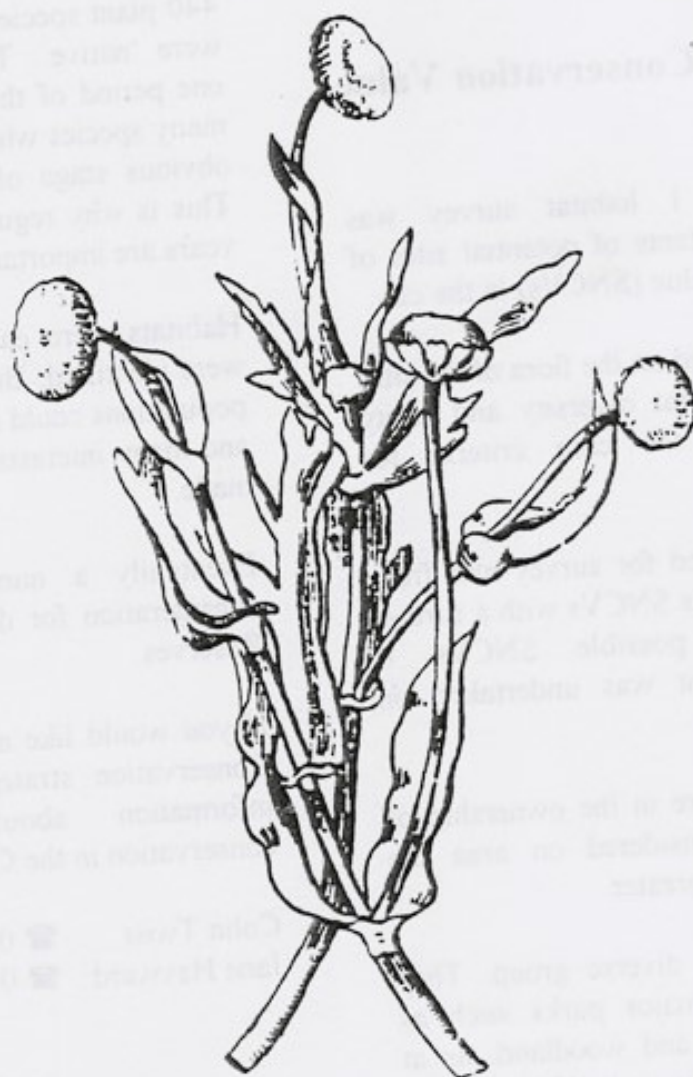


# *Parnassia*

The Newsletter of the Liverpool Botanical Society



Buttonweed, *Cotula coronopifolia*, Wirral Coast field meeting 1st June 1996

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*November 1996*

## Editorial

Welcome to *Parnassia* No. 5. The main bulk of this issue consists of summer field meeting reports. It is nice to see the thrice yearly publication of the newsletter allowing more space for these write ups, so much so, that I now feel even more disappointed at missing them all.

On the suggestion of our Secretary, Vera Gordon, I will be including a listing of forthcoming Society events in each newsletter as it seems common occurrence for programme leaflets to go astray. The full year's programme will, of course, be published in the February edition along with the AGM report.

Finally, thanks must go to all the contributors to this newsletter. Please remember to keep your eyes and ears open for any interesting bits of north-west botanical news for inclusion in future newsletters.

That's all for now

*Mike Palmer.*

**1997 Subscriptions.** As our current treasurer announced her intention to stand down at the 1996 AGM the Society will be electing a new treasurer at the 1997 meeting. Could members, therefore, please wait until they receive details of the forthcoming AGM before paying their subscriptions for 1997. These will be published in the February edition of *Parnassia*. Thank you.

## Forthcoming Meetings (evening)

All indoor meetings are held at Liverpool Museum, William Brown Street. Please use the lower basement entrance (*Disabled Entrance*) and wait for a member of staff to take you to the meeting room. All evening meetings commence at 7.30.

**10th December. *Trees and their Timbers.***  
Dr Angus Gunn.

**14th January. *Annual General Meeting.***  
Followed by a resume of the 1996 field

meetings. Members are encouraged to contribute slides.

**11th February. *The Conservation of Mosslands and their Plant Communities.***  
Dr Martha Newton.

**11th March. *Plants, People, Places.***  
(rescheduled from 8th October 1996).  
Mike Palmer.

## Liverpool Museum News

### Natural History Centre

The *Plants, People, Places* display, reported in the last issue, has been extended to run until the end of December when it will be replaced by a display looking at the range of plants we use, often unknowingly, around the house on a daily basis. For example, how many times a day do you use seaweed? Why not come in and find out. This display will run until the end of February 1997.

