

Parnassia

The Newsletter of the Liverpool Botanical Society



**Autumn Lady's-tresses, *Spiranthes spiralis*
Great Orme 14th September 2002**

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Editorial

Welcome to Parnassia 2004, the first since 2002. This issue is to get us towards being up to date by covering reports of the Summer 2002 and 2003 field meetings, and the indoor meetings for the winter 2002/2003.

Thanks for help with this issue go to the contributors: Rob Duffy, Dave Earl, John Edmondson, Eric Greenwood, Pat Lockwood, Tony Parker, Guy Sloman and, especially Susan Taylor who has made a big contribution to several field meeting reports.

It is hoped to produce another issue next year, which will be the 10th anniversary of the first Parnassia in April 1995.

Any contributions to the next issue will be very welcome

Thanks

Keith Watson
Wendy Atkinson
December 2004

Field Trips 2002

Dibbinsdale

6th April 2002

Leader – Peter Miller

14 members met the warden Peter Miller at Bromborough Rake station, who told us a brief history of the site. The Dibbin brook has cut its way through a surface layer of boulder clay, left from the retreat of the last ice age, and into the sandstone bedrock below to form an incised valley known as Dibbinsdale. In 1978 the Nature Conservancy Council identified the site

as a 'Site of Special Scientific Interest' (SSSI) due mainly to the presence of the largest remnant of natural 'ancient' woodland in Merseyside. In 1983, Dibbinsdale was designated as a Local Nature reserve.

As we descended into the wood with Oak, *Quercus* sp., Ash, *Fraxinus excelsior*, and Sycamore, *Acer pseudoplatanus*, with Blackthorn, *Prunus spinosa* and Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* providing a coppiced hedge, we saw Ground Elder, *Aegopodium podagraria*.

Ground cover was provided by plants such as Dog's Mercury, *Mercurialis perennis*, Lesser Celandine *Ranunculus ficaria*, Wood-sorrel *Oxalis acetosella*, Wood Speedwell *Veronica montana*, Opposite-leaved Golden-saxifrage, *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, Wood Sanicle, *Sanicula europaea*, Hedge mustard, *Sisymbrium officinale* and introduced Pink Purslane, *Montia sibirica*.



Wood Anemone, *Anemone nemorosa*



However, the masses of Wood Anemone, *Anemone nemorosa* put on a spectacular show for us and absolutely covered the woodland floor. Other plants adding colour to the day included Ramsons, *Allium ursinum*, Snowdrop, *Galanthus nivalis* and Bluebell, *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*. Carrying on along the path we came across two huge Beech, *Fagus sylvatica* trees and the wonderful Hornbeams, *Carpinus betulus*.

Further into the woodland there were wetter, boggy areas where we found Brooklime, *Veronica beccabunga*, Marsh Marigold, *Caltha palustris* and Himalayan Balsam, *Impatiens glandulifera*. Here, reed beds of *Phragmites australis* have developed, winter flooding ensuring their conservation, and weirs have been built to maintain water levels.

We saw the arboretum, which stands on the site of the former Woodslee house where trees such as the Monkey-puzzle *Araucaria araucana*, Coastal and Dawn Redwoods, *Sequoia sempervirens* and *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*, and Cherry Laurel, *Prunus laurocerasus* grew. We had lunch in the courtyard surrounded by Amelanchier and Rosemary bushes.

Wendy Atkinson

Caergwrle

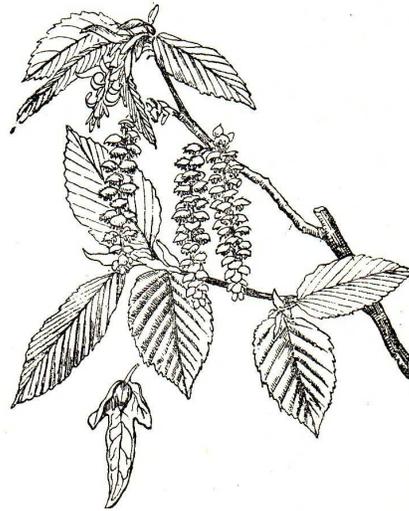
27th April 2002

Leader – Guy Sloman

After two weeks of fine summer-like weather it was disappointing to find it heavily overcast when we met at Caergwrle station but fortunately it

improved and we had very little rain. There were 14 of us including some welcome members and guests from the Manchester area.

We started, as usual, with a visit to the Packhorse bridge, passing on the way a fine specimen of Hornbeam, *Carpinus betulus*.



Hornbeam, *Carpinus betulus*

Unfortunately excavations to improve the flow of the Alyn have destroyed the habitat of the Toothwort, *Lathraea squamaria* which has been established there for many years but hopefully it will reappear before long. Nearby in an area of waste land we found Common Fumitory, *Fumaria officinalis*, in full flower together with a large Sun Spurge, *Euphorbia helioscopia*, alongside tiny specimens of Petty Spurge, *Euphorbia peplus* and a single Lamb's Lettuce, *Valerianella locusta*. Walking south along the riverbank, which is carpeted with Ramsons,



Allium ursinum, Redcurrant, *Ribes rubrum*, was in flower and the emerging spathes of Lords and Ladies, *Arum maculatum*, were prominent. On a wall in the car park in the village we discovered a fine Rustyback, *Ceterach officinarum*, a rare plant in Flint.

Continuing up the Caer Estyn road and along the path above the short lived Caergwrlle Wells building Bitter-vetch, *Lathyrus linifolius*, was growing with Bush Vetch, *Vicia sepium* and, nearby, Goldilocks, *Ranunculus auricomus*. Both Barren Strawberry, *Potentilla sterilis*, and Wild Strawberry, *Fragaria vesca*, were in flower and it was not always easy to tell the difference between them. The path across to the Alyn valley had recently been ploughed up depriving us of the usual early arable weeds but we did see Thyme-leaved Speedwell, *Veronica serpyllifolia*, and a single Field Pansy, *Viola arvensis*, elsewhere.

The wooded Alyn valley marks the boundary between vice-counties 50 Denbs. and 51 Flints. and is well known for the rather rare Alternate-leaved Golden Saxifrage, *Chrysosplenium alternifolium*. The lower valley is now dominated by Ramsons, *Allium ursinum*, and it seemed probable that the Saxifrage had been crowded out but diligent poking with sticks eventually found it alive and well under the large Ramsons leaves. The much more common Opposite-leaved Golden Saxifrage, *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, was frequent. Other plants seen on the valley floor included Wood Speedwell, *Veronica montana*, Germander Speedwell, *Veronica chamaedrys*, Crosswort, *Cruciata laevipes*,

Pendulous Sedge, *Carex pendula*, Town Hall Clock, *Adoxa moschatellina* and, just coming into flower, Wood Melick, *Melica uniflora*.

From the Alyn valley we walked through Cefn-y-bedd to the notoriously damp but botanically interesting path above the Brymbo road. Despite recent dry weather it lived up to its reputation but banks of Primroses, Bluebells, Anemones and Violets made it worthwhile. There were several Sedges in flower but, without fruits, we could only be certain of Lesser Pond-sedge, *Carex acutiformis* which was plentiful. At the start of the path we examined a single Crab Apple, *Malus sylvestris* and alongside the more open parts Marsh Valerian, *Valeriana dioica*, was in flower together with King Cups, *Caltha palustris*.

