his notes later in the Newsletter. Of the 742 species on the RPCC at the beginning of 2024, 327 (44%) were seen in 2023, 478 (64%) have been seen since 2019, 567 (76%) since 2013 and 595 (80%) since 2003. 146 (20%) are regionally extinct.

We have DDb records for 2575 different species and hybrids, with 2250 seen from 2003 onwards. 1150 species and hybrids were recorded during 2023. Unusually, April was the most popular month to record (4329 records) with February being the least (442). Overall in the v.c. MapMate database the most frequent species remain as *Urtica dioica* (**Nettle**) (in 664 of the 665 tetrads in the v.c. but missing from TL25N), followed by *Galium aparine* (**Cleavers**) (663, missing in TL25C and TL26Y) and *Dactylis glomerata* (**Cock's-foot**) (659, missing in TF41J, TL25Y, TL28U, TL64K, TL64M, TL68L).

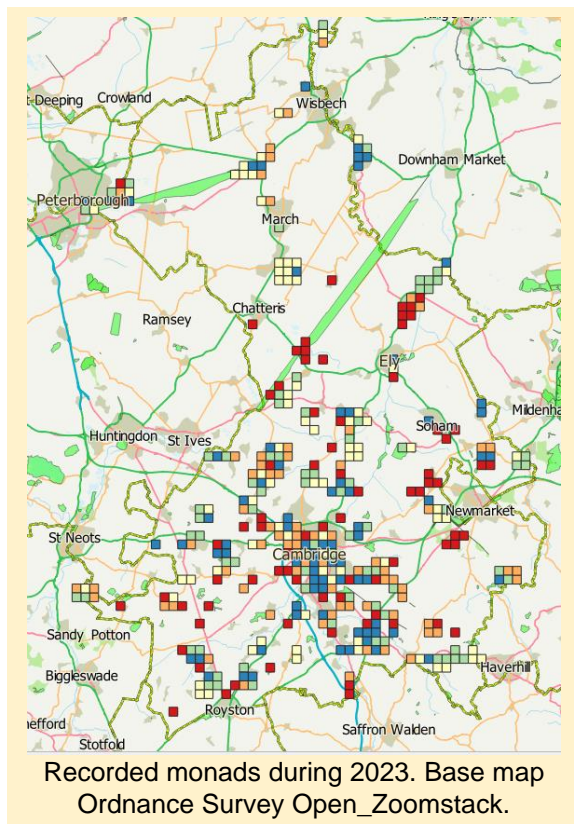
I have visited quite a few "Shanklins" during the year. Despite being slightly pessimistic as to whether visiting them would be productive, I was mistaken. In several instances I have found previously unknown sites for species on the RPCC either in or on the way to a "Shanklin". The total number of entire "Shanklins" is now 67 or 121 when partial monads on the county boundary are included. There are 368 entire monads with fewer than 50 species and 539 when boundary squares are included.

TL45 retained its top spot for having the most species recorded in a hectad in Britain & Ireland during 2023 with 896, with next best NT27 (Edinburgh) having 745. TL46 was way down in 20<sup>th</sup> place with 526. Taking all records into consideration TL45





now has records of 2085 species in the BSBI DDb. With the CNHS field studies in TL45J in 2024 the total may go up, though overall the hectad is likely to drop down the list as there are only a few sites in it left that need intensive recording.



If you have lists of records, please submit them promptly, in properly formatted spreadsheets if possible. This makes it much easier for me to verify them and import them into the local and thence national database. Casual records of interesting species can be submitted in any format and images are also welcome, particularly where they can help illustrate the newsletter. There are [hints and tips on format and recording](#) on the county web page. There is also a very [helpful xls utility](#) to input records which will create nicely formatted records. Phone apps are being developed by the BSBI and others for direct recording, and iRecord is operational, though does introduce erroneous records. Records from iRecord will only be accepted if they clearly meet the standard for what is a good record, in particular that the recorder gives a name rather than a pseudonym. At the moment iRecord information is not being transferred to the BSBI and thus records

from it lag several years behind. The BSBI app should go live in 2024.

The county register of botanical sites continues to be a work in progress, although some more sites that had few records have been visited. The 2023 late December bryophyte excursion was to churchyards with few or no bryophyte records and Chris Preston asked whether there were any without vascular plant records. After a bit of puzzling as to why some that I knew had records were not being shown (in one case because it was a “chuchyard”), I do have some answers for visits post 2000. Bar Hill has none, but it hasn’t much, if anything, of a churchyard; the Catholic church in Cambridge had one from 1987, though it only has a small churchyard; St Martin’s and St Paul’s in Cambridge had none, as do some of the other minor churches in the city; what is possibly a chapel of ease at Glebe House near Littleport has none; Lode has a handful of records from 1992 and Reach has none. Several churchyards have fewer than 20 records, these include: Benwick, Chettisham, Coldham, Landbeach, Landwade and Stuntney. The most species rich churchyard, which benefits from regular visits by the VCR for the purpose of bell-ringing, is St Andrew’s, Chesterton CiWS with 310, whilst the most species rich cemeteries are those on Newmarket Road out of Cambridge, which has 375 and Mill Road Cemetery CWS in Cambridge which has 357. As an addendum to this paragraph



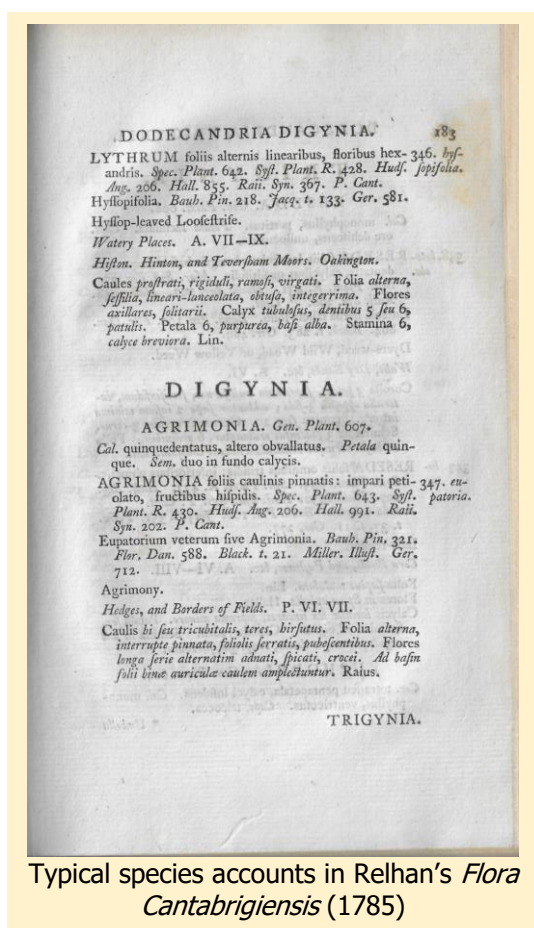
*Plantago media* (**Hoary Plantain**) rosettes in Chesterton churchyard [Jonathan Shanklin]

I visited the Catholic's churchyard in early January 2024. It was much better than I expected, with 50 species even in January and is the only churchyard in the city with *Ophrys apifera* (**Bee Orchid**). There are two others with this plant in the NatHistCam area, which are Cherry Hinton and Teversham.

If you are not already a member of the BSBI do consider joining. The Society journal *BSBI News* comes out three times a year and is full of interesting material as is their open access scientific journal *British & Irish Botany* (B&IB). Some abstracts from the latter follow. By joining BSBI you can get discounted rates on many publications, including their Handbook series.

## Abstracts of Recent Papers

The following papers from *British & Irish Botany* (B&IB) are either about or mention Cambridgeshire. The links should take you to the paper.



Typical species accounts in Relhan's *Flora Cantabrigiensis* (1785)

[British & Irish Botany 5\(2\): 137-166](#), 2023

June 12

**Constrained by poverty: Richard Relhan's botanical fieldwork in Cambridgeshire, 1781–1820**

[Christopher D. Preston](#)

Cambridge, U.K.

**Abstract:** Most records in the successive editions of the Rev. Richard Relhan's *Flora Cantabrigiensis* (1785, 1802, 1820) and its supplements (1786, 1788, 1793a) are not attributed to recorders, and consequently the contribution of Relhan himself to these works has never been clear. In this paper I use Relhan's statements in his surviving correspondence to identify the records that can plausibly be attributed to him. His hitherto neglected records of algae, fungi and lichens add significantly to the information provided by those of vascular plants and bryophytes. Taken together, they indicate that Relhan's fieldwork was largely restricted to areas he could visit on foot from his home town, Cambridge, with rather few excursions to more distant parts of the county. His repeated

references to his poverty show that this was the main constraint on his fieldwork. He visited some favourite sites near Cambridge repeatedly, especially Gogmagog Hills and Madingley. Although his published works make no reference to environmental change in the county, he did react to the enclosure and drainage of the species-rich wetland Hinton Moor by replacing the records in the final edition of his *Flora* by substitutes from two similar sites, Shelford Moor and Sawston Moor.



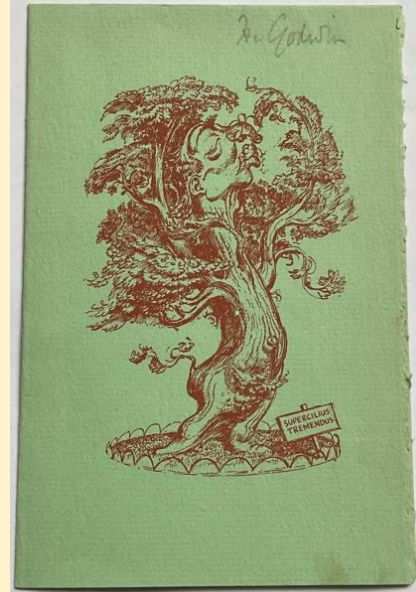
## Teasing Tansley? A ‘tremendus’ caricature from the launch party for the Flora of the British Isles

[David M Wilkinson](#)<sup>1</sup>, Laura Jean Cameron<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Lincoln, UK; <sup>2</sup>Geography and Planning, Queen’s University, Canada

### Abstract

On the 24th March 1952 a celebratory luncheon was held to mark the publication of Clapham, Tutin and Warburg’s Flora of the British Isles. The cover of the menu shows a caricature of what appears to be the plant ecologist Arthur Tansley drawn as a tree, and labelled ‘supercilius tremendus’. Using this, and other lines of evidence (both written and interviews), we discuss how his colleagues viewed Tansley, and the role of humour in helping to cement groups of scientists.