The Centre is also currently hosting a display of recently collected fungi which also runs until the end of the year. The display comprises local specimens collected over the last two years which have been preserved by means of freeze-drying. These include a massive Cep, *Boletus edulis*, collected in Eastham Woods, a marvellous cluster of Bird's-nest Fungi, *Cyathus olla*, from Calderstones Park, sections through Stinkhorn eggs, *Phallus impudicus*, and a one of King Alfred's Cakes, *Daldinia concentrica*, showing the concentric lines.

### Internet

The Natural History Centre is now fully linked up to the information super highway so if you fancy *surfing* through the New York Botanic Gardens, determining a few lichens or browsing the North West Fungus Group's pages please come on down.

Please note, the Natural History Centre is open every afternoon (except Monday) 1.00 till 4.30.  
☎ 0151-478-4291.

### History of the Mersey Basin Conference.

Friday and Saturday 5/6th July saw the Ecology and Landscape Development: History

of the Mersey Basin conference held at the Merseyside Maritime Museum. The conference, organised by our former President, Eric Greenwood, comprised 24 speakers and attracted some 160 delegates. The content was wide-ranging covering climate, human influence, landscape, habitats, fauna and flora. For the latter, speakers included Dr George Russell (marine algae), Professor Brian Fox (lichens) and Eric Greenwood (vascular plants). A conference report is scheduled - details and review to appear in a future issue.

*Mike Palmer*

## Sites of Nature Conservation Value in Liverpool

*Colin Twist*

In 1995 a Phase 1 habitat survey was undertaken by consultants of potential sites of nature conservation value (SNCVs) in the city.

The survey concentrated on the flora of the sites with species and habitat diversity and rarity plus naturalness as the core criteria for evaluation.

69 sites were considered for survey and from these 25 were selected as SNCVs with a further six highlighted as possible SNCVs if appropriate management was undertaken on them.

Over half the SNCVs are in the ownership of the City but when considered on area the proportion is very much greater.

The SNCVs are a very diverse group. They include all or part of major parks such as Sefton and Calderstones and woodland, as at Stockton's Wood which is part of the Speke Hall National Trust Estate. Other sites include the Loop Line Cycleway from Gateacre to Fazakerley on the disused Cheshire Lines Railway, the Mersey Estuary and the Leeds-Liverpool Canal.

With the basic information gathered on the City's natural resource a Nature Conservation Strategy is being prepared by the Council with the assistance of various partners.

This strategy will outline the need to preserve the sites and to adopt management plans for their enhancement, interpretation etc.

More information on each site is still required to provide a full picture throughout the season and work on further surveys will continue wherever possible. We would be pleased to receive any information on sites which are important to nature conservation in the city from readers.

The initial habitat survey identified a total of 440 plant species on the 69 sites of which 73% were 'native'. The survey visit, made just at one period of the year, will not have included many species which were not in flower or at an obvious stage of development at that period. This is why regular surveys throughout future years are important.

Habitats were easier to assess and 43 types were identified. Bird, mammal and invertebrate populations could not be assessed in great depth and many interesting discoveries are still to be made.

Eventually a number of SNCVs will receive consideration for designation as Local Nature Reserves.

If you would like a copy of the Draft Nature Conservation strategy or would like further information about aspects of nature conservation in the City please contact:

Colin Twist ☎ 0151 225 4582 or  
Jane Hayward ☎ 0151 225 5654

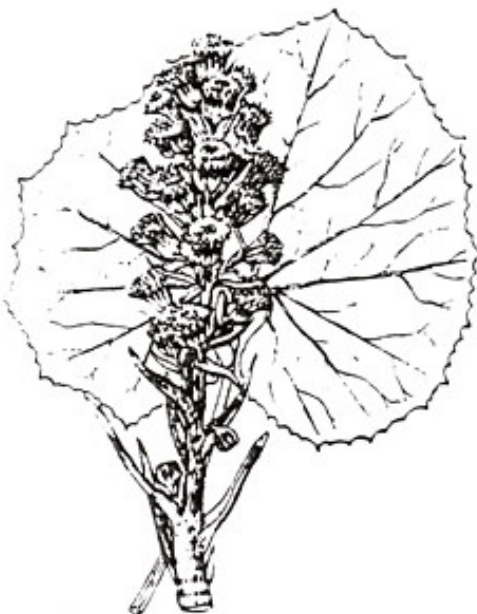
The Editors of *Parnassia* would welcome articles, news and requests for help for publishing in the newsletter from organisations, students or free-wheeling individuals undertaking botanical activities in the north-west.

