

## Introduction

This is the fourth mid-winter Newsletter, which will provide details of the activities and events of 2015. The 2015 recording year was much more active than the previous year with more people and groups submitting records. There were a couple of field trips organised by Kevin Widdowson and I understand that there will be further meetings arranged for 2016. Highlights this year include the completion of a major digitising project, progress with the Atlas work and the recording of several new and very rare species.

## Recording During 2015

For 2015, a total of 22,263 records have been, to date, uploaded onto the mapmate database. I am, however, awaiting records from NBGRC staff and my fellow VC recorder Dave Wood so the total number of records for 2015 will be significantly greater than 30,000. Records continue to be submitted by a number of recorders (see below) and I would like to thank all of those people who have contributed to this effort.

A total of 280,269 VC56 records are now in the mapmate database, an increase of 65,247 records from the end of 2014. The increase can be attributed to records obtained from recorders after the 2014 Newsletter was distributed; field recording during 2015; the receipt of historical data-sets from NBGRC and individual recorders, and completion of the digitisation of Dave Wood's card system representing a total of 87,759 records. Dave Wood's dataset only includes those records recorded at six-figure grid reference level up to 2009. Species recorded at 1km and 10km levels are yet to be digitised and Dave's records for 2010 and 2011 are still to be digitised, so there is still some work to do.

My fieldwork has largely involved tetrad bashing in parts of the county with either a limited number of records, or a limited range of common species records. Sites include Calverton (SK6048, 6148, 6049, 6149), Eakring & Kirklington (SK6860, 6859, 6858, 6958, 6959), Walesby & Bothamsall (SK6772, 6673, 6672, 6771, 6770, 6769, 6872), Oxton (SK6255, 6254, 6354, 6454), Elkesley (SK6875, 6874, 6774, 6775, 6674), Edingley – Kirklington (SK6756, 6656, 6657, 6757, 6655), Clarbrough (SK78G, 78L, 78M), North Clifton – Wigsley (SK8271, 8371, 8471, 8571), Spalford (SK8369, 8469, 8468, 8368), Bestwood (SK54P, SK54U), Marnham – Fledborough (SK87A), Clifton to Harby Dismantled Railway (SK8571, 8671, 8771, 8871), Blidworth – Farnsfield (SK65N), Hexgreave Park (SK6558), Southwell Trail (SK65P, SK64P), Spalford (SK8369, 8269), North Clifton (SK8272), Spalford – Girton (SK8367, 8266, 8366, 8267), Huthwaite – Stanton Hill (SK4759, 4760), Hayton (SK7285, 7385, 7384, 7284), Farnsfield (SK6357, 6456, 6256, 6356, 6257), Sutton-on-Trent (SK7765, 7865), Crow Park Bridge (SK7965), High Marnham Railway (SK7971, 8071), Hayton (SK7284, 7285, SK78C), Seller's Wood (SK5245), Blidworth (SK65D, 65I), Sutton Bonnington (SK4926, 4925, 4927), Marnham (SK77V), Welbeck (SK5674), Halloughton (SK65W, 65V, 65R, 65Q), Market Warsop (SK56S, 56T), Blidworth (SK6056), Papplewick Area (SK5851, 5852, 5952), Rolleston (SK75K, 7651), Caunton (SK76K, 76L), Kirkby Park (SK45M),

Everton (SK69V, 69W, 79B), Eakring – Kneesall (SK66R, 66W), Clipstone Forest (SK66G), Sutton Bonnington (SK4925, 4924, 5024), West Leake (SK52I), Clipstone (SK66B, 66C, 56W), Gringley (SK79F, 79G), Gibbetdale (SK5552, 5652, 5653), Pleasley (SK56H), Halam (SK65S), Oxton (SK65G, 65F), Edingley (SK65M), Papplewick Moor (SK5550, 5650), Blyth (SK68C, 68D), West Stockwith (SK7894, 7794), Church Laneham (SK8175, 8176, 8276, 8275, 8274, 8174), Shelton – Flawborough (SK74R, 74S, 74W), Aslockton (SK74K), Orston (SK74Q), Whatton (SK73J), Farndon (SK7652, 7653, 7753), Carlton-on-Trent (SK8064, 8164), Askham (SK77M, 7674), Clayworth (SK78I, 78J), East Drayton (SK77S, 7676), Farndon (SK75S), Elton (SK763), Alveston (SK7942, 74V, 8042, 8041), Barnby (SK85K, 85L, 85R), Arnold (SK8544).