Front cover of the menu for the lunch to mark the publication of CTW. Note Harry Godwin’s name at the top. Size, 9.5x14.5 cm.

## The shifting ecology and distribution of one of Britain’s rarest plants:

### *Orobanche picridis* (Orobanchaceae)

F.J. Rumsey<sup>1</sup>, [C.J. Thorogood](#)<sup>2,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Natural History Museum, London; <sup>2</sup>University of Oxford Botanic Garden; <sup>3</sup>Department of Biology, University of Oxford.



Babington’s 1853 specimen from Caldecote, south of Hardwick Wood, CGE.

### Abstract

*Orobanche picridis* F.W. Schultz (Picris Broomrape [**Oxtongue Broomrape**]) is perhaps the rarest and certainly the most misidentified British broomrape. This rare plant was perceived to have a distinct ecology in Britain where, until recently, extant populations were virtually restricted to high, chalk sea cliffs. Though widely recorded across Southern England, most records have proven to be erroneous due to confusion with the similar, often co-occurring, *O. minor* (**Common Broomrape**). The preference of *O. picridis* for steep and inaccessible chalky ledges affords it some protection from collection, however encroachment of scrub and coastal erosion pose a conservation risk. We present data from a 20-year survey of populations in Kent revealing a fifteenfold fluctuation in annual abundance. We also report

the astonishing recent discovery of a thriving meta-population of *O. picridis* in brownfield sites in South Wales. Finally, in light of these dynamics, we provide practical recommendations for conservation of one of Britain’s most elusive and unpredictable species.

[*Orobanche picridis* was recorded from Haslingfield Pit in 1935. *O. elatior* (**Knapweed Broomrape**) has occasionally been recorded at the Pit since 2003 and from memory some of these were rather “skinny” specimens. Recent conservation work to enlarge (or restore) the area of grassland will have created some disturbed ground, so maybe the *O. picridis* might re-appear.]

## Nature in Cambridgeshire

The 2023 edition of NiC (No 65) had a wealth of botanical papers, including Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire Elms (Brian Eversham), Dessert apples and dieback at 800 Wood (Oliver Glenister), Establishing a phenology research project at Cambridge University Botanic Garden – Presentation of early findings (Rose Fricker *et al.*), The effects of the weather in 2022 on the Cambridge street flora (Chris Preston), Madeleine’s Patch – notes and lessons in creating a flower-rich meadow in Fenland (Jon Graham and Pete Stroh), The flowering of Cambridgeshire plants (Jonathan Shanklin), *Seseli libanotis* and *Tranzschelia anemones*: two of Richard Relhan’s important finds in Cambridgeshire (Chris Preston), The Backs: A report on the CNHS Field Studies of 2019 (Jonathan Shanklin), U3A visit to Magog Down, May 23 (Jonathan Shanklin) and Vascular Plant Records 2022 (Alan Leslie) as well as several book reviews. Subscription details are on the [NiC web page](#). All [back issues](#) over two years old are now freely available and often offer fascinating views of how some of our sites appeared in the past.



*Seseli libanotis*. This copy of Sowerby’s engraving, has (unusually) been coloured. [See the paper in NiC].

## Vascular Plant Records 2023 – Alan Leslie

There is almost an embarrassment of choice from which to select records reflecting the success of Cambridgeshire botanists in 2023. There is as ever a large cohort of new or unusual aliens, enhanced this time as a result of much of the city of Cambridge not suffering the customary weed-spraying of its streets; many of these records are of plants escaping from cultivation. There have also been several new sites revealed where development work has resulted in apparently persistent new colonies in mown turf of once locally uncommon natives of sandy ground. However, star billing should probably be shared by a number of new records for rare native plants in more natural habitats and the reappearance of others in sites from which they have not been recorded for many years.

Until very recently the report of *Himantoglossum hircinum* (**Lizard Orchid**) in three further sites - on the Roman Road near Worsted Lodge, on Soham Wet Horse Fen and in Milton Country Park - would have been hard to beat, but the recent increase in new records for this orchid mean that these were not unexpected. However, the report of a single flowering plant of *Aceras anthropophorum* (**Man Orchid**) in grazed pasture on Fulbourn Fen took everyone by surprise. This has always been a rare orchid in the county and never seen before at this site; our only other extant colony is in Haslingfield chalk pit. Many recorders tend to fight shy of most grasses and sedges,

but it is still surprising that a Cambridgeshire Flora Group excursion found a huge colony of *Carex strigosa* (**Thin-spiked Wood-sedge**) in Ten Wood, on the Stetchworth Estate, a site the Group has visited on a number of previous occasions. It was formerly recorded in Hall Wood less than two miles to the north, but that wood was felled in the nineteenth century, and our only other confirmed recent record is from woodland on Chippenham Fen. The same excursion at Ten Wood also produced a small quantity of *Carex pallescens* (**Pale Sedge**), another new sedge for the wood, but one known in a number of other south-eastern boulder clay woods.



*Carex pallescens* (**Pale Sedge**) in Ten Wood  
[Peter Leonard]

Significant refinds have included a single plant of *Bunium bulbocastanum* (**Great Pignut**) on a trackside on the chalk near Melbourn at a site where it was last specifically noted in 1890; another more recent site not far away on the railway cutting north of Royston was covered in dense scrub in 2023 with no sign of the Pignut. Elsewhere *Lysimachia nemorum* (**Yellow Pimpernel**) was seen again in a damp spot in the woodland by Longstowe Hall, where it was first noted in 1977 but had proved elusive ever since, *Carex arenaria* (**Sand Sedge**) proved to be flourishing in an old gravel pit site at Kennett from where our last record was in 1953, and *Anagallis tenella* (**Bog Pimpernel**) was reported from a wet meadow on Fulbourn Fen, repeating a record last made there in 1938.

Equally good news came from Fenland with reports of *Eleogiton fluitans* (**Floating Clubrush**) in ditches at Doddington and Haddenham. This species used to be very sparsely recorded over the county, but in recent times has only been known from the iron-rich waters of ditches near Whittlesey. These new sites may mean that we have been overlooking this rather inconspicuous aquatic, not least as access to the edge of the water is often down very steep drain banks! Another rather unexpected record from Fenland, this time near Chatteris, was a small colony of *Rosa sherardii* (**Sherard's Downy Rose**). This is a predominantly northern taxon in the British Isles, one of the downy roses, with very few records from Cambridgeshire; the existence of a downy rose at this site had been reported earlier but its identity had not been confirmed. It was astonishing to find that another new site for this rose was unearthed during the year, along the old railway track bordering Hayley Wood. Both sites have been confirmed by Roger Maskew, the BSBI referee for the genus.

Amongst the local natives turning up at sites associated with developments were *Trifolium glomeratum* (**Clustered Clover**), abundant in lawns at Gamlingay and as a solitary weed at Girton College, *Vicia lathyroides* (**Spring Vetch**) and *Ornithopus perpusillus* (**Bird's-foot**) around the Cambridge Research Park at Waterbeach, *Aira praecox* (**Early Hair-grass**) at Fulbourn, *Hypochaeris glabra* (**Smooth Cat's-ear**) at Northstowe, where it was accompanied by *Rumex acetosella* (**Sheep's Sorrel**), and *Trifolium ornithopodioides* (**Bird's-foot Clover**) near the allotments in Hobson's Park, Cambridge. This last site produced one the main alien excitements of the year in the shape of a large colony of a variant of *Crepis foetida* (**Stinking Hawk's-beard**). As a native plant (or perhaps an ancient introduction) subsp. *foetida* has been recorded recently only on shingle in the south of England, but the new Cambridgeshire material turns out to be subsp. *rhoeadifolia* and was perhaps introduced at this site in a seed



mix, but is now spreading. There are very old records for Stinking Haw's-beard in the county, although their authenticity has not been confirmed in many cases.

Another plant that has a controversial history in terms of its status in Britain is *Poa palustris* (**Swamp Meadow-grass**). This was known from Wicken Fen from 1941-1953 but has not been seen since, but has now turned up in a run-off pit near the Washpit Brook below Girton. It was in good company with an entirely new alien grass to the county, *Beckmannia syzigachne* (**American Slough-grass**), plus a good deal of the alien *Cyperus eragrostis* (**Pale Galingale**). Could all three have arrived with visiting water birds? The origin of another new alien weed, the small annual, yellow-flowered legume *Rothia indica* can



Flower head of *Beckmannia syzigachne*  
(**American Slough-grass**)  
[Jonathan Shanklin]

pretty certainly be attributed to the coir element in compost used on a nursery at Cottenham. This actually occurred there in 2017 but had defied identification until now. New weeds discovered in other nurseries and garden centres this year included the alien duckweed *Lemna valdiviana* (**Valdivia Duckweed**) at Oakington and another of the little prostrate spurges, *Euphorbia serpens* (**Creeping Sandmat**), in Cambridge and Coton. We already have records for *E. maculata* (**Spotted Sandmat**) and *E. prostrata* (**Prostrate Sandmat**), and there are several more potential candidates that might occur. The last two are already being found as street weeds, sometimes in quantity. On the evidence seen so far they often arrive here with container-grown plants imported from southern European nurseries, where they are also weeds, although actually hailing from the Americas

As noted above many of the new street weeds recorded in Cambridge in 2023 derived from parents cultivated in gardens. These included *Gaura* (now *Oenothera*)



The *Bromus arvensis* specimen from Wandlebury. Note how the spikelets droop in life. [Jonathan Shanklin].