## Field Meeting Reports

### Hope 20th April

Leader - Miss Vera Gordon.

From Hope railway station the hedges along the footpath towards Caergwle sheltered an array of spring flowers such as Lesser Celandine, *Ranunculus ficaria*, Barren Strawberry, *Potentilla sterilis*, Dog's Mercury, *Mercurialis perennis*, and Ivy Leaved Speedwell, *Veronica hederifolia*. Down by the old pack horse bridge over the River Alyn the Toothwort, *Lathraea squamaria*, was still in flower though hidden by lush growth of Ramson leaves, *Allium ursinum*. Butterbur, *Petasites hybridus*, both male and female plants, were in good flower on the riverbank.



Butterbur, *Petasites hybridus*

A welcome though unscheduled break was made at the church hall where their ladies were holding a coffee morning in aid of the Welsh League of Youth's Eisteddfod near Wrexham. They were delighted to have a party of eighteen. Refreshed, we continued up a steep hill across meadows spangled with flowers of Wood Anemones, *Anemone nemorosa*. Lunch was taken above a small wood where Wood Sorrel, *Oxalis acetosella*, more Wood Anemones and Moschatel (Town Hall Clock), *Adoxa moschatellina*, were found.

Both Common and Early Dog Violets, *Viola riviniana* and *Viola reichenbachiana*, were seen on the steep banks of a narrow lane with Opposite-leaved Golden Saxifrage, *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, and the Soft Shield Fern, *Polystichum setiferum*.

The path to Cefn y Bedd, usually a running stream, was quite dry, but the fertile stems of Giant Horsetail, *Equisetum telmateia*, had good cones of spores and were abundant. Clumps of Primroses were seen under the trees but further along we gasped at the sight of a hillside below a wood absolutely yellow with primroses.

An optional detour during a tea break was made to see the Alternate-leaved Golden Saxifrage, *Chrysosplenium alternifolium*, which was just about over but Marsh Marigolds, *Caltha palustris*, Ramsons, and Bluebells, *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, were just coming into flower. A final lane had banks of Greater Stitchwort, *Stellaria holostea*, with their flowers wide open in the sunshine and down by another bridge over the Alyn the Hornbeam, *Carpinus betulus*, was admired.

### Littleborough 18th May

Leader - Peter Gateley

It was a bright start when 12 members and visitors set off in an easterly direction from Littleborough station. On the way to the canal a self-sown bush of the Red-berried Elder, *Sambucus racemosa*, was found in full flower, its inflorescences smaller, more rounded and yellower than our native Elder. Over the canal we headed along an industrial valley where Bogbean, *Menyanthes trifoliata*, was flowering by a lodge dam and where 'Easter Ledges' (Common Bistort), *Persicaria bistorta*, formed great leafy patches along the stream banks. The Eales valley proved quite diverse and plant-rich, with woodlands, grasslands, hedges and wetlands but as we progressed upwards the acidity of the local soils began to assert itself. Our lunch stop was in the shelter of the valley, just west of Owlets Hall, sitting in amongst Wavy Hair-grass, *Deschampsia flexuosa*, Moor Mat-grass, *Nardus stricta*, and Crowberry, *Empetrum nigrum*, with Marsh

Violet, *Viola palustris*, in the banks of the stream below.

After lunch things got bleaker as we passed through a recent-looking golf course, with many new trees planted, proceeding upwards towards the moors. On the way some track-side Blinks, *Montia fontana*, cheered us up in the lee of a dry-stone wall, but eventually we started climbing through species-poor acidic grassland and eventually into Crowberry-dominated moorland. Away from the track the desiccated moorland generally held only about half a dozen species of vascular plants, with both Common Cottongrass, *Eriophorum angustifolium*, and Hare's-tail Cottongrass, *E. vaginatum*, notable amongst the Crowberry. At this level the track up to Blackstone Edge became very interesting in its own right, a superb survival of Roman road construction with edging kerbs, paving blocks and central gully all hewn out of millstone grit and still forming extant stretches after more than 1500 years! After our climb there was not time to search for moorland rarities on top of Blackstone Edge Moor, instead we headed north towards the reservoir and then across Cowberry Hill and back down into Littleborough to catch the 4.30 train back towards Liverpool. The whole walk was conducted in fine dry bright weather, despite the prevailing changeable conditions.