In the road leading up to Cymau we were able to compare Common Dog-violet, *Viola riviniana*, with its near relation Early Dog-violet, *Viola reichenbachiana*, the dark spurs and narrower petals of the latter being obvious despite its being almost over. Sweet Cicely, *Myrrhis odorata*, was occasional in the hedgebanks together with a single clump of Bog Stitchwort, *Stellaria uliginosa*, better known to most of us by its former name of *alsine*.

A final and welcome find was Early-purple Orchid, *Orchis mascula*, on a bank just east of Cymau. From there we walked back to the station thankful that we had almost completely avoided the rain that was forecast.

Guy Sloman



Ness

25th May 2002

No report available

Pickering's Pasture

15th June 2002

Leader - Tony Parker

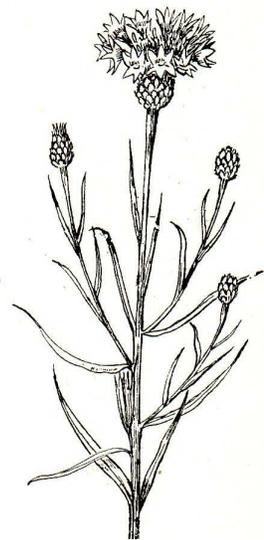
Pickering's Pasture LNR is situated on the banks of the River Mersey between Widnes and Hale village. Until the 1950s the area was grazed saltmarsh, home to many wading birds and estuary plants. For the next 30 years however, the site was used as a tip for both industrial and household waste. A mountain of rubbish built up on the marsh which has resulted in the present topography of the site.

Between 1982 and 1986 the site was reclaimed by Halton Borough Council, with assistance from Cheshire County Council, covering the refuse with clay and topsoil. The site was landscaped creating open grassy areas and small areas of woodland; a hide was erected at the western end overlooking the estuary and part of Hale Marsh. The site is now managed as a Local Nature Reserve, particularly for its butterflies and wildflowers, although, as with many other reclaimed sites, much of the flora is a mixture of 'introduced' and 'wild' species.

The main part of the site is divided into four areas according to the management regime employed. The first area visited by the group was the cornfield, an area sown with plants such as Cornflower, *Centaurea cyanus*, Corn Cockle, *Agrostemma githago*, Common Poppy, *Papaver rhoeas* and Oxeye Daisy, *Leucanthemum vulgare*.

The spring meadow, as its name suggests, is an area which comes into flower from early March into June. At the time of the visit most of the plants had gone to seed leaving the area largely grassland.

The group then went along the estuary path; this gives views across the Mersey and is part of the Trans-Pennine Trail. This is probably the most natural part of the site as minimal management work is carried out. A variety of plants were in flower at the time, including Viper's-bugloss, *Echium vulgare*, Yellow-rattle, *Rhinanthus minor*, Common Centaury, *Centaureum erythraea*, Kidney Vetch, *Anthyllis vulneria*, Field Scabious, *Knautia arvensis*, Wild Mignonette, *Reseda lutea*, Weld, *Reseda luteola* and Sainfoin, *Onobrychis viciifolia*.



Cornflower, *Centaurea cyanus*

The summer meadow is an area specifically planted to attract insects, particularly butterflies, during the summer months, with plants such as



Knapweed, *Centaurea nigra*, Bird's-foot-trefoil, *Lotus corniculatus* and Corn Marigold, *Chrysanthemum segetum*. Unfortunately the day was rather overcast so butterflies were few and far between; a few Meadow Brown and Gatekeeper were the only species of note.

Finally the group paid a visit to the wet meadow. Here plants included Meadowsweet, *Filipendula ulmaria*, Common Spotted-orchid, *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*, Yellow Iris, *Iris pseudacorus*, Hemp-agrimony, *Eupatorium cannabinum*, Ragged-Robin, *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, Cuckoo-flower, *Cardamine pratensis* and Purple-loosestrife, *Lythrum salicaria*.

Tony Parker

Moore Nature Reserve

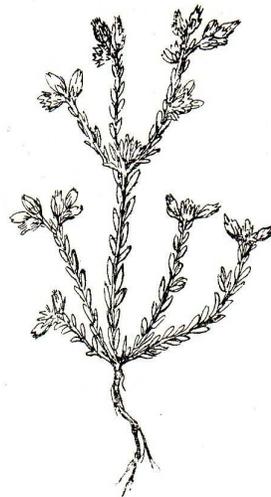
June 29th 2002

Leader – Rob Duffy

A party of 13 gathered to explore the western end of the Reserve on a relatively pleasant morning of a cool and wet summer. The walk pretty much followed the route taken by the late John Holness in August 1996, and several of the species he noted were found.

The party directed itself to the Common Cudweed, *Filago vulgaris* colony on the fringe of the sandy heath land, studded with ponds. This plant makes Moore a special place, as Newton, in his 1970 Flora, declares the species as "apparently extinct". Later, Vera found Small Cudweed, *Filago minima*, also described as "apparently extinct" by Newton.

Several members of the party made interesting finds, a few heads of Bee Orchid, *Ophrys apifera*, probably being the most appreciated. The author was, however, delighted at Margaret McCormack's discovery of a couple of flowers of the Field Mouse-ear, *Cerastium arvense*. A few scattered flowers had been found by the author, earlier in the month, further to the east, but Newton described Hilbre Island as "the only surviving locality". Tim Rogers discovered Knotted Clover, *Trifolium striatum* just as we were about to sit on it to have lunch!



Small Cudweed, *Filago minima*

The aquatic flora, despite its near inaccessibility, provided much of interest. Pat and Wendy found Spiked Water-milfoil, *Myriophyllum spicatum* and Vera confirmed Curly Waterweed, *Lagarosiphon major*. Broad-leaved Pondweed, *Potamogeton natans*, Water-soldier, *Stratiotes aloides*, Branched Bur-reed, *Sparganium erectum*, Fringed Water-lily, *Nymphoides peltata* and last, and least loved, New Zealand Pigmyweed,



Crassula helmsii completed the lunchtime listing.

This area narrowed to a footbridge over a small wetland, which led to a birch-lined pathway, resplendent with Foxgloves, *Digitaria purpurea* and intermittently jumping with migrating toadlets. The route took us back to the road where Audrey spotted Water Figwort, *Scropularia aquatica*, a minority plant in a jungle of Indian Balsam, *Impatiens glandulifera*.

A walk through woodland festooned with Climbing Corydalis, now *Ceratocarpus claviculata*, and then a meadow led us back to the starting point. On the short track leading up to it Biting Stonecrop, *Sedum acre*, Thyme-leaved Sandwort, *Arenaria serpyllifolia* and Common Stork's-bill, *Erodium cicutarium* were noted, though hardly abundant.

Rob Duffy

Ainsdale

27th July 2002

Leader – Rob Wolstenholme, Site Manager

On a warm and sunny day, our party which included several members from Manchester met at the English Nature office. We set off along a path through the pine and deciduous woods, and out onto the dunes.

