

Plant Records, 2020.

The *Flora of Staffordshire* dealt with records made up until the end of 2011. (Further matters relating to that time period are dealt with in a series of supplements.)

This short account is the ninth annual report listing some of the more interesting results of later fieldwork.

Dates are all 2020, unless stated otherwise.

New records for VC39.

Abies koreana, SJ8800, single planted tree, approx 3m high, Tettenhall Green, P. Newton (= PN).

Achilla millefolium 'Red Violet', SO9586, two flowering at base of temporary fencing around abandoned plot on corner of Reddal Hill Road & Claremont Street, Cradley Heath, N. Aspey (= NA).

Allium cristophii, SO9186, near base of wall, graveyard of St. Michael's Church, Brierley Hill, J. Hough (=JH).

Anemanthele lessoniana, SJ9019, several flowering tussocks on west and east shaded steep sides of Hyde Lea Bank Road, just south of junction with Church Lane, Coppenhall, NA.

Asparagus asparagoides, SK0220, bush fruiting on south-west side of bridge in Nature Garden area immediately west of Staffs Wildlife Trust HQ at Wolseley Centre, north-west of Rugeley, NA.

Berberis verruculosa, SK0220, several bushes fruiting in car park hedge at north-west corner, Staffs Wildlife Trust HQ, NA.

Chaenomeles speciosa, SO8593, extensive bush, farm hedge, well away from buildings, Woodford Grange. Possible outcast, PN.

Cotoneaster transens, SO8582, single 4m shrub-tree fruiting on west side of canal path c. 20m south of Whitting Horse Bridge, near Whittington, NA.

Cyrtomium fortunei, SK1109, wall behind a leaky downspout, shop front, Bore Street, Lichfield, D. Hall (= DH).

Eupatorium purpureum, SJ8917, introduced immediately north of farm pond on west side of road going north from Levedale, NA.

Laburnum alpinum, SJ9124, mature tree on edge of Eccleshall Cemetery, immediately east of cycleway, NA.

Rudbeckia laciniata, SK1210, a few small leafing suckers in bed under trees on south side of car park, Stowe House, Lichfield, NA.

Salix eriocephala, SK0220, below north-west side of footbridge on west side of stream north-east of Staffs Wildlife Trust HQ at Wolseley Centre, NA.

Scutellaria altissima, SJ8642, patch, waste ground near Hanford Roundabout, I.J. Hopkins (= IJH).

Silene coeli-rosa, SJ9124, wild flower mix against fence line opposite No. 2 Nursery Lane, Stafford, NA.

Taraxacum berthae, SK0550, nineteen plants, Casey Bank Nature Reserve, Casey Lane, Ipstones, H. Ball, conf. A.J. Richards.

T. ekmanii, SJ9756, around a sign post, edge of small industrial estate, Leek, B. Machin (= BM).

T. excellens, SJ9361, ditch by Rudyard Track, BM.

T. hesperium, SJ9558, over a dozen on bank by Rudyard Station; also SJ9856, cliff cutting, Broad Street, Leek: both BM.

T. lacistophyllum, SK0955, east facing main slope on Ossums Hill, Manifold Valley, BM.

T. lamprophyllum, SJ9852, south facing roadside bank, Basford Hurst; also SJ9757, edge of chemical works, Bridge End Lane, Leek: both BM.

Verbascum pyramidatum, SO8593, patch flowering in overgrown lot immediately adjacent to south-east end of playing fields, Trysull, NA.

Veronicastrum virginicum, SJ8917, introduced immediately north of farm pond on west side of road going north from Levedale, NA.

Species seen again after a gap of several years.

Filipendula camtschatica, SJ8007, large patch (5m x 2m) flowering immediately behind (and north-west of) St. Mary's Churchyard, Patshull Hall, NA. Last reported from this, its only VC39 site, in 1992.

New tetrads for rarer taxa

The following have been seen in a total of less than about seven tetrads, since 1994.

Allium ampeloprasum var. *babingtonii*, SK1849, two or three hundred plants on grassy bank above the wet meadows by the River Tame, near Dunstall Lane, J. & M. Walton (= J&MW).

Anemone apennina, SK1110, present for a few years, away from houses, under beech hedge bordering footpath on west side of Stowe Pool, Lichfield, DH.

A. hupehensis x *vitifolia* (= *A. x hybrida*), SJ9700, single flowering plant growing on west side of hedge on west side of Lucknow Road about 30m north of canal bridge, south of New Invention; also SK1208, 2m flowering strip rooting under garden fence along north side of footpath about 20m west of Hillside Road, Borrowcote Hill, Lichfield, both NA.

Anthenis austriaca, SK0220, part of wild flower seed-mix sown along east side of new building on south verge of road below Staffs Wildlife Trust, NA.