## Wirral Coast, Moreton to Meols

1st June

Leader - Dr Keith Watson

After meeting at Moreton station and sheltering from a quick shower, we walked towards the coast on a bright but windy and cool day. The overgrown meadow behind Pasture Road has been cleared and Celery-leaved Buttercup, *Ranunculus sceleratus*, and the, not common in Wirral, Common Fumitory, *Fumaria officinalis*, were found along the new ditch. After crossing the ditch with some difficulty, we walked through the meadows towards the lighthouse where Bulbous Buttercup, *Ranunculus bulbosa*, was in good flower.

The meeting was over part of the route of the B.S.B.I. Wirral Coast meeting the next day,

and I was happy to find a small clump of Buttonweed, *Cotula coronopifolia*, on the edge of one of the ponds where Fringed Water Lily, *Nymphoides peltata*, has recently appeared. Both Common and Long-headed Poppy, *Papaver rhoeas*, and *P. dubium* were present on sandy ground nearby.



Celery-leaved Buttercup, *Ranunculus sceleratus*

Moving onto the scrape at Moreton for lunch we found Knotted Clover, *Trifolium striatum*, Fenugreek, *T. ornithopoides*, Slender trefoil, *Trifolium micranthum*, and Bird's-foot, *Ornithopus perpusillus*, together with a wide variety of other tiny early dune plants. Again, as in 1991 and also the next day at the B.S.B.I. meeting, the search for Subterranean Clover, *Trifolium subterraneum*, was not successful.

We then moved on towards Meols, past yellow clouds of Cyprus Spurge, *Euphorbia cyparissias*. Near Parkfields we found Parsley, *Anthriscus caucalis*, Crow Garlic, *Allium vineale*, Artichoke, *Cynara scolymus*, and the female Hybrid Black Poplar, *Populus canadensis* 'Marilandica' with long catkins.

After deciding not to walk as far as Vauxhall Kirby, we explored a grassy relict dune behind the houses on the promenade at Meols. A large number of new records and records were found including natives such as Thyme, *Thymus polytrichus*, and Slender Trefoil, *Trifolium micranthum*, and also many

naturalised escapes such as Dropwort, *Filipendula vulgaris*. Bloody Crane's-bill *Geranium sanguineum*. Garden Cat-mint *Nepeta x faassenii*, and Apple Mint, *Mentha x villosa*. Finally, at tea time the highlight of the day for me was to find a new site for Mackay's Horsetail, *Equisitum x trachyodon*, which was compared the next day with the plants at Red Rocks marsh, Hoylake.

### Hall Road 15th June

Leader - Mrs Pat Lockwood

For once the trains and buses were kind to us, arriving on time. Some of our members travelled long distances, some using their own transport. It was also a family affair, i.e. the Duerdens and the Rangers, and we were so pleased to have them join us. After our "hello's" and "nice to see you's", we set off from Hall Road Station. I counted 14 members but wonder now if it is time I went back to school as I could only recall 13. Yes, I did include myself in the 13.

The day was warm and sunny, perfect for botanising, maybe too warm. We passed close to the Coastguards house with *Rosa rugosa* as a good hedge. It was in very good flower, smells nice too. It also grows very well in the dunes, and we saw lots of it. Another rose enjoying the dune system is the Burnet Rose, *Rosa pimpinellifolia*. It is a beautiful plant, covered in bristles, and it was also covered in cream coloured roses. One of our members said that for him, it was his best flower of the day. We always ask each other what has been the best of the day, and the answers are very varied from the commonest of plants to the rarest. We made our way along the paths close to the West Lancs Golf Club. There were many golfers on the course. I am sure they were having as nice a day as us, but of course we didn't really think so.

I think the flora in the area we were in is well worth a visit, and no I am not biased. I remember the first time I went there with Vera and Anne; it was magic. There are also many garden escapes, now well and truly naturalised and I name a few: Red Hot Pokers, Laburnum, Honeysuckle, Marguerites, Cat Mint,

Solomon's Seal, Orange Blossom. The area was covered in Biting Stonecrop, *Sedum acre*, and Bird's-foot Trefoil, *Lotus corniculatus*, and the larger Greater Bird's-foot Trefoil, *Lotus pedunculatus*. We also saw Smooth Hawk's Beard, *Crepis capillaris*, the hybrid between red and white Campion, *Silene x hampeana*, Horse Radish, *Amoracia rusticana*, Hoary Cress, *Lepidium draba*, Common Cat's ear, *Hypochaeris radicata*, Yarrow, *Achillea millefolium*, Goat's-beard, *Tragopogon pratensis*, with a huge pappus, Viper's Bugloss, *Echium vulgare*, a very beautiful plant, Tree Lupin, *Lupinus arboreus*, Wild Parsnip, *Pastinaca sativa* (I love the smell of the crushed leaves), Dog's Rose, *Rosa canina*, Blue Fleabane, *Erigeron acer* (a very favourite of mine, and I haven't seen much of it this year), Wild Mignonette, *Reseda lutea*, Tumbling Mustard, *Sisymbrium altissimum*, and Black Mustard, *Brassica nigra*.



