

## **BSBI CHESHIRE RECORDING NEWSLETTER – 2021**

It would be superfluous to comment on what an odd year 2020 was with all meetings cancelled. However, a few enterprising souls used their exercise rations to do a bit of local monad recording. John Hawksford covered the border with VC57 from New Mills to Marple where he made 2544 records. There were several amenity planting areas one of which contained *Geum x intermedium*, the only record this century and a bit of a mystery. *Briza maxima* graced the odd gutter as did the inevitable *Polypogon viridis*. *Impatiens capensis* has spread that far east along the canal system. *Catapodium rigidum* was an unusual find away from the coast. His interest in *Cotoneasters* was illustrated by records for *C. dielsianus*, *helmqvistii*, *horizontalis*, *rehderi* and *x suecicus*. *Saxifraga granulata* was found still flourishing in a long known site. Mary and Claire Smith very kindly looked at two half monads on the upland VC57 border at Errwood and recorded 485 including a welcome new site for *Phegopteris connectilis*. Another fern, *Cystopteris fragilis* was on mortar in bricks. Even up there, aliens are inescapable with *Rhododendron luteum*, *Juncus tenuis*, *Castanea sativa*, *Meconopsis cambrica* (*Papaver cambrica*) and *Epilobium ciliatum* being noted. *Alchemilla conjuncta* was a remarkable find in the middle of a footpath, only just beaten as a new county record (NCR) by my record of it in Sale!

Julian Laidler tackled the monads S of the R. Mersey near Sale Water Park and got 689 records. *Crocus nudiflorus* will have brightened two of his days and *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* only slightly less so. *Galium album* seems to be a popular “flower meadow” species that gets about. He found a native Black Poplar at Trafford, and *Rhamnus catharticus* (duly checked) at Kenworthy. *Stellaria nemorum* seems fond of the Mersey round there as his sighting illustrates.

Dave Morgan and myself independently sampled mid-north VC58. Dave made 3662 records and was pleased by the quantity of *Eriophorum vaginatum* in the Pennines where *Huperzia selago* on Shining Tor was an excellent find; it seems to be firmly back from the dead. He was impressed by meadows full of *Conopodium majus* and *Viola lutea*. *Carduus nutans* was seen enlivening sheep-grazed pastures. *Epipactis helleborine* popped up in nearly every monad.

My total was 8278. A nice bank of *Cyclamen hederifolium* was one record of many seen by others. The old tip at Wilmslow, now a shadow of its former self, being mostly dull woodland, still produced a good crop of *Epipactis helleborine* in one area and *Agrimonia eupatoria* var *major* which is bigger than normal. *Stachys x ambigua* was nearby. Elsewhere, a marshy field by the airport had *Bromus commutatus* and plentiful *Vicia tetraspermum* (*Ervum tetraspermum*). In a shady lane I spotted a beautifully marked *Pulmonaria officinalis* hiding under a tree, while *Spiraea douglasii* ssp *douglasii* and *x billardii* were more obviously visible. My *Alchemilla conjuncta* was 2 plants in willow scrub in Priory Gardens, Sale where any idea of a garden was long gone. Pauline Grimshaw’s patch was E of Manchester and yielded 162 records. Good natives were *Blechnum spicant* and

*Equisetum sylvaticum*. *Polemonium caeruleum* was presumably a throw-out but *Tellima grandiflora* gets about by itself. *Rubus odoratus* in Great Wood is only the second record.

Stephen Lemon visited Ashton's Flash where *Carex oederi* and *Cladium mariscus* were flourishing and Abbots Moss, a known site for *Rhynchospora alba*. In the nearby so-called Lily Pool, I am glad to hear that *Utricularia minor* is doing well and *Eleocharis multicaulis* was an excellent record. He also had a new site for *Carex muricata* ssp *pairae* at Hartford. The area around and S of Chester was well covered by Jonathan Shanklin, who has family in Dodleston, and Martyn Stead who lives in Chester. Jonathan made 2495 records including *Carex divulsa* and *Selaginella kraussiana* in Aldford churchyard, and *Geranium rotundifolium* on a track by the A55. He found *Inula conyzae* in Eccleston and *Lagarosiphon major* in a pond in Dodleston, where was also *Hordeum secalinum*. *Persicaria pensylvanica* was an NCR in Dodleston and *Carduus acanthoides* another NCR which we need to look out for. Martyn made an amazing 15462 records including *Anthemis tinctoria* ssp *australis* on an A55 sliproad which was new to the UK! By the canal he found *Anthriscus caucalis* and *Briza maxima* but they were later mown down. *Chaenorhinum minus* was a pleasing find as was *Aira caryophyllea* on a sandy bank at Barrymore. *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*, *D. x grandis*, and *Epilobium montanum x hirsutum* were good finds and *Cannabis* was a surprise. *Galium parisiense*, seen in the Chester Roman amphitheatre, is only the second record and seems to be spreading.

Julie Rose recorded further north and on the east of the Wirral. Among 1122 hits, she found *Impatiens capensis* and *Senecio inaequidens* at Stanlow in an area I was evicted from on a previous visit. What is the secret? *Sherardia arvensis* and *Anacamptis pyramidalis* were goodies from Ellesmere. *Carduus tenuiflorus* and *Polystichum aculeatum* were other good natives. *Hydrocotyle ranunculoides* was still in the canal despite the authorities being warned of its nature several years ago. Eric Greenwood directed his attention more to north and west Wirral with 630 records. A large bunch of snowdrops began his year, followed by *Sanicula europaea* in Manor Wood, *Crambe maritima* at Heswall and *Potentilla x mixta* in Gayton. Aliens he found include *Rubus loganobaccus* at Parkgate, *Buddleja x weyeriana* and *Calendula officinalis* at Heswall. *Cotula coronopifolia* is still in a long known area at Heswall. Finally, Joshua Styles who was inspired to visit Hoylake and found *Catabrosa aquatic* var *uniflora* in the area it was first described from and rarely seen since. Not content with that, he found the first records of *Atriplex longipes* and *A. x gustafssoniana* (*longipes x prostrata*). *Salicornia ramosissima* and *S. dolichostachya* helped to make up for the meeting to study this genus that could not take place.

Overall, 35694 records were made in about 300 monads which is probably more than a normal year might have produced. In fact, it is a record total, though considering that monads potentially give 4 times the equivalent tetrad, it might not be quite so spectacular. Still, congratulations to those whose contributed are

in order, especially Martyn. Keep up the good work in 2021. I doubt we will be able to have many/any meetings, but if we can, they will mirror 2020's proposals.

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