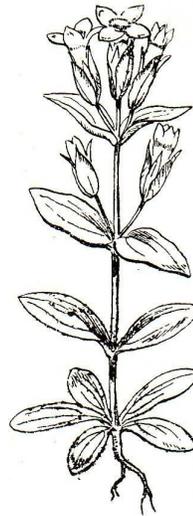
Rob explained the management of the reserve and showed us parts which were grazed (October to April) by Herdwick sheep.

The tiny flowers of Smooth Cat's-ear, *Hypochaeris glabra* were pointed out to us. Only recorded as pre-1970 in the

New Atlas of the British Flora, it was re-found in 2001 in a dune restoration area.

We admired Seaside Centaury, *Centaureum littorale* with deep pink flowers and leaves more or less parallel-sided. The delicately veined white flowers of Grass-of-Parnassus, *Parnassia palustris* grew in the damp slacks. A beautiful name for a beautiful plant.

In a sandy area we could clearly see the tracks left by a Natterjack toad (*Bufo calamita*).



Field Gentian, *Gentianella campestris*

Vera Gordon pointed out Cyperus Sedge, *Carex pseudocyperus*, with bright yellow-green and drooping flower spikes. Vera's favourite plant of the day was Field Gentian, *Gentianella campestris*, growing in profusion in the short turf. The New Atlas states that the plant has suffered a marked decline, and many sites of calcareous grassland have been lost over the years.



Therefore it was particularly pleasing to see it thriving here.

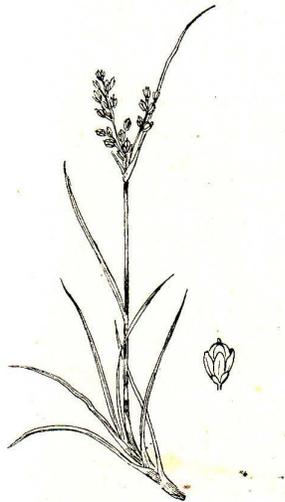
Susan Taylor

Carnforth

3rd August 2002

Leader – Eric Greenwood

For the second year running the Society hired a minibus. This time the bus took the group to Carnforth and dropped members by the salt marsh at the estuary of the R. Keer. During the day the bus met the party at various points along the coast before the group left Hest Bank at the end of the day for the journey home. In this way, members who did not feel able to walk all the way from Carnforth to Hest Bank could join and leave the main group as they pleased.



Round-fruited Rush, *Juncus compressus*

At the start of the day the leader had prepared a guide to the rarer plants that might be found on the walk. Many

of these were seen including Frosted Orache, *Atriplex laciniata*, Slender Thistle, *Carduus tenuiflorus*, Lesser Centaury, *Centaureum pulchellum*, Viper's-bugloss, *Echium vulgare*, Few-flowered Spike-rush, *Eleocharis quinqueflora*, Slender Spike-rush, *E. uniglumis*, Yellow Horned-poppy, *Glaucium flavum*, Frog Rush, *Juncus ambiguus*, Round-fruited Rush, *J. compressus*, Blunt-flowerer Rush, *J. subnodulosus* and Grey Club-rush *Schoenoplectus tabernaemontani*. The ditches and pools at the top were, until recently, a stronghold of Beaked Tasselweed, *Ruppia maritima* but this was not seen.

A feature of the topmost zones of the marsh was the abundance of Couch Grass, *Elytrigia* hybrids, in particular *Elytrigia repens* x *E. atherica* (*E. x oliveri*) and *Elytrigia atherica* x *E. juncea* (*E. x obtusiuscula*). *Elytrigia repens* x *E. juncea* (*E. x laxa*) was also present.

The party was also able to compare and distinguish between Round-fruited Rush, *Juncus compressus* and Saltmarsh Rush, *J. gerardii*, which were growing near each other at the top of the marsh.

Eric Greenwood

Great Orme

14th September 2002

Leader – Wendy McCarthy

Starting at the summit car park, the party of about 15 members walked downhill amongst the heather and bushes of Western Gorse, *Ulex gallii* with Harebell, *Campanula rotundifolia*. A patch of Autumn Lady's-tresses,



Spiranthes spiralis was admired. Goldilocks Aster, *Aster linosyris* was found on the top of the cliff overlooking the miniature golf course, where we had lunch and descended to see the Wild Cotoneaster, *Cotoneaster cambricus*.

One of the interesting things about this meeting was that not only were autumn plants in good flower, but also some of the spring and summer plants still had some flowers including Hoary Rock-rose, *Helianthemum oelandicum* and Western Spiked Speedwell, *Veronica spicata ssp. hybrida*.

We found many introduced plants during this meeting including Bastard Cabbage, *Rapistrum rugosum* and Hoary Mustard, *Hirschfeldia incana*, but one of the rarest and most interesting was the perennial form of Nipplewort, *Lapsana communis ssp. intermedia*. The Hawkweeds,



Autumn Lady's-tresses, *Spiranthes spiralis*

Heiracium sp. on the Orme are also notable and we found *Hieracium leyi* at the bottom of the zig-zag path and *H.*

grandidens in the woods above Haulfre gardens.

Other plants included Musk Stork's-bill, *Erodium moschatum*, Saw-wort, *Serratula tinctoria* and then Viper's-bugloss, *Echium vulgare* and White Horehound, *Marrubium vulgare* as we walked back to the car park.

Keith Watson

Knowsley Park

12th October 2002

Leader – John Edmondson

Following an abortive attempt to enter the Park via a route which traversed a slippery river bank, which some of the party felt unable to negotiate, the rest of the day was spent visiting the Acornfield Wood and surrounding roadside verges, mainly in search of fungi but also with an eye to discovering interesting Brambles. The diverse fungal habitats available within the wood led to an interesting list of fungi being observed, though dry weather prior to the field meeting had limited the development of a seasonal flush of species. One Bramble new to the area was observed at the western extremity of the woodland.

John Edmondson

Indoor Meeting Reports

Holiday Exhibits

12th November 2002

No report available

Botany Tour

10th December 2002

This meeting was postponed.



**The life and times of some early
Lancashire botanists.**
14th January 2003
Eric Greenwood

The speaker discussed the life and times of a group of north Lancashire botanists that he knew contributed or should have contributed records of the Lancashire flora during the 18th and early 19th centuries.

However amongst the earliest botanists was Thomas Lawson (1630 – 1691), a Cumbrian schoolmaster.

In the first half of the 18th century there was little botanical activity in northern England except for the work of Richard Richardson (1663 – 1743) in Bradford. He was a correspondent of Lawson but had a wide circle of friends and correspondents. There is no doubt that this circle influenced the life of Dr John Fothergill (1712 – 1780), the well-known medic and botanist who practised in London but who maintained close connections with his family in Warrington.

James Jenkinson (1738 – 1808) who published *A Generic and Specific Descriptions of British Plants* in 1775 was also a Quaker. He came from Yealand Conyers but went to London between 1764 and 1768. Here he would have met Dr John Fothergill and it was whilst he was in London that he made his first botanical records. His book includes many records from the Yealand area made on his return from London.