Not all of my recording was solo, Dave Wood and I teamed up for several field trips (included in the list above); the most notable being Fledborough to Harby Dismantled Railway / Spalford Gravel Pits / Pleasley – Mansfield Woodhouse/ Church Laneham / Farndon and Flawborough. I was also joined by Margaret Crittenden and Sally Peacock for surveys at Shelton, Flawborough and Carlton-on-Trent.

Dave Wood (Joint VC Recorder) has also been active this season and has collected over 3000 records. Dave has paid particular attention to sites in and around the city that are associated with the new tramlines. It is always worth checking recently disturbed sites in the city, because they normally yield an interesting range of native and non-native species. I look forward to viewing his species lists!

Sian Matthews, a relative newcomer to recording in Nottinghamshire, has ‘hit the ground running’ and provided a very praiseworthy set of records. Sian has recorded in 31 monads (SK5536, 5636, 5637, 5735, 5736, 5737, 5835, 5836, 5837, 5838, 5935, 5936, 5937, 5938, 7248, 7349, 7448, 7849, 7549, 7666, 7667, 7762, 7765, 7766, 7862, 7863, 7864, 7865, 7961, 7963, 7964 and 7965), which has included her local patch (West Bridgford & Wilford) and central Nottinghamshire (SK74 and SK76). Sian has also visited some of the disturbed sites associated with the new tram-lines and provided some interesting records such as *Salvia verbenaca*, in addition to other records for new or very rare species in Nottinghamshire (see rare plants section for further details).

Graeme Coles continues to provide records from the northwest of the county. This year Graeme has compiled and provided a dataset of records from the modern county of South Yorkshire, which are actually located within the historical Vice County boundary at Bawtry and Finningley. Monads include SK5683, 5684, 5782, 5783, 5784, 5785, 5786, 5787, 5883, 5884, 5885, 5886, 5887, 5983, 5984, 5985, 5986, 6082, 6083, 6084, 6085, 6086, 6181 & 6882.

There were welcome contributions from other recorders including The Friends of Forest Town, Kevin Widdowson, Ken Balkow, Richard Penson, Trisha Rice, Chris and Reva Smith, Andrew Burroughs, Margaret Crittenden, Sally Peacock and Gail Quartly-Bishop, which were largely site-based records. Apologies if I have missed anybody who has also submitted records.

As in previous years, it is not too late to submit to me or Dave Wood (via the NBGRC) any historical records that you may have in your possession. I plan to submit the 2015 batch to the BSBI database sometime in February 2016 so I would be grateful for receipt of records no later than mid-February.

In previous years I have provided a hectad map showing the coverage of records across the county. This year I have reviewed the database at tetrad level to more accurately identify the gaps in coverage. There are 179 tetrads (out of a county total of 618) with less than 150 records. There are

114 of those tetrads that contain one or more Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), which are very likely to have been surveyed by Nottinghamshire Biological and Geological Records Centre (NBGRC) at least once since 2000. The survey data from these sites is likely to significantly increase the number of records in each of the under-recorded tetrads. The relevant LWSs have been identified and I will be working with the NBGRC to obtain digital and paper based records to add to the mapmate database. By the end of 2016 I hope to have obtained and digitised the relevant LWS data and will update the records per tetrad in time for the next annual newsletter.