Wild Parsnip, *Pastinaca sativa*

We sat on a flat grassy area near Hightown for our lunch, most of us more than ready for a rest, and then onwards to look for the Sulphur Cinquefoil, *Potentilla recta*, and in the same area Changing Forget-me-not, *Myosotis discolor*, Bee Orchid, *Ophrys apifera*, Northern Marsh Orchid, *Dactylorhiza purpurella*, and Common Twayblade, *Listera ovata*.

We walked further on towards the Hightown Visitor Centre to see in particular Leafy Spurge, *Euphorbia pseudovirgata*. We also saw Sea Spurge, *Euphorbia paralias*, and Cypress Spurge, *Euphorbia cyparissias*.

Leaving Hightown we walked along the coast and saw Sea Kale *Crambe maritima*, English Scurvy-grass *Cochlearia anglica*, and also fruiting heads of Danish Scurvy-grass *Cochlearia danica*. The Yellow-horned Poppy *Claucium flavum* was in good flower, but their seed pods hadn't reached their full potential, which is very large indeed. After looking at the Sea Milkwort *Glaux maritima*, Sea Sandwort *Honkenya peploides*, Greater Sea Spurrey *Spergularia media* and Sea Plantain *Plantago maritima*, we wandered into the sand dunes, found a good 'spot', and sat down and had our tea.

Afterwards, along the coastal path in the direction of Hall Road, we found the Small-flowered Crane's-bill, *Geranium pusillum*, Hairy Tare, *Vicia hirsuta*, and *Salix cinerea* ssp. *oleifolia*.

If I haven't given your favourite an honourable mention, I am sorry, it is so hard knowing what to mention and what to leave out. I should like to thank you all for being so helpful and hope that you all enjoyed the day as much as I did.

*Footnote:* An added interest to us all was the sighting of birds, butterflies and insects. At times we were very close to Stonechats and the Skylarks. Also Black-headed Gulls, some now losing their black heads, and Lesser Black-backed Gulls, Curlews and Oyster Catchers. The butterflies were numerous, including Tortoiseshells, Painted Ladies, Skipper and Gamekeepers. Lastly, we saw Ragwort, *Senecio jacobaea*, covered with Cinnabar moth caterpillars, completely stripping some plants of their leaves.

## Seaforth - Rimrose Valley & Whabb Reserve 6th July

Leader - Mrs Pat Lockwood

Report by Miss Vera Gordon

We crossed the road from Seaforth railway station and entered the reserve and did not touch another road until we finished the walk and went to nearby railway stations in Bootle. This area, though used by locals for years, has been improved and officially opened in September 1995.

The party were warned that lunch could not be thought of until the 282 species already recorded for the tetrad had been increased to 300! No one went hungry as when we found a pleasant spot to sit the score was 311. We had provided interest to the passers-by and one lady walking a dog stayed with us a while spotting plants herself.



Great Spearwort, *ranunculus lingua*

The ditch of Great Spearwort, *Ranunculus lingua*, with large golden flowers shining in the sun was a rare sight and even the Scentless Mayweed, *Tripleurospermum inodorum*, bordering the wooden steps where we lunched, could not have been improved as a garden feature. In a few places nature had been helped with seed scattering, here we saw Cornflowers, *Centaurea cyanus*, Red Poppies, *Papaver rhoeas*, and Corn Marigold, *Chrysanthemum segetum*.

Eventually we arrived on the towpath of the Leeds and Liverpool Canal where there was quite a different range of plants typical of canals. The Fringed Water-lily, *Nymphoides peltata*, was not yet in flower. This was a rare naturalised species in the area but about 25 years ago it began to spread over miles of this canal and is now dredged out every year. The hybrid Reedmace (Bulrush), *Typha x glauca*, was seen in large colonies.