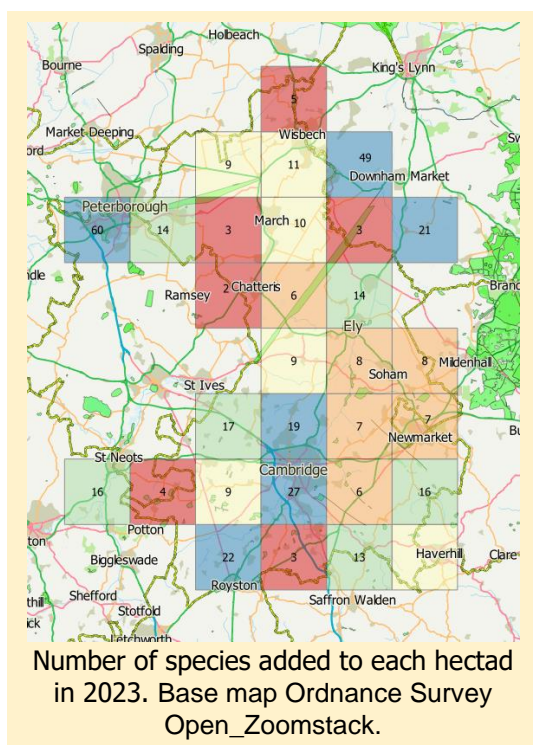
*lindheimeri* flowering in a pavement crack at the junction of Shelly Row and Castle Row, *Solanum laciniatum* (**Kangaroo-apple**) at the base of a wall in Garret Hostel Lane, and *Hebe stenophylla* (**Kokomuka-taranga**) on walls in St Matthew's Gardens. How the grass *Eleusine indica* (**Yard-grass**) came to be apparently naturalised on both sides of Montague Road is harder to fathom, maybe a bird seed origin is most likely. The appearance of *Geranium purpureum* (**Little Robin**) as a street weed in Cambridge is more readily explained as this has colonised the railway in and around the main station in Cambridge.

New or unusual aliens also crop up outside of the city and a large population of *Salvia hispanica* (**Chia**) was reported from road gutters and verges west of Great Abington and for some reason was mostly in fine flower, all our previous records being of only vegetative plants. Nearby in

an abandoned field were two bird-sown shrubs of *Rosa multiflora* (**Many-flowered Rose**). A little further north a field at Wandlebury produced a single plant of *Bromus arvensis* (**Field Brome**), a grass not reported from the county since the 1980s. By contrast it is sometimes possible to push back the earliest date for a plant being recorded in the county, usually by the discovery of previously unrecorded herbarium specimens. Such is the case for *Ambrosia artemisiifolia* (**Ragweed**) for which Chris Preston unearthed a specimen at Kew collected in a clover field at Sutton Gault in 1880 by Alfred Fryer: our earliest record had previously been listed as late as 1964. There may well be other exciting discoveries for those willing and able to trawl through large herbarium collections.

Finally what a year it has been for Fulbourn Fen, as not only did it produce records for Man Orchid and Bog Pimpernel, but a systematic search of the hedges round the various fields produced a healthy population of *Rosa micrantha* (**Small-flowered Sweet-briar**), with two further bushes in the middle of one of the fields. These seem to be the first specific records for the fen, but this may be the source of the 'Fulbourn' record listed by W.H. Mills, probably in the 1940s. Once again a good example of a well-known and much-visited site which can still produce surprises.

## Cambridgeshire Plants



Around 439 new hectad entities were added to the MapMate database during 2023. These are a mix of native and alien species, varieties, aggregates etc, so many are of no great significance. Those of great interest are captured by Alan, but here I note a few others of interest. 22 people or groups contributed them and they were made in most of the hectads of the county. Those with the most additions were the fragmentary hectads, TL19 and TF50, where an effort was made to record additional species; TL69 also did disproportionately well for the same reason. Perhaps unsurprisingly given the density of botanists, the Cambridge area of TL45 and TL46 also had many additions, despite starting from a high baseline. TL34 is the odd hectad out, with 22 additions, but its total was perhaps enhanced by three visits by myself, one by the Flora Group and surveys of Bassingbourn Barracks by Oli Glenister and James Rowland.

The Mistletoe Challenge that I set in 2019 had rather stalled, but Oli Glenister added it to TL48 in March, finding it on a garden poplar in Manea. It is certainly still spreading in Cambridge, but so far has been reported from only one new monad since the NatHistCam project ended in 2019. Despite a thorough search in 2024 January it has still not spread to a large part of Cherry Hinton.

Another spreading species is *Anacamptis pyramidalis* (**Pyramidal Orchid**), which was added to two more NatHistCam monads in 2023, bringing the total of post project additions to 15. Perhaps surprisingly it wasn't added to any county hectads

during the year, but there were some other orchid additions. Alan Leslie found *Cephalanthera damasonium* (**White Helleborine**) in Stetchworth and it may well appear in other beech plantations. Sub species or varieties of *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* (**Southern Marsh-orchid**) were found in three hectads. *Himantoglossum hircinum* (**Lizard Orchid**) appeared in another three hectads but it stays on the RPCC because it is a species included in the Cambridge and Peterborough Additional Species of Interest (CPASI) list produced by CPERC and is Nationally Scarce. Finally, there was the astonishing find by Lucy Watts of *Orchis anthropophora* (**Man Orchid**) at Fulbourn.



Pennyroyal at Flag Fen [Jasmin Atkinson]

A more worrying spreading species is *Medicago arabica* (**Spotted Medick**). From first being recorded at monad level in the database in 1961, it had been recorded in 24 monads by 2000 and today it is known from 346. It is certainly one that is being actively removed from several wildlife sites, so should have been increased to threat level 2 in the latest edition of the RPCC. It has been added to two hectads. Other spreading species listed as of potential concern in the RPCC include *Allium triquetrum* (**Three-cornered Garlic**), *Arum italicum* (**Italian Lords-and-Ladies**) [two new hectads], *Lepidium draba* (**Hoary Cress**) and *Smyrniololus satrum* (**Alexanders**) [one new hectad].

Perhaps to offset these some of the more common RPCC species have been found in additional hectads, though in some cases their arrival may not be entirely welcome. I found *Cynoglossum officinale* (**Hound's-tongue**) in Outwell, its northernmost location in the county and I also found *Filago germanica* [vulgaris] (**Common Cudweed**) there. *Hordeum marinum* (**Sea Barley**) continues to be found (or refound) on road verges, but I think its apparent addition on the A11 in TL54 and TL55 is due to a lack of digitisation. Finding *Hydrocharis morsus-ranae* (**Frogbit**) in the Great Ouse at Brandon Creek in TL69 was a genuine addition and this location also had *Ranunculus circinatus* (**Fan-leaved Water-crowfoot**). *Laphangium luteoalbum* (**Jersey Cudweed**) continues to spread and was found in two new hectads. Because it is still listed in Section 8 of the NERC Act, it remains on the RPCC. *Oenanthe crocata* (**Hemlock Water-dropwort**) also continues to spread, though it remains county scarce. *Torilis arvensis* (**Spreading Hedge-parsley**) continues to be found on Fenland drain banks, most recently being added to TL29 in the vicinity of Flag Fen Archaeology Park, a site that also has *Mentha pulegium* (**Pennyroyal**), which escaped from a herb garden and now thrives on rabbit grazed ground.

## Review of the 2023 excursions

### Sunday, January 1, Cambridge, Hobson's Park

The year started in the traditional way with a New Year's Day walk in the area covered by the Cambridge Natural History Society for their field studies. For 2023 the broad area was "Great Kneighton", which includes the Addenbrookes site, the Clay Farm estate, Hobson's Park and several City Wildlife Sites (CiWS). For the opening walk the group of 11 started at the Long Road bridge by the Guided Busway and essentially



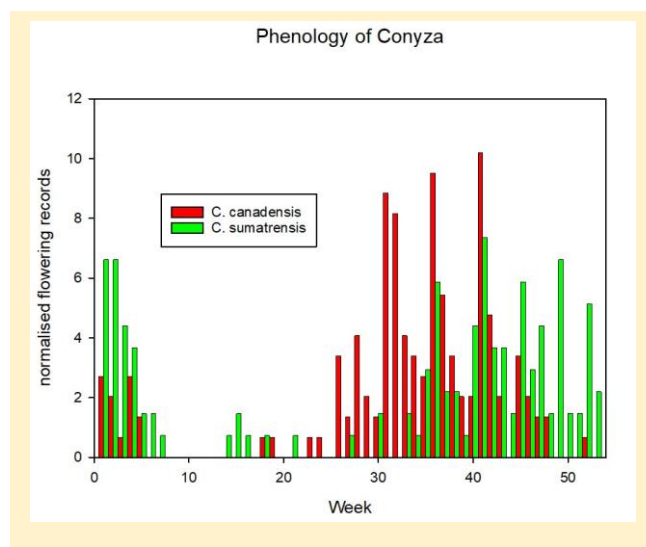
carried out a circular path around the outskirts, along Hobson's Brook, crossing over the railway line and through the Addenbrookes site, before crossing back on the busway bridge to return to our starting point. The day was quite mild, though a stiffening breeze made the afternoon feel cooler.