There are 65 tetrads with no LWSs (see below), which will require a field survey. These tetrads are unlikely to be very exciting, but for the sake of consistency, need to be completed. I will be concentrating on these tetrads over the next three years, but would be grateful of any help that can be given. If anybody wants to take on any of these tetrads, please let me know. In addition the tetrads containing LWSs would also benefit from a survey of the land outside of the LWS so that a representative range of common species is obtained. Upon request, I can provide a spreadsheet that gives details of the number of records in each tetrad, the under-recorded tetrads (and where relevant, details of the LWSs in the tetrad).

**Table 1: Under-recorded tetrads with no LWSs**

SK45M	SK63A	SK69T	SK74L	SK77K	SK84G	SK87D
SK52C	SK63C	SK69Y	SK74N	SK77Q	SK85G	SK87E
SK52D	SK63H	SK72D	SK74S	SK77W	SK85H	SK87G
SK52R	SK65J	SK73B	SK74T	SK77X	SK85I	SK87H
SK52W	SK66X	SK73F	SK74U	SK78S	SK85S	SK87I
SK52X	SK67T	SK73T	SK75H	SK78T	SK85U	
SK54X	SK67U	SK73Y	SK75P	SK78W	SK86L	
SK54Y	SK68Q	SK74B	SK76Y	SK79N	SK86N	
SK57X	SK69B	SK74F	SK77E	SK79Q	SK86U	
SK58F	SK69C	SK74G	SK77F	SK84D	SK86Z	

### Digitising Records

I have had a few offers of help for digitising records, which are most welcome. At the earliest opportunity I intend to visit the NBGRC to identify historic, paper-based datasets that would benefit from digitising. There are datasets that originate from the late 1970, mid 1980s and 1990s, which will yield important data for the preparation of a county flora. Anybody who can help should let me know at the earliest opportunity so I can make best use of the available help.

### NBRG Field Trips 2015

Owing to my lack of activity with regards to arranging field trips I am very grateful for the activities of Kevin Widdowson. Kevin has organised field trips to Misson Carr and Stapleford Wood. These trips are aimed at beginners and are organised so that participants can share experience and knowledge without the potential for feeling overwhelmed by working with more experienced botanists. I understand that Kevin will be organising more trips in 2016 and I will notify you all of any scheduled

activities well in advance. Alternatively you can visit the Facebook page and join the group [<https://www.facebook.com/groups/floraofnottinghamshire>]. As in previous years, if people want specific training on any particular plant families and/or genera, then please let me know and I endeavour to make the appropriate arrangements.

### Rare Plants Recorded in 2015

I will remember 2015 as the year of the brome grasses. Rye brome *Bromus secalinus* (IUCN category 'Vulnerable') was until 2015, considered to be scarce (15 records) and scattered on the claylands throughout the county. During 2015 a total of 38 records were obtained and I suspect that recorders who are still to submit their 2015 lists will add to the total number of records for the species. Nottinghamshire is not the only county to be subject to a significant increase in records, but to date I have yet to hear any reasons as to why the increase has occurred. At many of the sites meadow brome *Bromus commutatus* has been much more commonplace than previous years, but whether this is coincidental is unknown. With regards to bromes, the most important record was field brome *Bromus arvensis* (see below), which I also consider to be the most important of all of the rare records for the year, although others have come close.

Dave has completed the update of the Rare Plant Register and I will be updating the text at some stage in 2016. Once complete we will re-issue as a second edition onto the BSBI web-site.

2015 provided several records of note including:

1. *Bromus arvensis* Field brome – 1<sup>st</sup> record since the early 19<sup>th</sup> Century; several plants were located on the kerb of the overspill car park (Park Lane) at Southwell Leisure Centre, SK697532 (Rob Johnson)
2. *Brassica juncea* Chinese mustard – 1<sup>st</sup> record since 1950; a single plant was present at the edge of an agricultural storage area at Everton Carr, SK700932 (Dave Wood & Mark Woods)
3. *Calystegia sepium* subsp. *roseata* Hedge bindweed – 1<sup>st</sup> record for the subspecies; several plants were found at two locations on the towpath side of the Chesterfield Canal between Misterton and West Stockwith at SK782947 and SK780947 (Dave Wood & Mark Woods). Dave Wood considers this taxon to be under-recorded so please take time to key out any of the *Calystegia* plants.
4. *Carex divulsa* subsp. *divulsa* Grey sedge – 3<sup>rd</sup> modern record at Clayworth Church, SK726884. There were a couple of plants at the base of the perimeter wall and several mown plants in the churchyard grassland (Mark Woods)
5. *Carex divulsa* subsp. *divulsa* Grey sedge – 4<sup>th</sup> modern record at an undisclosed site near Worksop. Hundreds of plants are present in a very old wood meadow (Mark Woods)
6. *Carex divulsa* subsp. *divulsa* Grey sedge – 5<sup>th</sup> modern record (2 plants) at Stanford Hall Lake, SK566236 (Dave Wood). This species has now gone from very rare (1 record) to scarce (5 records) in the county so please keep an eye out for the taxon, particularly in churchyards and other old grasslands.
7. *Cordyline australis* – 2<sup>nd</sup> record: self-set between a wall and lamp post at Stanhome Square, West Bridgford, SK5764235549 (Sian Matthews)
8. *Cordyline australis* – 3<sup>rd</sup> record: self-set behind a street sign at Mabel Grove, West Bridgford, SK5898937821 (Sian Matthews)
9. *Cotoneaster ascendens* Ascending cotoneaster – 2<sup>nd</sup> record: Locally abundant at Littlewood Lane Quarry, Mansfield Woodhouse, SK534649 (Dave Wood & Mark Woods)

10. *Cotoneaster perpusillus* Slender cotoneaster – 1<sup>st</sup> record: Locally abundant at Littlewood Lane Quarry, Mansfield Woodhouse, SK534648 and SK533650 (Dave Wood & Mark Woods)
11. *Cyclamen coum* Eastern sowbread – 1<sup>st</sup> record: found at the base of a wall on Selby Road, West Bridgford, SK585366 (Sian Matthews)
12. *Erodium moschatum* Musk stork's-bill – 2<sup>nd</sup> record: found on a disturbed grassland edge at Greythorne Recreation Ground, West Bridgford, SK576362 (Sian Matthews). Dave has been informed of another site at Radford in Nottingham, but at this stage, I have no further details.
13. *Euphorbia myrsinites* Broadleaved glaucous spurge – 1<sup>st</sup> VC record (unconfirmed): pavement weed, Canberra Crescent, West Bridgford, SK5780435516 (Sian Matthews).
14. *Galium parisiense* Wall bedstraw – 3<sup>rd</sup> VC record: 4m x 2m patch, in open vegetation on compacted cinders - disused sidings in front of High Marnham Power Station gates, SK8049671324 (Mark Woods & Dave Wood)
15. *Rosmarinus officinalis* Rosemary – 1<sup>st</sup> VC record: Pavement at foot of West Bridgford wall, SK583363 (no parent visible), also seen at SK586361 base of a garden wall, originating from a plant above (Sian Matthews)
16. *Sedum* sp. Unknown stonecrop – 1<sup>st</sup> VC record: few plants on a disused section of the A52 trunk road at Elton-on-the-Hill, SK761387 (Dave Wood). Plants needs to flower to confirm identification
17. *Teucrium chamaedrys* Wall germander – 1<sup>st</sup> modern VC record: small patch on a railway storage yard at North Muskham, SK792586 (Dave Wood)
18. *Urtica dioica* subsp. *galeopsifolia* Stingless nettle – 2<sup>nd</sup> site in the VC: small patch in marshy ground in a grassland at Kirkby Park, SK471548
19. *Verbascum lychnitis* White mullein – 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> site in the VC: few plants on a disused section of the A52 trunk road at Elton-on-the-Hill, SK761387 (Dave Wood)
20. X *Conyzigeron huelsonii* (*Erigeron acer* x *Conyza canadensis*) – 2<sup>nd</sup> VC record: 3 plants on a roadside verge, Grange Lane, Fernwood, SK80644913 (Dave Wood & Neil Pinder)