### Fazakerley 27th July

Leader - Miss Vera Gordon

Since this meeting was planned the building of the proposed, and much disputed, new prison had been started, covering much of the area we would have examined. However, we still found much of interest. A Small-leaved Lime, *Tilia cordata*, was in good flower, the cymes held quite erect above the leaves. Further on there were a few large Ash trees, *Fraxinus excelsior*, of the cultivar 'Diversifolia' ('Monophylla'). The large simple leaves gave a very distinctive appearance. We had been following a tributary of the River Alt starting as the Tue Brook and then continuing as the Fazakerley Brook. We followed this through a maintained park-like area of paths and beds of shrubs where we found many interesting weeds introduced with the shrubs and doing well, making good additions to our records.



Small-leaved Lime, *Tilia cordata*

Lunch was taken in the banks of the River Alt when a grapnel was used to obtain some Broad-leaved and Fennel Pondweed, *Potamogeton natans* and *P. pectinatus*. Along Back Gillmoss

Lane we crossed another tributary of the Alt, Knowsley Brook, which further upstream is called the Croxteth Brook, on the banks of which Bistort, *Polygonum bistorta*, grows.

To get to the other side of the M57 we had a short road walk where dried remains of Danish Scurvy-grass, *Cochlearia danica*, were seen. From here it was a mile along the valley of the Kirkby Brook, another tributary of the Alt, which starts its life as the Mill Brook flowing from Kirkby Mere. When the new town of Kirkby was built, this area was saved and some trees planted, obscuring the buildings. The White Poplars [*populus alba*] here and there along the brook added to the scene and a couple of tall Balsam Poplars, *Populus trichocarpa*, were examined.

At Kirkby railway station some members left the party and the others continued back to Fazakerly along an area recently planted as part of the Community Forest Woods. Here included: Musk Mallow, *Malva moschata*, Greater Knapweed, *Centaurea scabiosa*, and Field Pepperwort, *Lepidium campestre*.

Then to Fazakerley siding where because of two dry summers and encroaching coarser species, the Coral Necklace, *Illecebrum verticillatum*, has almost gone, however, the Twiggy Spurge, *Euphorbia x pseudovirgata*, had not suffered. A more recent invader on some new rubbish tips was Great Lettuce, *Lactuca virosa*.

### Moore Nature Reserve 17th August

Leader - Mr John Holness

After slight confusion as to where the leader would meet the party from Liverpool, we caught the bus to Moore and then a pleasant walk to the Reserve.

On arrival, we were met by Estelle Linney, one of the wardens, who first gave us a short history of the site. The site was crossed by the Runcorn-Latchford Canal, completed 1804, which was abandoned when it was cut by the Manchester Ship Canal, completed 1896, which borders the site, both canals leaving spoil dumps on the site. The area became low grade pasture with small woods of hawthorn, oak,



alder, and birch. The potential ecological value of the area was noted in the *Master Plan for the Warrington New Town* and a conservation group carried out an ecological study of the Moore area in 1974. In the 1980's there were proposals for a landfill site in the area, the outcome was that planning permission was given for the landfill and in compensation a nature reserve was created. The reserve while not having any national rarities did have a wide range of habitats with damp and dry grassland, various woodlands and the Runcorn-Latchford Canal which was largely dried out. The owners promptly set about extracting as much sand as possible from the site altering the topography and creating some new lakes, which will be soon completed.

We set off up a field being invaded by Gorse, *Ulex europaeus*, to which recent plantings of trees and shrubs have been added and partly dug out where the visitor centre is planned. Here we found Common Centaury, *Centaureum erythraea*, Cornish Heath, *Erica vagans*, Musk Mallow, *Malva moschata*, Large-flowered Evening-primrose, *Oenothera glazioviana*, Heath Groundsel, *Senecio sylvaticus*, Sand Spurrey, *Spergularia rubra*, and two species of Nettle, *Urtica dioica* and *U. urens*.



Sand Spurrey, *Spergularia rubra*

On to a quarried area which had been and dale with ponds which had already planted with marginal and aquatic including Curly Waterweed, *Laguncularia major*, and Fringed Water-lily, *Nymphaea peltata*, then along the bed of the canal, footpath with Butterbur, *Petasites hybridus*, the sides, to some much disturbed grass with Marsh Cudweed *Gnaphalium uliginosum* and Trailing St Johns-wort, *Hypericum humifusum*. To Pond Wood where Water violet, *Hottonia palustris*, successfully transplanted from a pond now under the tip, established, and on dry land, Water Figwort, *Scrophularia auriculata*, and Swedish Whitebeam, *Sorbus intermedia*, were seen.