A nice find at the starting point was a cluster of rosettes of *Ophrys apifera* (**Bee Orchid**), but the only flower we could find was a solitary *Bellis perennis* (**Daisy**). Having walked along the Long Road Plantation CiWS, we reached the Hobson's Brook CiWS and discovered that the access track used by the contractors was now open access. On the disturbed ground they had left behind we did quite well, finding *Euphorbia helioscopia* (**Sun Spurge**) and *Veronica persica* (**Common Field-speedwell**) amongst others. The Hobson's Brook CiWS has had no formal records since 2005, so general records were made. An interesting start was finding a Willow with relict "rose galls" caused by *Rabdophaga rosaria*. A surprise species in flower was *Alnus glutinosa* (**Alder**), but generally flowering species were few along the Brook.

With lunch time approaching we headed into Hobson's Park, finding a suitable spot with seating for everyone in the shelter of a bird hide overlooking the lake. With several birders in the party a call of a kite being sighted attracted some attention, but it was of the flown variety. A nearby planted *Corylus avellana* (**Hazel**) had male catkins clearly dispensing pollen, and close inspection also showed the tiny red female flowers. We then continued along the Brook, finding increasing quantities of a dead plant that Jonathan confidently identified as *Cichorium intybus* (**Chicory**). On the bridge embankment the small white pincushion seed heads of *Erigeron acris* (**Blue Fleabane**) attracted attention, and close inspection showed that a few plants were still in flower.

On the Addenbrookes site a contractors' security hoarding had clearly provided some shelter from the frosts of December and we added *Mercurialis annua* (**Annual Mercury**) to our flowering list, along with a single flower of *Geranium pusillum* (**Small-flowered Crane's-bill**). Crossing back across the busway bridge we failed to find any flowering *Erophila verna* (**Common Whitlowgrass**) and we had nearly reached the starting point when the final find of *Cardamine hirsuta* (**Hairy Bitter-cress**) was made.

Altogether during the day we recorded 22 species in flower, less than half the number seen in 2022. One of them was *Erigeron* [*Conyza*] *sumatrensis* (**Guernsey Fleabane**) and an email exchange with the BSBI



NYPH team led me to look at its phenology in v.c.29, which clearly showed that it usually continued flowering much later than *E. canadensis* (**Canadian Fleabane**). In total 75 species were recorded, but this was fewer than the number seen, as apart from Hobson's Brook (46 species) only additional and flowering species records were made.

### Saturday, March 25, Fenland churchyards

*I usually write these accounts at the time and thought that I had done so for this excursion. When the newsletter was in its final stages, Chris Preston pointed out that*

*Luzula campestris* was reported from two churchyards rather than one. I then discovered that the account suddenly jumped to the report from 2022. I began to fill in the gaps, but just as I got on to the final one discovered that I had indeed written the account and had sent it to the participants, so was able to recover the missing information.

With mad March winds and April showers forecast only the hardy team of Jonathan



The churchyards group [Peter Leonard]

Shanklin, Peter Leonard, James Simpson and David Dives met up outside St Wendreda's church in March. Initially the churchyard did not look promising, with a large extent of mown grass, but it proved to hold the only *Luzula campestris* (**Field Wood-rush**) of the day. Even a strip under trees by the churchyard wall had been mown, however this wasn't enough to totally destroy plants of *Lamium hybridum* (**Cut-leaved Dead-nettle**), which has sharply toothed leaves, contrasting with the rounded teeth of *Lamium purpureum* (**Red Dead-**

**nettle**). Another contrast was the T-shaped mid-rib under leaves of *Crocus*, compared to the rounded underside to *Ornithogalum umbellatum* (**Star-of-Bethlehem**) leaves. Over the road was the church cemetery, and this was in a wilder state, though the hardest species to identify was a flowering hedgerow *Berberis*, which keyed closest to *B. manipurana*, a plant that isn't the BSBI DDb. In all we found 32 additional species in the monad, bringing its total to 232.

Our next stop was Westry, one of several churchyards which annoyingly sat on a grid square boundary, in this case a hectad one. We found three forms of *Viola odorata* (**Sweet Violet**) in flower: var *odorata* (purple flowers), var *dumetorum* (white) and f *lilacina* (white suffused with lilac). A grill by the church was signed "Danger deep water" so perhaps it wasn't surprising to find *Deschampsia cespitosa* (**Tufted Hair-grass**). Another tufted grass caught the eye and this later keyed out to *Ceratochloa carinata* (**California Brome**), though a flowering specimen would provide useful confirmation. With the cemetery in March being an unplanned addition to the day, we decided to have lunch on a conveniently sheltered bench. Before leaving we looked at a rosette of leaves, which Jonathan thought might *Symphytum orientale* (**White Comfrey**), though an id app suggested *Phlomis fruticosa* (**Jerusalem Sage**). We added 25 additional species, bringing the churchyard total to 117.

Guyhirn provided another unscheduled churchyard, with Jonathan, Peter and James stopping at a small, semi-derelict chapel, however Dave went on to the designated site of the Chapel of Ease. The churchyard drive was more species rich



*Viola odorata* (**Sweet Violet**) f *lilacina* [Peter Leonard]



than the churchyard itself, which was a sea of *Galanthus nivalis* (**Snowdrop**) that was shortly going to be overtaken by *Anthriscus sylvestris* (**Cow Parsley**) and *Urtica dioica* (**Common Nettle**). Having concluded the visit the trio went on to the Chapel of Ease where they were reunited with Dave, though he had to leave before we finished. This churchyard had a tetrad boundary, and plants were (mostly) assigned to the correct monad where they were first spotted. An unmown area had a large patch of *Calamagrostis epigejos* (**Wood Small-reed**), a plant which seems to be on the increase in the county. Between the two sites we added 68 species, bringing the total count to just over 100, though it was the least well-recorded area that we visited.

Wisbech St Mary had an extension cemetery, which was largely in a different tetrad, so we recorded that separately to the churchyard, though a small bit of the churchyard was also in the cemetery monad. On the churchyard wall (in the cemetery monad) we found *Veronica polita* (**Grey Field-speedwell**) and some *Asplenium scolopendrium* (**Hart's-tongue**), with a little further on *Asplenium ruta-muraria* (**Wall-rue**) in the main churchyard monad. Altogether we added 31 species, taking the combined churchyard and cemetery total to 124.

Our final churchyard was that of SS Peter & Paul in Wisbech, where we were greeted by a curious (inebriated) eastern European as we inspected *Lamium amplexicaule* (**Henbit Dead-nettle**) on the churchyard wall. A speciality of the churchyard is *Atropa belladonna* (**Deadly Nightshade**), a plant that has been known from the Wisbech area for over 400 years. A dead plant, with emerging leaves was soon spotted inside a securely fenced monument, with another under a nearby Yew. The fencing was probably to protect the monument, as anybody would find it easy to put a hand through the bars to pick a berry. On and around a chest tomb we found a wonderful display of *Saxifraga tridactylites* (**Rue-leaved Saxifrage**), mixed with *Erophila verna* (**Common Whitlowgrass**) and *Cardamine hirsuta* (**Hairy Bitter-cress**). Having failed to find any ferns on the first circuit of the church, Jonathan decided to go round again, whilst the remaining two decided it was time to return for dinner. There were ferns to find: on both sides of the south porch behind drainpipes was *Pteris cretica* (**Ribbon Fern**), with a detached rootstock of *Asplenium scolopendrium* (**Hart's-tongue**), but no indication of where it had come from. Near one drainpipe, *Berberis julianae* (**Chinese Barberry**) was growing from the church wall; this had very different leaves to the *Berberis* found earlier in the day. Continuing around the church a drainpipe on the northern side of the church gave shelter to *Asplenium trichomanes* (**Maidenhair Spleenwort**) and some well rooted *A. scolopendrium*. Once again we made a substantial number of additions (45) putting the churchyard total over 100. With success achieved it seemed sensible to head more or less straight home (avoiding the flooded Welney Washes) rather than detouring to a reserve churchyard.

During the day we recorded 184 species (including the vars, ladybirds and liverworts) (187 the previous year) of which 51 (47) were recorded as in flower. Five



*Saxifraga tridactylites*, mixed with *Erophila verna*  
[Jonathan Shanklin]



species shared the top spot, and once again, *Bellis perennis* (**Daisy**) was the only species seen in flower at all eight sites.

## Tuesday, April 25, Halfmoon Plantation Pit CWS

Roughly half the pit is still managed by Mick George, though it has closed as a working sand quarry. Lucy Wilson arranged access as she needed to survey the County Wildlife



The Group at Halfmoon Plantation Pit  
[Peter Leonard]

Site, though we were unable to obtain the necessary permissions to visit the part managed by the FCC recycling company. We were met by Darren Griffiths, the Mick George Quarry Operations Director, who gave us a site brief and then let us get on with recording. With a cold north wind several participants had opted for hi-viz jackets rather than vests and it wasn't until near the end of the visit that it warmed up enough to consider unzipping them!

We decided to head north from our starting point, up what amounted to a mountain in Cambridgeshire. This was composed of spoil taken from

sites in a wide area surrounding the pit and not surprisingly there were quite a few alien species on view. These started with some flowering *Senecio squalidus* (**Oxford Ragwort**), which was a new plant for some. A patch of dark blue flowered plants turned out to be *Symphytum caucasicum* (**Caucasian Comfrey**) and there was a single plant of *Amsinckia micrantha* (**Common Fiddleneck**) with yellow flowers. At the top of the hill a dead crucifer caught Jonathan's eye, with the bulbous pods indicating *Rapistrum rugosum* (**Bastard Cabbage**). Descending the other side we searched for *Herniaria glabra* (**Smooth Rupturewort**) without success, but further along in a corner of the site found *Cerastium arvense* (**Field Mouse-ear**).