James Jenkinson also knew the Crosfields from Kendal. He attended

the same meetings as George Crosfield (1754 – 1820) at Lancaster, who, it is believed, took over (in partnership) Samuel (brother of Dr John) Fothergill's shop in Warrington. He may have met John Fothergill but it is known that he took an interest in the cultural life of the town. His business interests took him to Liverpool and back to Lancaster where he ran a sugar refinery. His son, George (1785 – 1847) followed his father in the family business but eventually moved to Liverpool. The Crosfield family were prominent in industry, commerce and public life. Both Crosfields contributed a few but valuable records from the Lancaster area through their herbarium specimens at the Natural History Museum, London. The son also contributed many records for the Warrington area.

Most of the 18th and early 19th century records were made by Quakers and their circle (friends, relatives and business associates) and possible routes by which an interest in plants had passed along the generations was suggested. Most if not all were descended from yeomen farmers. Similarly another group of Lancashire yeomen were to contribute significantly to an understanding of the Lancashire flora in the 1830s.

Samuel Simpson (1802 – 1881) made all his records in a short period around the 1830s. At that time he was secretary of the Lancaster Literary, Scientific and Natural History Society; local secretary of the Botanical Society of London and member of the Botanical Society of Edinburgh. His family were prominent Lancaster merchants (and amongst other things



imported sugar probably for the Crosfields' refinery). He was well connected, as was his wife, Ann Atkinson. He was trained in Liverpool as a solicitor but from 1828 to 1844 practised in Lancaster. In 1844 his father died, he got married and built a fine house, The Greaves, then on the outskirts of the city. He then changed career and became a vicar in the Isle of Man. Apart from two letters written on behalf of parishioners to Sir W.J. Hooker, Director of the Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew there is no further reference to botany. Some of his plants are at Oxford University and others are scattered in various herbaria but a more substantial number are in the Watson herbarium at Kew and substantiate records in *Topographical Botany*.

Samuel Simpson had a brother, Richard Salisbury Simpson (1810 – 1888) who had a distinguished army career in India and who sent plants to Kew. His sister, Mary Maria Simpson (1804 – 1895), was also a botanist and trained as a botanical artist in Liverpool. There she met her husband, Henry Borron Fielding (1805 – 1851) then training to be a solicitor.

The talk spent some time dealing with the complex legacies, partnerships and family relationships that gave rise to the calico printing firm, Henry Fielding Brothers at Catterall. The family originated as yeomen farmers in the Blackburn – Church area of Lancashire and under Henry Fielding the company prospered. He died in 1816 and when his only son came of age he inherited his father's wealth. In 1826 following his mother's death in 1824 he left the family home in Winckley Square,

Preston, gave up training to be a solicitor and with his wife settled at Stodday Lodge south of Lancaster. Here they spent many years studying natural history living off the income from their estates. Stodday Lodge was however owned by Lawson Whalley, a prominent Lancaster doctor and Quaker related to the Crosfields. In a MS memoir of H.B. Fielding at Oxford University it is said that when he was shown a herbarium by a friend (was this George Crosfield?) he decided to make one of his own. At some stage he was introduced to the then Professor Hooker and spent a holiday with his family at his home in Glasgow in 1835. This friendship was probably important to Fielding who went on to form a large private collection. However a major project whilst at Stodday was the compilation of a MS English Flora. This consists of six volumes of paintings by Mrs Fielding with commentary by her husband. It makes a valuable contribution to our understanding of the Lancashire flora, especially around Lancaster, but only came to light recently and was purchased by the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

On her husband's wishes Mrs Fielding donated his herbarium to Oxford University where it forms part of the Fielding – Druce Herbarium. On her death in 1895 she left a legacy to the University of Oxford to be invested and the income to be used to pay part of the stipend of a curator for ever.

The talk ended by mentioning the artisan naturalists of Preston who left no records but who may have used the Richard Shepherd Library that was also



important to H.B. Fielding in his education.

As with the Quakers the Simpsons and Fieldings had complex family and business relationships at a key time in British history and the development of the industrial revolution. It was a time when fortunes were lost as well as made. H.B. Fielding had no interest in the family firm and its bankruptcy in 1831 had no financial implications for him. Interestingly his interests and those of the Quakers coincided in Lancaster in the 1830s, a city that was a venue for several botanists from all over the country at that time.

Wendy Atkinson

Annual General Meeting 11th February 2003

The president Dr. Edmondson was in the chair and 19 members present. The Hon. Secretary's report summarising membership details, and meetings held during the year was presented. Its adoption was proposed by Claire Sedgwick and seconded by Mary Dean.

The Hon. Treasurer Mr. Lockwood presented the balance sheet and summary of accounts. He reported that as of 31st December 2002 the LBS showed a small profit of £14.64 giving a balance of £3823.54. Mr. Lockwood explained that income from subscriptions was lower than in 2001, the interest rate at the bank was down and the cost of hiring the Bluecoat had increased. Mr Lockwood thanked the auditors Jean Bentley and Joan Davis and the typist Patricia Lockwood. Adoption of the report was proposed by Wendy Atkinson and seconded by Jean Bentley.

Peter Tipping noted that there had been no subscription paid to *Plantlife* in 2002. Vera Gordon proposed that we resume our subscription and this was seconded by Tom Smale.

The Hon. Librarian Claire Sedgwick presented her report. The LBS has now adopted a renewable 15-year loan agreement for Liverpool Museum to house the LBS library in the Botany section. All library material has been catalogued and marked using foil backed archival quality labels. There was one new book acquisition in 2002, this being a copy of Clapham, Tutin and Warburg's *Flora of the British Isles*. Adoption of the report was proposed by Peter Tipping and seconded by Angus Gunn.

Election of officers followed:-

The following officers were elected en bloc, proposed by Keith Hatton and seconded by Vera Gordon.

President Dr. John Edmondson

Vice-
Presidents Dr. Angus Gunn
 Mr Peter Gateley

Hon.
Secretary Miss Wendy Atkinson

Hon. Treasurer, Mr D. Lockwood was proposed by Joan Davis, seconded by Wendy Atkinson. The Hon. Librarian Claire Sedgwick was proposed by John Edmondson and seconded by Wendy Atkinson.

John Edmondson proposed a vote of thanks to Keith Hatton for his work on *Parnassia*.



Mr. E. Greenwood, Miss J. Bentley, Miss J. Davis, Miss V. Gordon, Mrs. P. Lockwood, Messrs Messenger, Smale and Tipping were all re-elected en bloc as Council members. Susan Taylor nominated Keith Watson as a council member, seconded by Angus Gunn.

Miss Jean Bentley and Miss Joan Davis were elected as Auditors; nominated by John Edmondson and seconded by Douglas Lockwood.

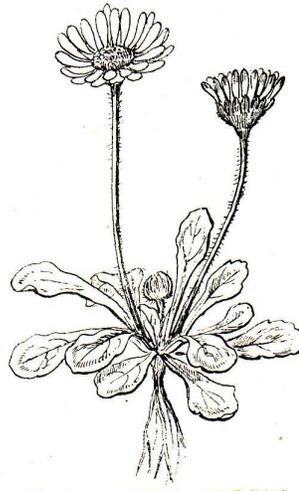
Joan Wilson asked about the LBS purchasing books for the library. Claire Sedgwick reported that this had not happened whilst she has been Librarian.