Then back to the canal again, now on the towpath, where there was Perennial Wall-rocket, *Diplotaxis tenuifolia*, Hop, *Humulus lupulus*, and Slender Rush, *Juncus tenuis*. A detour to a field reverting to scrub revealed Corn Mint, *Mentha arvensis*. Finally, leaving the canal, through fields with Heath-grass *Danthonia decumbens*, and Biting Stonecrop *Sedum acre*, we went back to our starting point having seen only a small part of the reserve.

### Bebington 7th September

Leader - Dr Keith Watson

On a fine warm day the party met at Bebington station to visit the New Ferry Butterfly Park, a Cheshire Wildlife Trust reserve. We were met by Mel Roberts, who lives next door to the reserve, and who showed us round the surprisingly large area pointing out features of interest. Although mainly an insect reserve with exceptional diversity, a good variety of plants were found, including Wild Carrot, *Daucus carota*, Hoary Ragwort, *Senecio erucifolius*, Small Toadflax, *Chaenorhinum minus*, Figwort, *Scrophularia nodosa*, Annual Wall-rocket, *Diplotaxis muralis*, and Common Imperforate St John's-wort, *Hypericum maculatum*. A total of about 150 plants were recorded, although some have been planted to encourage the insect life, and a list has been prepared for the C.W.T.

After a brisk walk through New Ferry shopping centre, unfortunately leaving some party members behind, we had lunch on the edge of the cliffs on the Mersey shore, with a good view across the water to Liverpool. After lunch we found Dyer's Greenweed, *Genista tinctoria*, in grassland on the cliff top, and then went down to the shore to find the Common Cord-grass, *Spartina anglica*. Annual Sea-blite, *Suaeda maritima*. Glasswort, *Salicornia dolichostachya*, and Sea Aster, *Aster tripolium*. Yellowwort, *Blackstonia perfoliata*, was present on the cliffs as we walked along the beach towards Rock Park, and Reflexed Saltmarsh-grass, *Puccinellia distans*, was found on the Esplanade footpath. The footpath was closed towards Rock Ferry pier, but we found Sweet Cicely, *Myrrhis odorata*, as we walked towards Rock Park. Hoary Mustard, *Hirschfeldia incana*, and Shaggy Soldier, *Galinsoga quadriradiata*, were found on waste ground as we made our way to Rock Ferry station at the end of our meeting.



Sweet Cicely, *Myrrhis odorata*

### Childwall 5th October

Leader - Donna Hughes (Broad Green Station to Childwall Woods) and Peter Gately (Black Woods).

This was a joint meeting with The North West Fungus Group to Childwall. Unfortunately the original leader for the field meeting, Mike Palmer could not join the group until later in the afternoon. Seventeen people from both groups turned up, some of us being members of both. We also welcomed some newcomers. We met at Broad Green Station and walked along the old Loop Line towards Childwall woods. This area has been previously well recorded by Vera Gordon. Notable species (botanical and fungal!) along this track were the White-stemmed Bramble, *Rubus cockburnianus*, and the Wood Blewit, *Lepista nuda*. We also saw some interesting galls all present on one tree; the artichoke, marble and oak apple gall.

We stopped to have lunch just before the end of the track and here we found *Clitocybe odora*, the Aniseed Toadstool, so called because of its lovely distinctive smell. Walking from lunch up to the woods we stopped to look at the Silver Birch and Downy Birch, *Betula pendula* and *B. pubescens*, growing side by side.

The churchyard of All Saints was well worth stopping off at, for here we found a group of Fly Agaric, *Amanita muscaria*. Also present was Honey Fungus, *Armillaria mellea*, Ugly Milk-cap, *Lactarius turpis*, and the Common Earth-ball, *Scleroderma citrinum*.

The most exciting find of the day was the discovery of quite a large group of the rare species of fungi, *Phaeolepiota aurea* in Black Woods. Many took photographs of this magnificent large yellow toadstool. Two specimens were taken back to the Museum and put into the freezer, which will be incorporated into the Museum collection after freeze-drying. Also found in these woods were the jelly fungi *Ascocoryne sarcoides* and *Neobulgaria pura*.



## From the Archives

Donna Hughes.

As part of the recently held and extremely well attended evening meeting with Richard Mabey, time was set aside after his presentation for tea and biscuits. Whilst in conversation with fellow members we all agreed what a nice opportunity this provided to meet at a social level. Vera, a member of the society for ? years, reminded us that this was nothing new and in the societies' hey-day social gatherings of a much more formal nature were an annual event. This prompted me to investigate the archives for further reference.