Coming across access to the public footpath that crosses the site, we decided to follow it along the River Kennett and back. A long the field margin we saw *Anthriscus caucalis* (**Bur Chervil**), *Lamium amplexicaule* (**Henbit Dead-nettle**) and several other Arable Plant Area indicators, though it only scored 11, so not yet enough to qualify as Important. Returning to the edge of the quarry site we found a sheltered spot for lunch, where there was *Trifolium arvense* (**Hare's-foot Clover**) on one side of the track and *Cerastium semidecandrum* (**Little Mouse-ear**) on the other. After lunch we continued round the site, walking through an older portion on



*Cerastium semidecandrum*  
(**Little Mouse-ear**) [Peter Leonard]

the way to a pond. This proved rather disappointing, with *Crassula helmsii* (**New Zealand Pigmyweed**) as the only aquatic.

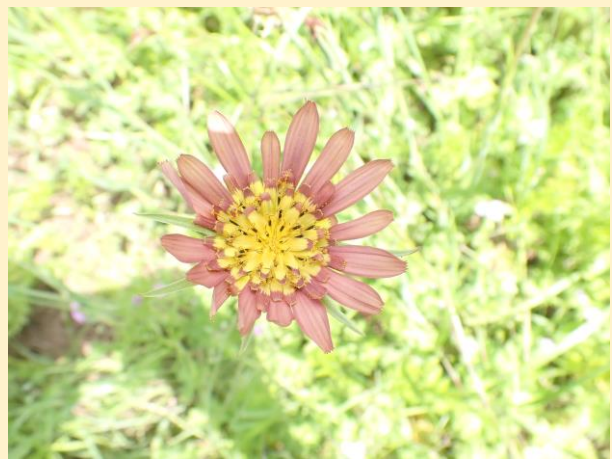
Circumnavigating the pond we spotted a sedge on the southern side, which turned out to be a significant find - *Carex arenaria* (**Sand Sedge**), which only has 8 other extant sites in the county. Some recently disturbed ground looked inviting, but proved to be species poor, so we retraced our steps to continue going round the pond. Although there was some doubt as to whether this would be possible, it did add several species to the list, including a rosette of an orchid which was probably *Anacamptis pyramidalis* (**Pyramidal Orchid**). The route through proved not too difficult and emerging the other side we headed for the final monad of the site.

This was the smallest part of the site, but still added some interesting species, including *Clinopodium calamintha* (**Lesser Calamint**) and *Erophila majuscula* (**Hairy Whitlowgrass**). Two rather more prosaic additions to our list for the day were *Fraxinus excelsior* (**Ash**) and *Trifolium repens* (**White Clover**)! There is undoubtedly more to find on the site and we didn't find any of the less frequently seen species known from it. Overall it is probably best described as a brownfield post-industrial site, but nevertheless highly diverse. In total we more than doubled the species list for the CWS and recorded around 196 species.

## Tuesday, May 16, Guided Busway

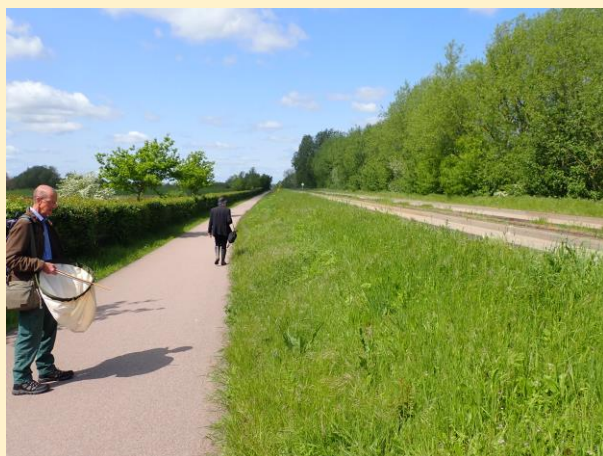
We had a fine day for our final leg along the Busway, though there was a chilly wind from the north. Fortunately we were often sheltered from it. Jonathan Shanklin and Nick Jardine arrived a little later than planned, as road works along Milton Road delayed the guided bus. On arriving at our starting point at Swavesey we joined Nick Millar, who was the only person waiting for us.

The first notable find was a single plant of *Eryngium planum* (**Blue Eryngo**), growing on the verge. A little further on Jonathan mentioned seeing *Tragopogon porrifolius* (**Salsify**) at



*Tragopogon x mirabilis* [Jonathan Shanklin]

Histon and immediately a plant was spotted on the busway. Opposite Swavesey Lake we found several plants of *Sanguisorba officinalis* (**Great Burnet**), which has long been known from this area. The only question was whether it might have been introduced as part of the sowing along the route. A single plant of *Lathyrus latifolius* (**Broad-leaved Everlasting-pea**) growing up a fence line caught our attention; again it is a plant long known from the area, so perhaps seeded from nearby plants. We then spotted the aptly named *Tragopogon x mirabilis* (*T. porrifolius* x *pratensis*) growing with



A fine day on the busway [Jonathan Shanklin]



its parents. At the Fen Drayton Lakes stop we duly found the promised *Galium parisiense* (**Wall Bedstraw**) and found that *Cerastium semidecandrum* (**Little Mouse-ear**) was growing nearby.

It was fractionally too early for lunch, so we continued along the track on the north side of the busway, finding a few plants of *Lepidium campestre* (**Field Pepperwort**), which was known from this section and also a patch of *Myosotis ramosissima* (**Early Forget-me-not**). Reaching Elney Lake, we found that the bird lookout provided welcome seats for lunch, although we disturbed a Heron that had been fishing for its lunch. In the background we heard calls from a Cuckoo and booms from Bitterns.

Crossing from Cambridgeshire (v.c.29) to Huntingdonshire (v.c.31) we continued recording, thinking nothing of finding several plants seen on the v.c.29 stretch. Only later when checking did I discover that *Geranium rotundifolium* (**Round-leaved Crane's-bill**) is on the v.c.31 Rare Plant Register and that *Lepidium latifolium* (**Dittander**) had only two previous extant sites. Both are relatively common in v.c.29, though the *Lepidium* makes it onto the RPCC by virtue of being Nationally Scarce. I then spotted a single plant of *Geranium columbinum* (**Long-stalked Crane's-bill**), which is scarce in v.c.29 and turned out to be rare in v.c.31 with only three other sites. I had previously found a single plant further east along the busway, near Over.

Reaching the Busway P&R before 3pm, the terminus of our voyage, we decided that there was plenty of time to explore some of the beds and paving. There was extensive amounts of *Saxifraga tridactylites* (**Rue-leaved Saxifrage**), which clearly seems to have appreciated the weather of last year. *Helleborus argutifolius* (**Corsican Hellebore**) was seeding away from its planted beds and there was some colourful *Eschscholzia californica* (**Californian Poppy**). *Claytonia perfoliata* (**Springbeauty**) was not always looking beautiful, but the occasional fresh plant still had pretty starlike flowers nestling between the perfoliate leaves. During the day we recorded 222 species, giving a final total for the Busway of 530 species.

### Wednesday, June 7, Devil's Ditch

The initial question for this excursion was "how many layers to put on". There had been continuing easterly winds for several weeks, bringing dry but often cloudy and cold conditions. A group of nine met up at the Burwell Road car-park and headed for the Ditch, where the first kilometre on the eastern side of the road had few records in the last few years. This was put right, though progress was slow as there was much to see and record. Alan Leslie found that a plant of *Echinops bannaticus* (**Blue Globe-thistle**) was still present near the start; this had first been noted

by A.A. Butcher in 1986, so it has survived for a long time. There were swathes of *Filipendula vulgaris* (**Dropwort**) in places, looking almost like *F. ulmaria* (**Meadowsweet**) in a wet ditch. Most of the Ditch specialities were still there and we were able to admire flowering *Gymnadenia conopsea* (**Chalk Fragrant-orchid**) and



Lunch on the Devil's Ditch [Peter Leonard]



*Astragalus danicus* (**Purple Milk-vetch**). We also saw the only two remaining plants of *Hypochaeris maculata* (**Spotted Cat's-ear**) in the county, one with spotted leaves and the other without. *Thesium humifusum* (**Bastard-toadflax**) required some searching, but Alan eventually found a couple of small plants. By now the sun had come out, so layers were quickly shed!



The unusual colour variant of *Veronica arvensis* (**Wall Speedwell**)  
[Peter Leonard]

It was already lunchtime, but we had only got half-way to the A11 and we also planned to record the stewardship fields adjacent to the Ditch. Fortunately (in some ways) the second half was not as species rich, so progress was quicker. There was a delightful amount of *Geranium columbinum* (**Long-stalked Crane's-bill**) scattered along this length, a known speciality, but clearly doing well this year. A pink flowered speedwell caused some debate, with the consensus that it was an unusual colour variant of *Veronica arvensis* (**Wall Speedwell**). Rather unexpected was a patch of a Broomrape,

which after some keying on site came out as *Orobanche minor* (**Common Broomrape**), with some further keying using the Broomrape Handbook at home suggesting subsp. *minor*. We refound some of the plants of *Himantoglossum hircinum* (**Lizard Orchid**) whose rosettes had been seen over the winter, although only two seemed to be on their way to flowering, with a third having recently been got at by rabbits; several others were not seen. In a more species rich section we found another patch of *Astragalus danicus* which had grown since Alan first saw it in 2015.

Having got to the end of the monad we switched to the sheep grazed pasture that had been created from former arable fields close to the Ditch. The species diversity of these was clearly slowly increasing, but was generally lower than that of the Ditch. The more easterly fields had considerably greater quantities of *Cirsium acaule* (**Dwarf Thistle**) than were present on the adjacent section of Ditch. Overall 79 different species were recorded from them, but we failed to locate anything that required an eight-figure grid reference. An opportunity to visit the section of Ditch west of the Burwell Road was offered, but a majority decided that they would rather return home for tea, so we did!