Susan Taylor reminded members that it is the LBS centenary in 3 years time and maybe we should think of some activity to mark the occasion.

Keith Hatton asked about the possibility of using a digital projector at the next AGM, but it is doubtful we will be back in the Museum by then.

Holiday exhibits were then shown:

Vera Gordon showed slides of *Crambe maritima* from Pickering's Pastures, *Valeriana dioica* from Caergwrle and the Laburnum arch at Ness Gardens. We also saw lots of Fungi slides including Morrels, Earthstars, Fairy rings, Scarlet Elf Cups, the Stinkhorn fungus and many *Lactarius* spp. Vera finished off with a slide showing masses of *Bellis perennis* in flower in October.



Daisy, *Bellis perennis*

Wendy Atkinson

British Palaeobotany

11th March 2003

Wendy Simkiss

Studying palaeobotany enables us to study the environments of the past in terms of the climate, soils, landscapes and plant responses to environmental conditions and ecosystems. This can be seen in the Bay of Fundy, Canada where Upper Carboniferous plants are found indicating previously hotter, humid conditions. In 1871, which was before the theory of plate tectonics, Higgins described this tropical flora more typical of lower latitudes. The number of leaf stomata is indicative of the environmental conditions, and leaves with smooth edges are found on tropical plants, whereas serrated leaves are found on temperate plants.

Palaeobotany also gives us an indication of the diets of herbivorous animals of all geological ages.



Plant remains are preserved by one of 4 main ways:

- i. **Impression:** Material is buried and decays, and the spaces left fill with air or water to create the impression.
- ii. **Compression:** When plant material is buried in oxygen-free conditions a carbon film is preserved. We saw a slide of *Onchiopsis psilotoides* from the Fairlight Clay from Hastings, Sussex 140-145 million years old.
- iii. **Petrification:** When plant remains are submerged in a mineral-rich solution such as from a volcanic, lime or sulphur spring, the wood is replaced slowly, molecule by molecule until the lignin is replaced with inorganic material. The structure of the wood is preserved very well this way.
- iv. **Casts:** When a plant's trunk or stem is in water, the hardwood remains while the softer centre wood rots and fills with sediment. A cast is formed and is gradually squashed evenly by weight of sediment beds above. We saw a cast of *Calamites suckowi* from the Upper Carboniferous coal measures of Barnsley, around 310-315 million years old.

Plant remains may also be preserved in amber.

There are many problems to deal with in studying palaeobotany. Less than 1% of living things become Fossilised and land fossils are much less common than marine fossils and most living things rot down to provide nutrients for living plants. Leaves, fruits, roots, stems, pollen and seeds may become separated from the plant before burial, and some structures and even whole species never appear as fossils. Fossilised plants may have no living relatives, so their classification may remain unknown; DNA sampling is not possible. Few plants are preserved *in situ*, sediments containing plant remains may be transported away from their original environment and some sediments such as sandstone can obscure a plants identification features.

In spite of these factors, there are plenty of examples of fossilised plant material available to study; some may even be related to living plants. Wendy then went on to show us a selection of slides of fossilised plants.

Cooksonia The first vascular land plant. It had a thick epidermis for protection from dry air and is found in Silurian rocks as old 410 million yrs. Remains have been found in Russia, S. Wales and New York State.

Archaeopteris 367-408 million years old. Vascular plants with Gymnosperm anatomy but with pteridophytic reproduction.

Lepidodendron The commonest of a group of Lycopside from Upper Carboniferous deposits. They were up



to 40m tall but were not woody. Rhizomes produced a single branchless stem. On maturity the trunk produced a crown of 'branch-like' structures. They would have been found on raised banks close to rivers and swamps.

Glossopteris Tree sized deciduous gymnosperms from Gondwanaland, previously assigned with pteridophytes due to their seed-bearing megasporophylls. They had lanceolate leaves with strong midribs and reticulate venation. The trunk is woody with prominent growth rings. Rooting structures are known as *Vertebraria* and were first illustrated in 1833 by Royle.

Williamsoniaceae These grew worldwide in the Mesozoic but died out in the Cretaceous. Leaves resemble those of Cycads. Characterised by separate male and female stalked cones that resemble flowers named *Weltrichia* and *Williamsonia*.

Caytoniales Mesozoic seed ferns from Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous sediments, these were once mistaken for angiosperms. *Sagenopteris* was recorded from the Upper Trias to the Cretaceous in England, Greenland, Canada and the United States.

Wendy Atkinson

Museum Tour

8th April 2003

No report available

Leader – Guy Sloman

From Caergwrle Station we set off to the old packhorse bridge, over the River Alyn. It was pleasing to see that it had been carefully repaired, since the damage caused by flooding in 2001. Sadly there was no sign of the Toothwort, *Lathraea squamaria* in its usual spot. The LBS first discovered it growing beside the bridge in 1964, so it was an old favourite.

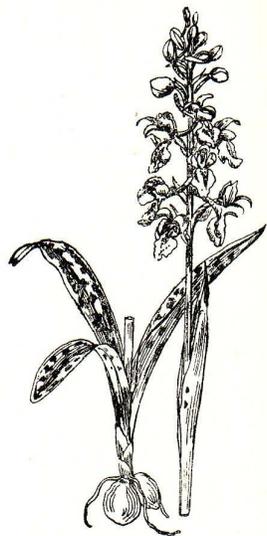
We then strolled towards Cefn-y-bed. Bluebells, *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*, Goldilocks Buttercup, *Ranunculus auricomus*, Yellow Archangel, *Lamium galeobdolon* and Bitter-vetch, *Lathyrus linifolius* flowers were all admired beside the track. Across the fields towards the Alyn, some scrambled down to the shady riverbank to find the Alternate-leaved Golden-saxifrage, *Chrysosplenium alternifolium*, almost hidden by the prolific Ramsons, *Allium ursinum*.

We walked towards Plas Maen and the edge of Cymau. The lovely shining, golden flowers of Kingcups, *Caltha palustris* grew in a marshy field, fed by a nearby spring. Marsh Valerian, *Valeriana dioica* grew beside the tiny stream and in a wet hollow there was a splendid patch of Large Bitter-cress, *Cardamine amara*. Leaves of Meadowsweet, *Filipendula ulmaria* were showing.

Field Trips 2003

Caergwrle

26th April 2003



Early-purple Orchid, *Orchis mascula*

At the edge of a lane, above the Bryn Yorkin road, Early-purple Orchid, *Orchis mascula* and Cowslip, *Primula veris* were in flower. The first pubescent, palmately-lobed leaves and tendrils and leaves of White Bryony, *Bryonia dioica* were showing beside a thicket. Not nearly as common a plant in Flintshire as Black Bryony, *Tamus communis*. We then descended through the Bryn Yorkin woodland to the steep, narrow lane down to Caergwrle.

A lovely springtime walk, enjoyed by the party. Many thanks to Guy Sloman for leading the walk.