*Footnote:* Since this piece was written we have lost the wonderful *Phaeolepiota* specimens. Unfortunately the Botany Department suffered a power failure the weekend following the field trip and we lost not only these but many other fungi from this season's collection.

Donna Hughes.

*Toenote:* Whilst preparing for this meeting I came across a copy of Howard Channon's 'A Pride of Parks'. In this we learn that Childwall Woods was originally part of the pleasure grounds of Childwall Abbey - a mansion built in 1780 and pulled down after the last war. The woods were given to the City in 1965.

Blackwoods occupies part of the former Childwall Heath which in 1718 was in the ownership of the Liverpool attorney, Isaac Green. The land was passed down through the family (and through various name changes) until in 1939 it was given to the City by 4th Marquis of Salisbury. At this time the woods extended beyond their present boundary, however, after the war surrounding land was *surrendered* for housing development. The oldest trees here are Beech and Sweet Chestnut, and are thought to date from the mid eighteenth century. The Oaks are younger, probably early twentieth century, older specimens presumably having been felled for their valuable timber.

Mike Palmer.

The 'Annual Soirée and Conversazione' would take place in February, the first one being in 1907, probably at the Hartley Botanical Laboratories at Liverpool University where all the indoor meetings were held at the time. I can not find the programme of that meeting, but the next year following a "short Lantern Lecture", refreshments were served and a 'conversazione' was held where members could tour the laboratories.

In 1909 the sub-committee of the council decided that the February meeting should take the form of a dinner, followed by "a social evening, music, etc." This dinner was going to be held at the Bear's Paw Restaurant on Lord Street but was later changed "in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the members" to take the form of a 'soirée' ("evening dress optional"), at the Gainsborough Restaurant, Dale Street. Over the next few years the venues changed but the decided-upon formula of exhibits, competitions, a concert, and light refreshment, remained the same. Accommodation was booked at the venues "in order that members may have the fullest opportunities for social intercourse and for the expansion of that symbiosis which has ever been a feature of the society". Grand embossed invitations were sent out and beautiful gilt-edged programmes of the evenings entertainment were printed. (See over for a sample of the grand affair of 1911).

ANNUAL

Soiree and Conversazione,

TO BE HELD AT THE

PALATINE CAFE, LORD STREET,  
LIVERPOOL.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 21st, 1911,

7.30—11 p.m.



TICKETS (Single) - - - 2/-

Programme of Concert.



Pianoforte Solo	"Songs without words"	
	Mr. A. J. Kennison.	Mendelssohn
Song	"Roses"	Stephen Adams
	Mr. F. J. Routledge.	
Song	"Villanelle"	Eva Dell'Acqua
	Miss Ethel M. Davies.	
Violin Solo	"Andante and Bolero"	Danila
	Miss Ada Whitehead.	
Song	"Good Night, Beloved!"	Balfe
	Mr. James Barr.	
Song	"April Morn"	Robt. Batten
	Miss Ethel M. Davies.	
Reading	"Annals of the Year"	...
	Miss Ethel Warhurst.	
Song	"The Day is Done"	Balfe
	Mr. James Barr.	
Song	"An Evening Song"	J. Blumenthal
	Mr. F. J. Routledge.	

Accompanist—Mr. A. J. KENNISON.

I'm not sure when or why these events ceased to happen, or whether they dwindled each year with the falling membership, maybe Vera could enlighten me. Pulling myself back to the future,

I would like to suggest that as a society we re-engage ourselves on the social front. I'm not suggesting we mimic the auspicious occasions of a past era, but I think it would be nice to take an opportunity once a year to get together on a social level, maybe cheese and wine served after the AGM, or even a meal out to a restaurant. Anyway, it's food for thought. Let me know if anyone has any suggestions or preferences.

CONTACTS:

President:	Dr Angus Gunn.
Vice Presidents:	Dr John Edmondson Mr Peter Gateley.
Hon. Secretary:	Vera Gordon, 23 Alder Grove, Waterloo, Liverpool L22 2AL.
Hon. Treasurer:	Jean Bentley, 16 Waterford Road, Oxton, Wirral L43 6UU.
Hon. Editors:	Mike Palmer. Natural History Centre, Liverpool Museum William Brown St. Liverpool L3 8EN ☎ 0151 478 4291
	Peter Gateley 21 Lathom Avenue Ormskirk L39 2EU
Hon. Librarian	Donna Hughes Dept. Botany Liverpool Museum As above