### Saturday, July 1, Hauxton Pits

The Flora Group was welcomed to the Pits by their owner Will Garfit. They are old gravel pits, with some fields and wet woodland, which he had purchased in the 1970s. Although there had been hints of drizzle, by the time everyone assembled it had gone and we had a dry breezy day. Will suspected that it would take us a long time to get out of the car park and he was right. Some plants had been introduced in a wildflower mix, with *Centaurea nigra* var. *radiata* (rayed **Common Knapweed**) giving the game away. A damper area of ground usually had a lot of *Samolus valerandi* (**Brookweed**), but this year it wasn't damp and there was only one plant. We then had a *Verbascum* (**Mullein**) to study: the leaves were not decurrent, the leaf and stem hairs were not glandular, the upper stamen filaments had yellow hairs and the stamens on the lower ones were longitudinal. Taking all of this together showed that we had *Verbascum*

*phlomoides* (**Orange Mullein**). Another *Verbascum* just round the corner had decurrent leaves and was the more common *Verbascum thapsus* (**Great Mullein**).

We then moved to another yard area, where there was a *Papaver somniferum* (**Opium Poppy**), which had a narrow capsule but only some hairs on the stem, which was indicative of subsp. *setigerum*, though the stem should have been densely hairy. As we were leaving the area an Oak caught Jonathan's eye as the leaves had long petioles. It clearly wasn't *Quercus petraea* (**Sessile Oak**) and some keying suggested it might be *Quercus x crenata* (**Lucombe Oak** (*Q. cerris x suber*)), though the leaf lobes didn't have mucronate tips. Detailed examination at home, and consultation with several books suggested it was actually *Quercus pubescens* (**Downy Oak**).

Our next target was some of the lake margins. Will showed us a planted willow, which had twigs that could be tied in knots. He had obtained it from the Netherlands, where it was used for tying bundles of faggots. There it had been described as *Salix dasyclados*, which is a synonym of *Salix x calodendron* (*S. caprea x cinerea x viminalis*). The BSBI Willows Handbook says that this species is "neither particularly ornamental nor useful" and as it didn't have the broader leaves that might be expected for the species it was recorded as *Salix x holosericea* (*S. cinerea x viminalis*), though Alan Leslie suggests that it might be *S. gmelinii*. Along many of the margins we found *Bolboschoenus maritimus* (**Sea Club-rush**), which Will said had originally been planted, but was clearly spreading. On the banks there was plenty of *Centaureum erythraea* (**Common Centaury**), but also some patches of *Centaureum pulchellum* (**Lesser Centaury**), with much shorter stems; unfortunately the generally overcast conditions at the time meant that it wasn't prepared to show off its flowers. This pretty much took us to lunch time, which we took on the banks of a lake.

After lunch we continued round the lake, then headed towards where a game cover crop had previously been planted. Here there was more of the *Verbascum phlomoides*, but in amongst it an *Oenothera* (**Evening-primrose**). This required more keying – it had small petals, red streaked sepals and some red based hairs, leading to the diagnosis of *Oenothera x fallax* (*O. glazioviana x biennis*); later we also found *Oenothera glazioviana* (**Large-flowered Evening-primrose**). Moving to another field we found a different *Verbascum*, this time with violet hairs, and clearly *Verbascum nigrum* (**Dark Mullein**); nearby were some plants that had the flowers close to *V. nigrum*, but leaves like *V. phlomoides*, so possibly the hybrid *V. x brockmuelleri*, although this is so rare that it wasn't in the BSBI database. A later visit by Alan Leslie did not find it, but he did find *Verbascum x semialbum* (*V. thapsus x nigrum*).

Returning to the lakes we came across the promised orchid rich area, finding *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* (**Common Spotted-orchid**), *D. praetermissa* (**Southern Marsh-orchid**) and their hybrid *D. x grandis*. Although time was running out the remaining



The group at Hauxton [Peter Leonard]



Examining a hybrid mullein  
[Peter Leonard]

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members of the party decided to try a track leading east, finding another meadow and whilst returning spotted *Carex pseudocyperus* (**Cyperus Sedge**) in a small lake. Altogether we recorded 225 species on the day, found several of the species not seen for 20 or more years and added 81 species to the site list. I had prepared lists of species to look for to hand out to participants, but managed to leave this at home. This had 71 axiophyte, RPCC or LORE species of which we saw 30, and also 29 species that weren't on the site list, of which we found 16. Clearly there is more to see and a return visit would be worthwhile.

### Saturday, July 29, Ten Wood

Ten Wood is a SSSI designated for its Ash-Maple woodland and also for the presence of *Carpinus betulus* (**Hornbeam**) and *Primula elatior* (**Oxlip**). *Luzula sylvatica* (**Great Wood-rush**) is mentioned in the designation, but this hasn't been seen there since 1964. Stetchworth Estates gave permission for us to explore the wood in the summer and Alan Leslie arranged all the keys etc that would be needed to let us in to various sections. In the event the first wasn't needed as a straw stack had collapsed near our meeting point and work was on-going to rebuild it. Overall the summer had continued cool and showery and more showers were forecast for our meeting.



Excitement at finding a tussock of *Carex strigosa* (**Thin-spiked Wood-sedge**)  
[Peter Leonard]

We explored the car park whilst waiting for late arrivals, with Chris Preston finding a rare downy mildew on *Tripleurospermum inodorum* (**Scentless Mayweed**) and Jonathan Shanklin finding that hidden in full sight amongst the Mayweed plants was *Anthemis cotula* (**Stinking Chamomile**), distinguishable by the smell, slightly wider leaves and scales amongst the achenes.

We then set off down the track to Ten Wood, encountering more weedy margins around the fields, which were a notable feature of the Estate management. Entering the wood we started recording its species, beginning with the common ones. A much less common one (at least in Cambridgeshire) was *Holcus mollis* (**Creeping Soft-grass**) growing by the ride in a clearly more acidic area as there was also *Pteridium aquilinum* (**Bracken**). Alan Leslie investigated off the ride and called the group to see an interesting plant. He had found a patch of *Carex strigosa* (**Thin-spiked Wood-sedge**), distinguishable from *Carex sylvatica* (**Wood-sedge**) by its much broader leaves and differently shaped utricles. Deciding to continue exploration of the northern monad of the wood we headed towards the stream, but found it largely overgrown and difficult to pass along, so headed for the central ride. Here we found an enormous population of *Carex strigosa* and continued to encounter it through much of the wood. We wondered if it might have been overlooked for young *Carex pendula* (**Pendulous Sedge**) in some of the other nearby woods.

We now moved into a recently felled area, which was protected by a secure deer fence. The difference in vegetation was very noticeable. Ferns were not being browsed and we immediately saw *Athyrium filix-femina* (**Lady-fern**). Continuing round the exclosure we disturbed some hornets, which stung one of the party. After some immediate first aid, the victim thought it best to head for home in case the stings triggered something worse than swelling. Although it was nearing lunch-time, the rest of the party was instructed to continue exploring the exclosure, so we headed down



the main track, finding *Carex leporina* (**Oval Sedge**) and one flowering *Ranunculus flammula* (**Lesser Spearwort**). With dark clouds threatening rain we decided to cross the central meadow without doing any recording and lunch under trees.

In the event it didn't rain and the weather continued to improve through the rest of the day. The first plant to look at in the meadow was *Calamagrostis canescens* (**Purple Small-reed**), with densely hairy narrow leaves, in contrast to the much more



Glandular hairs of *Lysimachia arvensis* subsp. *arvensis* f. *azurea* (**Scarlet Pimpernel azure form**) [Chris Preston]

common *Calamagrostis epigejos* (**Wood Small-reed**) which was growing with it. Jonathan Shanklin spotted a four petalled *Potentilla*, which was determined as *Potentilla x mixta* the sterile hybrid of one of *Potentilla erecta* (**Tormentil**) or *P. anglica* (**Trailing Tormentil**) with *P. reptans* (**Creeping Cinquefoil**). As there are no known sites for *P. anglica* within 20 km, the former seems the more likely parent. We then briefly left the wood to check to see if *Melampyrum cristatum* (**Crested Cow-wheat**) might be growing by the track to the wood (it wasn't), but we did see several hybrids, along with *Polygonum*

*rumicivagum* (**Cornfield Knotgrass**) in another conservation margin.

Returning to the wood and the central meadow, Chris Preston found a small patch of *Carex pallescens* (**Pale Sedge**), which is now a rare plant in the county, with the only other current site for it being in Gamlingay Wood. Leaving the meadow, we continued down the central ride and eventually made our way out onto the footpath. Emerging into the open we found another conservation margin, where we spotted several plants of *Lysimachia* [*Anagallis*] *arvensis* subsp. *arvensis* f. *azurea* (**Scarlet Pimpernel azure form**). This differs from *Lysimachia foemina* (**Blue Pimpernel**) in the number of cells in the glandular hairs, so needed checking under the microscope, which Chris Preston later did. Other rare arable plants included *Fumaria parviflora* (**Fine-leaved Fumitory**) and *Silene noctiflora* (**Night-flowering Catchfly**). Totting up the totals of qualifying plants gave the strip an "Important Arable Plant Area" score of 43, more than enough to qualify it as a County Wildlife Site.