Susan Taylor

Great Orme

24th May 2003

Leader – Wendy McCarthy

On a sunny but quite windy day, a party of about 20 set off from the summit car park. This was the second Great Orme meeting within a year, after the meeting on Sept.14th 2002.

The spring flowers such as Common Rock-rose, *Helianthemum nummularium*, Hoary Rock-rose, *Helianthemum oelandicum*, Spring Squill, *Scilla verna* and Early-purple Orchid, *Orchis mascula* were all in good flower. The grasses Meadow Oat-grass, *Helictotrichon pratense* and Downy Oat-grass, *Helictotrichon pubescens* were compared.

A special plant for me was Mountain Everlasting, *Antennaria dioica*, now very rare on the Orme. Even though I have visited the Orme many, many times over the last almost 30 years, the last time I saw it here was the LBS meeting 2nd June 1979.

Plants at the triangular green near Ty'n-Coed included Musk Stork's-bill, *Erodium moschatum*, Small-flowered Crane's-bill, *Geranium pusillum*, Spotted Medick, *Medicago arabica*, Parsley-piert, *Aphanes arvensis* and Field Madder, *Sherardia arvensis*.

We then walked on to the woodland above Haulfre gardens, and saw the Stone and Monterey Pines, *Pinus pinea* and *P. radiata*, also Sanicle, *Sanicula europaea*, Wood Melick, *Melica uniflora*, and Ivy Broomrape, *Orobanche hederæ*. Some of the party climbed the steep slope to see Dropwort, *Filipendula vulgaris*, Horseshoe Vetch, *Hippocrepis comosa*, Hairy Violet, *Viola hirta* and Juniper, *Juniperus communis*.



Mountain Everlasting, *Antennaria dioica*

Then we climbed up the zig-zag path, where we saw Dark-red Helleborine, *Epipactis atrorubens* and leaf rosettes of Spotted Cat's-ear, *Hypochaeris maculata*. Near the top was Spring Cinquefoil, *Potentilla neumanniana*. We were diverted for a while by an impressive air display by the Red Arrows, but continued to see one of the few wild sites of Wild Cotoneaster, *Cotoneaster cambricus*. Another special plant for me was Green-winged Orchid, *Orchis morio* near the miniature golf course, again a plant I had not seen for a long time on the Orme.

Many thanks to Wendy for leading the meeting

Keith Watson

Meols Meadows

7th June 2003

Leader – Keith Hatton

A party of about 15 met at Meols Station, and walked along Park Rd to the entrance to the meadows near the

new Sewage works. Meols Meadows is an area of traditional hay meadows, where management has remained unchanged for 350 years. Cattle graze part of the year. The area is below sea level and usually wet in winter. Alluvial deposits lie on top of boulder clay and sandstone. We were interested to be told some of the old field names such as "Saughall Towne Field Meadow" and "Old Carr Pasture". It was a lovely, warm, sunny day and larks sung cheerily above us.

The first meadow was full of flowers such as Yellow-rattle, *Rhinanthus minor*, Tufted Vetch, *Vicia cracca*, Selfheal, *Prunella vulgaris*, Common Sorrel, *Rumex acetosa*, Wild Carrot, *Daucus carota* and Brown Sedge, *Carex disticha*, an uncommon plant in Wirral.

In some areas Common Reed, *Phragmites australis* had become very invasive, and almost impenetrable, but in another meadow were splendid yellow patches of Dyer's Greenweed, *Genista tinctoria*. Grasses included Yellow Oat-grass, *Trisetum flavescens*, Meadow Foxtail, *Alopecurus pratensis*, Crested Dog's-tail, *Cynosurus cristatus*, Sweet Vernal-grass, *Anthoxanthum odoratum* and , in one place, Meadow Barley, *Hordeum secalinum*. The first few flowers of Pepper-saxifrage, *Silaum silaus* were open. A single large flower spike of a Spotted Orchid was admired and discussed, it may have been Heath Spotted-orchid, *Dactylorhiza maculata*. Meols Meadows is notable for being one of the very few Cheshire localities of Green-winged Orchid, *Orchis morio*, but it was not seen on the present visit and has not been recorded recently.



Walking along a raised-up track we noticed a single plant of Salsify, *Tragopogon porrifolius* with its purple flowers. At one time it was cultivated for its taproots. It was just after this that someone reminded us that Leander and Katie were getting married, about that very time! We stood on a small bridge over the River Birket, and thought about their happy day and wished them all the best.



Salsify, *Tragopogon porrifolius*

We headed towards the coast, Lucerne, *Medicago sativa* and Kidney Vetch, *Anthyllis vulneria* were plentiful. Solitary bees flew about the sandier areas, enjoying the sunshine. Notable plants on the shore included Sea Spurge, *Euphorbia paralius*, Sea Holly, *Eryngium maritimum* and Hound's-tongue, *Cynoglossum officinale*. Two orchids, Bee Orchid, *Ophrys apifera* and Pyramidal Orchid, *Anacamptis pyramidalis* were found.

As we walked back to Meols Station some of us were discussing ferns. At that very moment, by sheer coincidence, a Rustyback, *Ceterach*

officinatum was spotted growing on a garden wall. Another interesting plant was Small-flowered Crane's-bill, *Geranium pusillum* growing on a grass verge.

Those of the group who still had time to spare and energy (revived by lolly ices from a local shop) headed towards the ponds near Leasowe lighthouse. They were rewarded by Greater Spearwort, *Ranunculus lingua*, Great Yellow-cress, *Rorippa amphibia* and the introduced Buttonweed, *Cotula coronopifolia*. A few Bee Orchids were not far away.

A most interesting and enjoyable field meeting, many thanks to Keith Hatton, our leader.

*Susan Taylor
Keith Watson*

Aston's Flash 28th June 2003

Leader – Rob Duffy

The Flash is a waste alkali lake, forming a bowl on the outskirts of Northwich, which has reverted to scrub and carr. There are genuine wet areas; these become more like bogs in drier spells. One of the embankments forms a calcareous scree. Despite being only half a mile across the effect is of mild disorientation when walking around.

The flora is notable for its orchids, including Fragrant Orchid and Marsh Helleborine and hybrid orchid swarms, unusual for Cheshire. It has been of botanical interest since described in Newton's Flora of Cheshire, 1970.

A party of 9 gathered at Northwich Station to explore the site. Ironically,

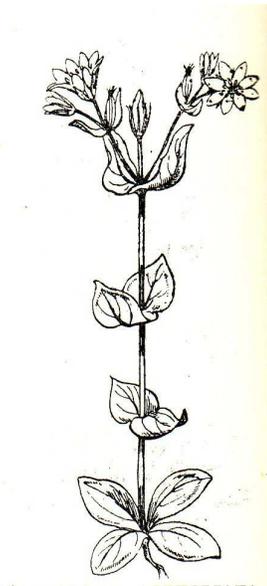


this was almost certainly the last botanical meeting before the site was mysteriously closed for “environmental improvement”. The guess was that these measures to raise the water table – nothing sinister we hoped!