Other notable records include a fourth site for basil thyme *Clinopodium acinos*; two new sites for seaside daisy *Erigeron glaucus* (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> sites); new site for annual toadflax *Linaria maroccana* (5<sup>th</sup> record), new site for hybrid primrose *Primula x pruhonicensis* (5<sup>th</sup> record); new site for vervain *Verbena officinalis* near Grange Lane Landfill (10<sup>th</sup> site for the species), new site for small-flowered buttercup *Ranunculus parviflorus*, which is many miles from the suite of sites on the south side of the River Trent in the Rushcliffe Borough of the county; an eighth site for shepherd's needle *Scandix pecten-veneris* in a cereal field on clay soils.

If anybody has any records that they want checking or if anyone has recorded any rare plant (any species) then please let us (Dave and I) know.

## Website

Still not done - apologies! There is a need for a front cover photograph(s), suggestions with regards to species have been received. It is now up to me to do something towards progressing this work.

For those of you who like to communicate by way of social media forums, Kevin Widdowson has set up a facebook site called "Flora of Nottinghamshire". If you are interested in joining then please contact Kevin Widdowson. Despite my somewhat 'Luddite' approach to social media, I have joined in order to provide technical support to the group.

## Photographs

The re-formatted Flickr site (<http://www.flickr.com/groups/2181996@N22/>) has 191 excellent photographs of plants growing in Nottinghamshire including common and rare species. If you have good quality photographs of any species that are present in Nottinghamshire, then please submit them for inclusion on the site. Some photographs of plant communities and sites of botanical interest would be a most welcome addition.

## Other Activities

*Salix* – Norman Lewis (ex-Conservation Officer for Notts Wildlife Trust) and I have done some more work on the Farndon willows and will be planting some new specimens including bay willow *Salix pentandra*, creeping willow *Salix repens* and an osier hybrid *Salix x rubra*, into the collection in the early part of 2016. Most of the errors with regards to labels have now been resolved and the necessary changes will be made in due course.

*Prunus* – Norman and I have also been comparing blackthorn, wild plum and hybrids at sites owned or managed by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust. We have been able to name some of the forms of blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* including a spectacular hybrid *Prunus x fruticans* at Duke's Wood (see photograph below) containing the 'densiflora' form of blackthorn as one of the parents.



*Dactylorhiza purpurella* – I understand that the fieldwork for a study of northern marsh orchid *Dactylorhiza purpurella* in Nottinghamshire is now complete and I await the opportunity to review the results and conclusions of the study. A post-graduate student at Nottingham Trent University has visited the Nottinghamshire populations of northern marsh orchid and compared their morphology with populations in Derbyshire. Many of the plants at Bevercotes Country Park appear to be intermediate with other marsh orchids including southern marsh orchid *D. praetermissa* and common spotted orchid *D. fuchsii* (see Flickr web-site for photographs) and the presence of pure northern marsh orchid as a distinct species in Nottinghamshire has not been fully confirmed. Nottinghamshire is at the interface where the distribution of northern and southern marsh orchid overlap so there is high potential for hybridisation and the loss of the pure species due to hybrid vigour. I therefore asked a student to measure the characters of the Nottinghamshire plants and statistically compare those characters with specimens from populations in Derbyshire. The study will hopefully help field recorders to know which taxa are likely to be encountered in Nottinghamshire and to give some guidance about measurements of flower characteristics (labellum width is critical) to aid accurate identification.

*Translocations* - I have been approached by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust (NWT) about re-introductions of important plants into NWT sites from which they have been lost. We are at a very early stage in proceedings and the project may not commence unless there is scientific merit. If, however, NWT do decide to proceed with further investigations I will of course, keep you all informed of developments.

That is all my news for now so Happy New Year to you all and I hope that you can contribute to the activities of the recording group / BSBI in Nottinghamshire during 2016. I will be moving to a new address (still in Hucknall) in early 2016 and will update the BSBI and anyone who corresponds by post in advance of the move.

Mark Woods (Joint BSBI recorder for Nottinghamshire)

31/12/2015