Reaching the River Stour we crossed into Suffolk (not Essex as originally thought) and largely ceased recording, though Alan Leslie and Peter Leonard lingered over several roses, whilst the rest of the party moved more rapidly to get back into Cambridgeshire. Once in the county, recording started again and we found further interesting plants including *Hypericum maculatum* (**Imperforate St John's-wort**) and *Rosa micrantha* (**Small-flowered Sweet-briar**). A slightly odd looking *Vicia cracca* (**Tufted Vetch**) turned out to be



*Silene noctiflora* (**Night-flowering Catchfly**) on the arable margin [Peter Leonard]

*Vicia villosa* (**Fodder Vetch**) when later examined in detail by Alan Leslie. Reaching the pumping station, we found a large *Rumex hydrolapathum* (**Water Dock**), a plant known from further downstream and indeed seen earlier in the Suffolk stretch. We eventually found the route round the reservoir, which was not as shown on the OS map, and then walked along Woodditton Road, where the majority turned down the minor road to see *Trifolium ochroleucon* (**Sulphur Clover**) on its Protected Road Verge and County Wildlife Site. This was past flowering, but the distinctive yellow-green leaves and hairy stems allowed us to find a couple of patches. A surprise addition to the CWS flora was *Pimpinella major* (**Greater Burnet-saxifrage**), which sometimes had pink flowers instead of the normal white flowers. It was actually known from the site, but the plethora of designations (Kirtling RSV, PRV E5 Kirtling, Kirtling RSV 89/29 amongst others) had obscured the fact.

From here we re-traced our footsteps through Suffolk and back along Ten Wood, adding a few more species to the lists as we went. Finally we rounded the corner of Ten Wood and back to our starting point, where the stack rebuilding was nearing completion. We had found more than half of the notable species on the list provided for the area, and added quite a few more, making it a very successful day. Hopefully we will return to another of the Estate woods next year.

## Tuesday, August 15, RSPB Hope Farm

Georgie Bray, the farm manager of RSPB Hope Farm (also known as Grange Farm), gave an inspiring talk to the Cambridge Natural History Society in 2022. A follow-up visit for members of the CNHS to see the birds was soon organised and I organised a visit to see the flora, as the farm had been an introduction site for *Ranunculus arvensis* (**Corn Buttercup**) as part of the “Colour in the Margins” project with Plantlife. The due day saw a transition from frequent showers over the weekend to dry and sunny, so we had excellent conditions for the excursion.



The Group at Hope Farm  
[Jonathan Shanklin]

Georgie welcomed us to the farm and introduced us to other staff members and to the management of the farm. She and the other staff then accompanied us around all day, explaining various aspects of the farm management as we went.

Needless to say the first port of call was the car park (actually the farm yard), where there was a plot for wild-flowers. These were a mix of introductions from green hay from the farm gardens along with naturally arriving species. There were four species of *Verbascum* including *V. blattaria* (**Moth Mullein**), arable weeds such as *Anagallis arvensis* (**Scarlet Pimpernel**) and totally unexpected oddities such as *Silene uniflora* (**Sea Campion**). We also visited the known colony of *Juncus compressus* (**Round-fruited Rush**) and with it some *Sagina filicaulis* (**Upright Pearlwort**) growing through cracks in the concrete. More time could have been spent in this area, but there was the whole farm to see.

Our next significant stop was a pond that had a wildflower mix sown in one quadrant of its bank, including *Agrostemma githago* (**Corncockle**) and *Centaurea cyanus* (**Cornflower**). There were however other plants than those expected, most notably a fine specimen of *Rumex maritimus* (**Golden Dock**). From here we progress to another field margin where Monica noticed an odd looking Bird's-foot-trefoil, which



satisfactorily keyed out in both Poland and Stace as *Lotus tenuis* (**Narrow-leaved Bird's-foot-trefoil**). We hunted for some *Vicia parviflora* (**Slender Tare**), but could only find *Vicia tetrasperma* (**Smooth Tare**). Returning to the main track we continued round the field margins, where Alan spotted a couple of plants of *Euphorbia platyphyllos* (**Broad-leaved Spurge**). We continued past the compost storage area (commercially composted green waste from household bins was being delivered by big lorries for use on the fields) and found a spot for lunch looking down from the local hill towards the Ouse Valley.



*Euphorbia platyphyllos* (**Broad-leaved Spurge**) [Peter Leonard]

From here we continued down a field margin, finding a bigger cluster of *Euphorbia platyphyllos* plants. A deepened ditch bank looked promising, but in the end there were no aquatic species in it (we didn't go further down, where there was another wider area of wetland). Continuing along the track Alan found a few plants of *Polypogon monspeliensis* (**Annual Beard-grass**). Jonathan and Duerden were rather lagging behind at this point and found a single plant of *Panicum miliaceum* (**Common Millet**) in what was otherwise a Barley field, along with some very unusual *Avena sativa* (**Oat**), which had five florets in the spikelets. Before long we were back at the farm, where we were provided with refreshment in the barn. A hunt for *Polypodium vulgare* (**Polypody**) previously seen on an old garden wall near the farm

buildings proved fruitless, but did add a few plants to the day list such as *Thymus vulgaris* (**Garden Thyme**), which had become established on a patio.

We only found about half the species on the notable plants sheet, but did add several to it, along with some less significant ones that were new to the farm. Thanks are due to Georgie, Duerden and the RSPB for making us welcome and it will be well worth another visit earlier in the year.

### Sunday, September 10, Wicken Fen

The group met at the National Trust car park on a hot sultry morning, after a week of no rain and record breaking day-time temperatures above 30°C. We had a quick look at car-park plants whilst we waited for the due meeting time, finding *Anagallis arvensis* (**Scarlet Pimpernel**), which surprisingly had never previously been recorded from the monad. We also discussed the knotgrasses, which we decided included *Polygonum arenastrum* (**Equal-leaved Knotgrass**), which was also new for the monad. We then moved on to the Visitor Centre, where we were welcomed by Alan Kell, the Countryside



Fishing out *Utricularia* [Peter Leonard]



Manager for Wicken Fen. After being issued with a radio and given a quick safety brief we made our way onto the Fen.

Our first stopping point was near the Windmill, where a bridge over a small lode allowed us to sample the plants in the lode. *Lemna trisulca* (**Ivy-leaved Duckweed**) was obvious, but with it came *Myriophyllum verticillatum* (**Whorled Water-milfoil**), immediately recognisable by its torpedo like turions. Also near here were several **Dog-roses**, which had hairy leaves with one also having glands. The former was thought to be good *Rosa corymbifera*, but the latter remains undetermined for now. Passing through the area of brick-pits, one open area had an aquatic species in it, which when pulled out showed the distinctive bladders of the carnivorous *Utricularia vulgaris* (**Greater Bladderwort**).



The unusual looking umbellifer at Wicken Fen [Peter Leonard]

Passing into a new monad, where there was plenty of shade and a bench, we decided it was time for lunch. Lunch completed we made our way through a dense spread of reeds onto Sedge Fen Drove. Near the start of the drove was a fine leaved plant, which on close inspection was clearly a sedge, living up to its name of *Carex lasiocarpa* (**Slender Sedge**). Along the drove we found scattered *Oenanthe lachenalii* (**Parsley Water-**

**dropwort**), a plant often associated with brackish conditions, though not here. A glaucous sedge drew attention, but it wasn't *Carex flacca* (**Glaucous Sedge**) as the vein spacing indicated *Carex panicea* (**Carnation Sedge**). Other notable plants along the drove included *Carex elata* (**Tufted-sedge**), *Carex lepidocarpa* (**Long-stalked Yellow-sedge**), *Lathyrus palustris* (**Marsh Pea**) and *Thelypteris palustris* (**Marsh Fern**).

Emerging onto the western drove, we walked along it and then into compartment 5, which is mostly managed by cutting. Here there was flowering *Triglochin palustris* (**Marsh Arrowgrass**), which seemed fairly frequent both here and in compartment 4, which is grazed by Konig ponies. To the west we heard rumbles of thunder, but fortunately the promised rain also stayed to the west. We were making complete species lists for both these compartments, finding 70 in cpt 5 (bringing its total to 90) and 63 in cpt 4 (bringing its total to 87). In both cases we made over 30 additions to the compartment lists. We had been looking for *Mentha arvensis* (**Corn Mint**) along Sedge Fen Drove, but found nothing convincing, but there was some in both compartments, often alongside *Mentha aquatica* (**Water Mint**), though we didn't spot the hybrid. A slightly surprising monad addition was *Leontodon saxatilis* (**Lesser Hawkbit**), which obligingly provided a seed-head to show the scales on the outer achenes. Having walked half way round, the main group decided to retrace its steps back to compartment 4, whilst Alan Leslie opted to look for sedges around the old mere, where the bryologists had recorded the hybrid between *Carex oederi* (**Small-fruited Yellow-sedge**) and *Carex hostiana* (**Tawny Sedge**) the previous October. In a pony grazed lawn we found a couple of plants of *Carex oederi*, with the skull of a small rodent nearby. This had prominent orange teeth, which Lucy then remembered indicated that it was a Water Vole.

With time passing we aimed to walk as far as a tall tree before returning, but first Nick Jardine found a slightly odd looking umbellifer. It took a bit of searching to refind, but eventually a flowering stem was spotted. This looked a bit like an *Oenanthe* (**Water-dropwort**), but it didn't really seem to key out and later research suggested

that it was probably just a slightly odd *Angelica sylvestris* (**Wild Angelica**). We then made a more determined effort to return to the Visitor Centre, as the cafe closed at 5pm. We got there just in time for refreshments, which were duly enjoyed. We finished with a final new monad record before leaving Wicken, spotting *Pimpinella saxifraga* (**Burnet-saxifrage**) in the car park.

### Saturday, September 30, Mill River Nature Reserve and Rouses Wood

Our final visit of the year was on the last day of the warmest September on record.



The entrance avenue at Mill River Nature Reserve [Jonathan Shanklin]

Although the early morning was cool, the day as a whole continued warm and although no rain was forecast a few spots fell in the morning. We were met by Will Garfit, who explained that the reserve had been set up as compensation for the construction of a solar farm. Our first task was to record Long Meadow, and this was a relatively quick task, as although it was long, there was not a great deal of botanical interest. It should improve in future as Belted Galloways are due to graze it over winter and they may be fed with hay cut from the adjacent more species-rich avenue.