Species noted:

Fragrant Orchid, *Gymnadenia conopsea* and ssp. *densiflora*
 Southern Marsh-orchid, *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*
 Early Marsh-orchid, *Dactylorhiza incarnata*
 Marsh Helleborine, *Epipactis palustris*
 Yellow sedge, *Carex viridula* ssp. *oedocarpa*
 Lesser Pond-sedge, *C. acutiformis*
 Common sedge, *C. nigra*
 Sea Club-rush, *Bolboschoenus maritimus*
 Common Club-rush, *Schoenoplectus lacustris*
 Great Fen-sedge, *Cladium mariscus*
 Timothy, *Phleum pratense*
 Creeping Bent, *Agrostis stolonifera*
 Red Fescue, *Festuca rubra*
 Tall Fescue, *Festuca arundinacea*
 False Brome, *Brachypodium sylvaticum*
 Eyebright, *Euphrasia sp*
 Yellow-wort *Blackstonia perfoliata*
 Ploughman’s-spikenard *Inula conyza*
 Mouse-ear-hawkweed, *Pilosella officinarum*
 Fairy Flax, *Linum catharticum*
 Field-rose, *Rosa arvensis*
 Prickly Lettuce, *Lactuca serriola*
 Wild Mignonette, *Reseda lutea*
 Sainfoin, *Onobrychis viciifolia*
 Common Valerian, *Valeriana officinalis*
 Wild Parsnip, *Pastinaca sativa*
 Wormwood, *Artemisia absinthium*
 Wild Angelica, *Angelica sylvestris*

Hoary Mustard, *Hirschfeldia incana*
 Marsh Arrowgrass, *Triglochin palustris*
 Goat’s-beard, *Tragopogon pratensis*



Yellow-wort, *Blackstonia perfoliata*

Rob Duffy

Wigg Island (Runcorn)

12th July 2003

Leader – Tony Parker

Wigg Island is situated on the South bank of the River Mersey. The site covers 20 hectares of reclaimed industrial land, the area having previously been a tip for the chemical industry and a mustard gas factory!

The site has several areas of grassland and woodland, although the latter is of reasonably recent origin having been planted as part of a landscaping scheme run by the then Runcorn New Town. Recently part of the site has been reclaimed as a community park complete with hides, picnic areas etc.



The group visited on a hot sunny day in July, ideal for both plants and insects which were present in abundance. The morning was spent at the western end of the site and along the banks of the Manchester Ship Canal, this area has been subject to less disturbance from the reclamation work hence the flora has developed over a longer period of time, a good number of species were noted here.



Bee Orchid, *Ophrys apifera*

After lunch the group visited the more recently developed part of the site. Here was the unusual sight of an open-topped double-decker bus parked under some Wych Elms. This was a joint Halton Borough Council/Butterfly Conservation event looking for White-letter Hairstreak butterfly; this is a small species which is almost entirely associated with Elm trees. This somewhat strange arrangement did allow good close-up views of this and several other butterfly species.

Species recorded:

- Wych Elm, *Ulmus glabra*
- Silver Birch, *Betula pendula*
- Alder, *Alnus glutinosa*
- Pedunculate Oak, *Quercus robur*
- White Poplar, *Populus alba*
- Aspen, *Populus tremula*
- Crack Willow, *Salix fragilis*
- Grey Willow, *Salix cinerea*
- Hawthorn, *Crataegus monogyna*
- Blackthorn, *Prunus spinosa*
- Rowan, *Sorbus aucuparia*
- Common Mouse-ear, *Cerastium fontanum*
- Wild Mignonette, *Reseda lutea*
- Silverweed, *Potentilla anserina*
- Grass Vetchling, *Lathyrus nissolia*
- Bird's-foot trefoil, *Lotus corniculatus*
- Tufted Vetch, *Vicia cracca*
- Hairy Tare, *Vicia hirsuta*
- Meadow Vetchling, *Lathyrus pratensis*
- Black Medick, *Medicago lupulina*
- White Clover, *Trifolium repens*
- Red Clover, *Trifolium pratense*
- Marsh Willowherb, *Epilobium palustre*
- Rosebay Willowherb, *Chamerium angustifolium*
- Wild Angelica, *Angelica sylvestris*
- Wild Carrot, *Daucus carota*
- Hogweed, *Heracleum spondylium*
- Yellow-wort, *Blackstonia perfoliata*
- Field Bindweed, *Convolvulus arvensis*
- Hedge Bindweed, *Calystegia sepium*
- Self-heal, *Prunella vulgaris*
- Marsh Woundwort, *Stachys palustris*
- Hedge Woundwort, *Stachys sylvatica*
- Spear Thistle, *Cirsium vulgare*
- Creeping Thistle, *C. arvense*
- Knapweed, *Centaurea nigra*
- Nipplewort, *Lapsana communis*
- Goat's-beard, *Tragopogon pratense*
- Cat's-ear, *Hypochaeris radicata*
- Smooth Sowthistle, *Sonchus oleraceus*
- Autumn Hawkbit, *Leontodon autumnalis*
- Mugwort, *Artemisia vulgaris*



Yarrow, *Achillea millefolium*
 Ragwort, *Senecio jacobea*
 Bee Orchid, *Ophrys apifera*
 Common Centaury, *Centaureum erythraea*
 Common Nettle, *Urtica dioeca*
 Curled Dock, *Rumex crispus*
 Broad-leaved Dock, *R. obtusifolius*
 Weld, *Reseda lutea*
 Wall Speedwell, *Veronica arvensis*
 Germander Speedwell, *Veronica chamaedrys*
 Perforate St. John's Wort, *Hypericum perforatum*
 Pellitory-of-the-wall, *Parietaria judaica*
 Scarlet Pimpernel, *Anagallis arvensis*
 Creeping Buttercup, *Ranunculus repens*
 Figwort, *Scrophularia nodosa*
 Moth Mullein, *Verbascum blattaria*
 Lesser Burdock, *Arctium minus*
 Ox-eye Daisy, *Leucanthemum vulgare*
 Sea Aster, *Aster tripolium*
 Red Campion, *Silene dioeca*
 Foxglove, *Digitalis purpurea*
 Gypsywort, *Lycopus europaeus*
 Fleabane, *Pulicaria dysenterica*
 Yorkshire Fog, *Holcus lanatus*
 Hart's-tongue Fern, *Phyllitis scolopendrium*

Tony Parker

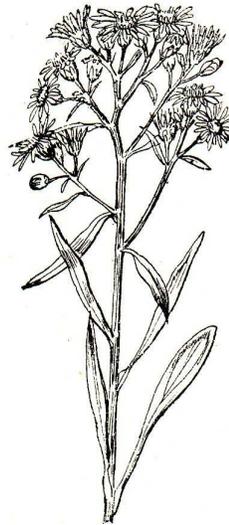
Hall Road

9th August 2003

Leader – Dave Earl

SD30A is one of the tetrads which are a feature of the Local Change Project (LCP) being undertaken by the BSBI during 2003-2004. This tetrad was studied for the BSBI Monitoring Scheme during 1987-1988. A prime objective for the LCP to date has been that of attempting to find as many of the species that were recorded during

1987-1988 as possible. Although the tetrad had been extensively explored for the flora, 2003 was the first year of recording for the LCP therefore we could expect to find numerous LCP records in addition to those gathered during the spring and early summer of 2003.