From the meadow we continued along the footpath to a green lane, but found that the surrounding hedges had been allowed to grow and it was largely impassable. Fortunately, the side adjacent to the solar farm was easy to access and was much richer in species than the meadow, though with nothing very notable. Along the boundary with Bassingbourn Barracks we came across rosettes of *Cirsium eriophorum* (**Woolly Thistle**) and Alan Leslie found a bush of *Rosa x bigeneris* (*Rosa micrantha* x *rubiginosa*) (**Small-flowered Sweet-briar** x **Sweet-briar**). We then continued around the solar farm intending to jump a riffle across a stream, but decided that wet feet would result. The bank adjacent to the riffle did however make a good spot for lunch.

We headed north to the farm track bridge over the river, finding several willow species that engendered some debate. *Salix purpurea* (**Purple Willow**), with its leaves having a pale central vein was fairly straightforward but another needed a bit more thought before coming up with the answer of *Salix triandra* (**Almond Willow**). We couldn't taste rosewater under the bark, however on the main trunk the bark was flaking. We then doubled back on ourselves on the other side of the stream, eventually coming across a series of earth banks, some scrapes and then a sequence of ponds. The ponds gave some interest, with a several species from the RPCC including *Alisma plantago-aquatica* (**Water-plantain**) and *Veronica anagallis-aquatica* (**Blue Water-speedwell**).

We found we couldn't cross the Mill River at the spot marked on the OS map, so continued up to the farm track and then into Shingay Lake Nature Reserve CWS, which had been designated for the presence of White-clawed Crayfish. This also had



*Erigeron acris* (**Blue Fleabane**) at Mill River Nature Reserve [Karen Johnston]

a few interesting botanical species on the site list, a couple of which, *Scrophularia nodosa* (**Common Figwort**) and *Thymus pulegioides* (**Large Thyme**) seemed unlikely. In the event they weren't found and in any case the banks of the lake had probably matured significantly since the 2004 survey. We didn't see any Crayfish, but the clear water did support *Chara aspera* (**Rough Stonewort**) and *Chara virgata* (**Delicate Stonewort**).

With time passing we needed to get a move on in order to reach Rouses Wood at the appointed time, so chose the outer route around the Mill River and reduced the recording effort. We did however occasionally stop for interesting species, finding *Myosotis scorpioides* (**Water Forget-me-not**) in one open section of river. Moving into a new monad required a new recording card, and despite moving through fairly quickly we still recorded fifty species by the time we left the Reserve for the walk to the Wood.

We were met by the owner at Rouses Wood CWS, which was designated because it was one of the few "ancient" Ash-Maple woods of the area. The Wood has a moat (still wet) in the middle of it, suggesting that it is perhaps only 800 or so years old. Filipa showed us round the path through the wood, which also held some large Elms, some of which were clearly amongst Brian Eversham's microspecies rather than from the standard subset. We made quite a few additions to the species list for the site, however we were there at the wrong time of year to find *Ranunculus auricomus* (**Goldilocks Buttercup**), seen in the wood in 1933.

In addition to the botanical records, Nick Jardine identified several macro-fungi whilst Chris Preston concentrated on the micro-fungi. Although we didn't find anything very exciting, the weather was fine and the visit made for an enjoyable end to the season.

## Excursions for 2024

Please take careful note that our excursions vary both in the day of the week on which they take place and in the time at which we meet on each occasion. Although no Coronavirus restrictions are currently in force, this and similar diseases are widespread [Indeed as I write this I may have Covid], so do consider other participants. I will send out an email before each meeting reminding you of the details and of any changes, and they will also be posted on the web page. Participants are normally welcome to join us for all or part of any

excursion, but please arrive promptly at the start. We often have to give a site briefing at which you must be present. A packed lunch will be required for all meetings and we will generally finish towards the end of the afternoon. On occasion we will be walking for some distance over ground which may be rough. **This means that some meetings are not suitable for all participants.** Please do read the [BSBI advice to participants on field meetings](#) and consider whether your attendance will adversely affect how much ground can be covered. Cambridgeshire meetings are usually "green" (ie easy



Hope Farm group on the 2023 excursion  
[Peter Leonard]



going) or “amber” (some more rapid walking required or over rough ground). Some meetings have been deliberately arranged to allow wide participation. Meeting places have been chosen as having some parking space, but this can not be guaranteed. Several landowners specifically request no dogs, and the BSBI guidance is not to have dogs (except guide dogs) at meetings, so if you do have a dog, please leave it at home. Our meetings often produce some surprising and interesting records so do come along if you can.

### **Saturday, March 23, 10:00, South-east churchyards: Green**

Continuing with our early season format of starting with churchyards we will explore some in the south east of the county. We will begin at Ashley and its cemetery then continue to Woodditton (11:45), Borough Green (13:30), Brinkley (14:30) and Weston Colville (15:30). We might call in at Six Mile Bottom as we return if there is time.

### **Tuesday, April 16, 10:00, Hatley Park Estate**

There are several County Wildlife Sites on the Estate lands. On this visit we plan to record part of the Cambridge – Bedford Disused Railway and some stewardship areas which have been strewn with green hay from the Park meadow. The Meadow is the only current site for *Saxifraga granulata* (**Meadow Saxifrage**) in the west of the county, so we hope that it may now have taken in the stewardship areas. The railway has a rich grassland flora including *Trifolium ochroleucon* (**Sulphur Clover**). The meeting point to be confirmed by email.



Blue flowered variant of *Anagallis arvensis* (**Scarlet Pimpernel**) on the Stetchworth Estate [Jonathan Shanklin]

### **Saturday, May 11, 10:00, RSPB Hope Farm**

Following our interesting visit in 2023 (see report above), when we found several interesting species new to the farm we will visit some other areas to see spring flowering species. Meet at the farm car park TL332625.

### **Sunday, June 9, 11:00 Abington Pigotts**

Unfortunately permission to visit Bassingbourn Airfield was not granted. We will therefore explore the area around the village of Abington Pigotts. Meet at the church TL304446. Unless there is a service it should be possible to park in the lane.

### **Thursday, June 20, 10:00, Duxford Airfield**

There is only one record in the database that specifically relates to Duxford Airfield so it is in need of some recording. We plan to visit the barracks area, where *Clinopodium acinos* (**Basil Thyme**) has been mentioned as being present and the airfield area. You will need to book in advance for this meeting as the Imperial War Museum requires a list of visitors and car registration numbers. Details of where to meet will be sent to those who book.

### **Tuesday, July 9, 10:00, Wicken Fen: Amber**

We made a late season visit in 2023 only visiting a small part of the Fen, but still found much of interest (see report above). We will aim to find some more of the well-known species not reported post Atlas and once again add a few casuals. We may

concentrate on Verralls Fen, which has had scrub clearance work carried out over the winter. Meet at the car park TL564706. Charges will apply to those who are not members of the National Trust.

**Saturday, August 3, 10:00, SE Cambridgeshire Woods: Amber**

I am approaching the Thurlow Estate for permission to visit two of the woods south of Ten Wood. Details will be provided by email.

**Saturday, August 31, 10:00, Northstowe: Green**

The new town of Northstowe has associated open areas and we will explore some of these. Sometimes, such as in Hobson's Park, landscape planting brings with it some unexpected additions. There have already been some interesting finds, such as *Juncus tenuis* (**Slender Rush**), *Lagarosiphon major* (**Curly Waterweed**) and *Nicandra physalodes* (**Apple-of-Peru**). Meet at the Guided Busway stop at Longstanton P&R.

**Saturday, September 21, 10:30, River Nene: Amber**

Our visits to the Cambridgeshire "seaside" are usually confined to v.c.29, but this time we are going to record the part that is in administrative Cambridgeshire, though in v.c.28. One objective will be to try and refind *Bupleurum tenuissimum* (**Slender Hare's-ear**) where it was last seen in 1978. It should be possible to park on Ferry Lane somewhere near TF456140.

**Saturday, October 12, 10:00, Countryside Restoration Trust Westfield Farm: Green**

Our final visit of the year is to the CRT land of Westfield Farm. This includes arable fields that have a selection of threatened species such as *Scandix pecten-veneris* (**Shepherd's-needle**), though this will be difficult to spot this late in the year. The objective will be to try and increase the area's IAPA score, which is currently 37 and makes it a place of at least county importance. We will also visit the old railway, where we may see *Euphrasia nemorosa* (**Eyebright**). There is limited parking at TL38245524, but it may be easiest to park at Comberton church and walk south. The churchyard is under conservation management and does have interesting species, so we may walk round if there is time at the end of the day.

There may be additional meetings organised after publication of this newsletter. In addition to the Flora Group meetings, many of the Cambridge Natural History Society field meetings have a botanical bias. This year the Society has returned to TL45J in West Cambridge, where my botanical interests re-surfaced in 2004 following my organisation of walks along the Coton Footpath. There may also be further "Nature in my neighbourhood" visits to explore Cambridge streets, and visits to Coton Orchard, Wandlebury Country Park and Magog Down. Dates for all these additional meetings will be included on the [county web page](#).



Young leaves of *Scandix pecten-veneris* (**Shepherd's-needle**), taken on 2023 October 13. The cotyledon leaves are linear, with the subsequent leaves pinnate.  
[Jonathan Shanklin]



## Photo gallery



*Filipendula vulgaris* (**Dropwort**) on the Devil's Ditch [David Dives]



*Helianthemum nummularium* (**Common Rock-rose**) on the Devil's Ditch [David Dives]



*Polypogon monspeliensis* (**Annual Beard-grass**) in abundance along the Old Bedford River [Chris Preston]



*Orchis anthropophora* (**Man Orchid**) at Fulbourn Fen [Lucy Watts]



Flowering *Triglochin palustris* (**Marsh Arrowgrass**) at Wicken Fen [Peter Leonard]



*Crepis foetida* (Stinking Hawk's-beard) with ladybird [Peter Leonard]

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