Sea Aster, *Aster tripolium*

On this hot August day we made our way to the promenade in search of the salt tolerant plants which grow on the salt sprayed lawns adjacent to the River Mersey. Plants found included Sea Aster, *Aster tripolium*, Grass-leaved Orache *Atriplex littoralis*, Sea-purslane, *Atriplex portulacoides*, Sea Holly *Eryngium maritimum*, Sea Milkwort, *Glaux maritima*, Sea Sandwort *Honckenya peploides*, the coastal form of Curled Dock, *Rumex crispus ssp. littoreus*, Lesser Sea-spurrey, *Spergularia marina*, Sea Pearlwort *Sagina maritima*, and Sea Mayweed *Tripleurospermum maritimum*. Silver Hair-grass *Aira caryophylla* was a feature of the sandy turf.



Leaving behind the refreshing breeze of the coast we headed inland to the fringes of the Key Park finding Wild Onion, *Allium vineale*, Harebell, *Campanula rotundifolia*, Blue Fleabane, *Erigeron acer* and the planted shrubs Evergreen Spindle, *Euonymus japonicus* and Spanish Broom *Spartium junceum*.

Lunch was taken under the trees of a small park where Sunflower, *Helianthus annuus* and Wheat, *Triticum aestivum* occurred. Then, onward into intense heat towards Sniggery Wood. In the arable fields additional species included Shaggy Soldier, *Galinsoga quadriradiata*, Perennial Sow-thistle, *Sonchus arvensis* and Corn Marigold, *Chrysanthemum segetum*. Finally we found a number of wetland species Purple-loosestrife *Lythrum salicaria*, Common Fleabane, *Pulicaria dysenterica*, Common Valerian, *Valeriana officinalis* and Greater Bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus pedunculatus*. Having found an extra 87 species for the LCP we returned to Hall Road Station completely exhausted from the intensive heat. The total number of species increased to 320 for the LCP within SD30A. Note also that the LCP has greatly increased the total number of species recorded for SD30A for the South Lancashire Flora Project to 427 species.

It is intended that a summary of the findings of the LCP 2003-2004 within SD30 will appear in a future edition of Parnassia

Dave Earl

Treborth

13th September 2003

No report available

Sankey

27th September 2003

Leader- Dave Earl

Meeting at Sankey Station our objective was the exploration of SJ58U and SJ58T with a view to increasing the vascular plant tetrad totals beyond 200 species.

From Sankey Station we walked east towards Whittle Brook Valley recording numerous garden outcasts that have become established on the wooded railway embankment including Japanese Spindle, *Euonymus japonicus*, Mrs Robb's Hat Plant, *Euphorbia amygdaloides ssp. robbiae* and Red-hot-poker *Kniphofia uvaria*. At Whittle Brook Valley we found much of the area had been landscaped with planted shrubs as is often the case in the Warrington suburbs. Grassland areas had been created, as indicated by the presence of Grass Vetchling, *Lathyrus nissolia*. The areas by the paths had been recently sown with wildflower mixtures providing a habitat for a number of adventive species such as Canadian Fleabane, *Conyza canadensis*, Lesser Swine-cress, *Coronopus didymus*, Black Bindweed *Fallopia convolvulus*, Shaggy Soldier *Galinsoga quadriradiata*, Field Penny-cress, *Thlaspi arvense*, Garden Lobelia, *Lobelia erinus* and the increasingly characteristic species of disturbed ground Prickly Lettuce, *Lactuca serriola*. By the brook we found Branched Bur-reed, *Sparganium erectum* and a local speciality of the Sankey Valley system Greater Pond



Sedge *Carex riparia*. Our works were well rewarded with a new tetrad total of 264 species.



Wild Celery, *Apium graveolens*

After returning to our cars we travelled down to the next tetrad SJ58T to have lunch by the Fiddler's Ferry Lock. We admired the splendid population of Wild Celery, *Apium graveolens* on the walls of the old lock as the magnificent high tide of the River Mersey steadily inundated the plants. A walk along the Sankey Canal provided records of Reed Sweet-grass, *Glyceria maxima*, Skull-cap *Scutellaria galericulata* and Common Valerian, *Valeriana officinalis*. We found that the waters of the Mersey subsided as rapidly as they had risen, allowing us to explore the nearby salt marsh where we recorded a few extra species including Sea Arrow-grass *Triglochin maritimum*, the coastal form of Curled Dock, *Rumex crispus ssp. littoreus* and Sea Club-rush *Bolboschoenus maritimus*. On the banks above the salt marsh were fine plants of the Roseate Hedge Bindweed, *Calystegia sepium*

ssp. roseata. Along a newly created path adjacent to what may have been a former landfill site, were a number of planted shrubs amongst which appear to be hybrid plantings of *Prunus x fruticans* (*domestica x spinosa*) and *Rosa x verticillacantha* (*arvensis x canina*). Finally we found Black Horehound, *Ballota nigra* on a lane north of the canal with clumps of False Brome, *Brachypodium sylvaticum* surviving along a shaded brook. The new tetrad total for SJ58T rose to 254, further demonstrating the substantial progress made for the South Lancashire Flora during our days' excursion.

Dave Earl

Freshfield

11th October 2003

Leader – Pat Lockwood

When Douglas and I did the recce on the previous Monday, a gale was blowing and we had to walk backwards onto the shore. If we hadn't had such a busy week, we could have aborted our efforts, but on we went. The conditions were unpleasant and a total contrast to the Saturday, which couldn't have been better.

A happy band of 10 left Freshfield Station. We walked alongside the Leonard Cheshire Home and followed the footpath to Larkhill Lane to see Chicken-of-the Woods, *Laetiporus sulphurous*. Then we crossed over Blundell Avenue, into the pinewoods, walking through to Victoria Road where we stopped for lunch at the picnic tables.

Afterwards, we walked to an area where the Autumn Gentian, *Gentianella amarella*, still showing



flowers, grows. Onward through the woods and down onto the shore until we came to the old Fisherman's path, homeward bound, some going to the station, others coming home for tea.

Never, ever, have I seen such a wonderful display of fungi and a few are listed here. Puffball, *Lycoperdon perlatum*, Plums-and-Custard, *Tricholomopsis rutilans*, Brown Roll-rim, *Paxillus involutus*, Woolly Milk-cap, *Lactarius torminosus*, Saffron Milk-cap, *Lactarius deliciosus*, Honey Fungus, *Armillaria mellea*, Common Ink-cap, *Coprinus atramentarius*, Sulphur Tuft, *Hypholoma fasciculare*, Wood Blewit, *Lepista nuda*, False Chanterelle, *Hygrophoropsis aurantiaca*, Candle-snuff Fungus, *Xylaria hypoxylon*, Fly Agaric, *Amanita muscaria* (Douglas and I counted 43 in one area) and False Death Cap, *Amanita citrina*. The Boletus species and Russulas were abundant, the Russulas very colourful.

Pat Lockwood

Please send all articles and contributions for Parnassia to:

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