Bupleurum rotundi.folium, SJ9124, wild flower mix against fence line opposite No. 2 Nursery Lane, Stafford, NA.

Epipactis phyllanthes, SJ9916, ten spikes under a small group of *Fagus*, Rifle Range Corner, Cannock Chase, J&MW; also seen by them at this site in 2009.

Euonymus japonicus, SO8692, component of a roadside hedge enclosing a canal bank, converting it into a garden with gated access, NA.

Euphorbia esula, SO9791, large flowering patch (5m x 5m) on south side of Birmingham Canal (New Main Line), Tividale, Tipton, NA.

Inula helenium, SJ8739, several plants not yet in flower, in tall herb-dominated vegetation, between Trentham Gardens Monkey Forest overspill car park and the river (where, in the early 2000s, much of the top-soil was removed by an excavator, leaving a long, shallow pit), IJH.

Knautia macedonica, SJ8739, abundant, in tall herb-dominated vegetation, between Trentham Gardens Monkey Forest overspill car park and the river, IJH.

Linum grandiflorum, SO9586, local authority wild flower mix on A459/A4100 roundabout, Cradley Heath; also SP0194, occasional weak plants along 50m of disturbed low banking where bollards have been installed on east side of Sandy Lane, Friar Park, Wednesbury, probably a disturbed seed bank from an old seed mix: both NA.

Mahonia japonica, SJ9202; single shrub, churchyard, Bushbury Hill; also SO9592, canalside vegetation, relict of planting, Bushbury: both PN.

Malva alcea, SJ9223, single flowering plant between railings and river, Stafford; also SK0013, tall fruiting plant growing out of brambles on north side of track on south side of pool on waste ground, north-east of Hednesford, with a single fruiting plant on the east side of this pool: all NA.

Nicotiana forgetiana, SO8592, two flowering plants and two rosettes in disturbed margin of field on west side of footpath, Trysull, NA.

Persicaria amplexicaulis, SO8287, large patch on wide road verge, Blundies, PN.

P. mitis, SJ9024, Doxey Marshes Nature Reserve, M.F. Godfrey.

Picea pungens 'Glauca', SO9087, overgrown area between playing field and disused railway line, JH.

Pontederia cordata, SJ8917, introduced at edge of farm pond on west side of road going north from Levedale, NA.

Potentilla erecta x *reptans* (= *P. x italica*), SO8289, Mere Hall, PN.

Pterocarya fraxinifolia x *stenoptera* (= *P. x rehderiana*), SK0220, several mature trees with bushy suckers running along 30m of south bank of Stafford Brook immediately north of Staffs Wildlife Trust HQ, NA.

Salix udensis, SK0220, large low bush, north of pool, north of Staffs Wildlife Trust HQ at Wolseley Centre, NA.

Silene armeria, SJ9124, wild flower mix against fence line opposite No. 2 Nursery Lane, Stafford, NA.

Silybum marianum, SK0066, single plant, near footpath, in sheep pasture, north of Manor Farm, Dane Valley, Quarnford Parish, S.F. Woodward.

Sisymbrium loeselii, SO9990, large flowering patch against brick wall on north side of A4034 about 20m west of canal bridge, Oldbury, NA.

Taraxacum boeckmanii, SJ9856, west of Nicholson Memorial, Leek, BM.

T. bracteatum, SJ9856, a dozen, west facing wall, Market Street, Leek, BM.

T. duplidentifrons, SJ9756, verge, Kiln Lane, Leek, BM.

T. pseudohamatum, SJ9852, south facing roadside bank, Basford Hurst; also edge of path below Thor's Cave, Manifold Valley: both BM.

Teucrium chamaedrys, SK0220, flowering patch 2 x 1m on north verge of entrance road to Staffs Wildlife Trust HQ, NA.

Trifolium incarnatum ssp. *incarnatum*, SO8396, many, presumed impurity in recently re-seeded field, Bridgnorth Road, PN.

Verbascum speciosum, SJ8640, two flowering plants and six rosettes on waste ground, Trentham, IJH; also SO8593, 20+ plants over 100m of hedge, most extremely branched, Woodford Grange, PN.

Verbena hastata, SJ8739, both blue-purple and pink flowered forms in tall herb-dominated vegetation between Trentham Gardens Monkey Forest overspill car park and the river (where, in the early 2000s, much of the top-soil was removed by an excavator, leaving a long, shallow pit), IJH.

Vinca major var. *major forma variegata*, SK1209, scattered along 10m of south verge of Station Road about 20m east of footbridge, Lichfield, NA.

Further observations.

There was less recording by monad (or tetrad) than usual in 2020, because of Covid restrictions. In particular, the usually three most prolific recorders' activities have been seriously hampered by health and/or travel problems.

Wild flower seed mixes sown by local authorities and others continue to cause identification problems. Components can have a continental origin, with varieties not otherwise seen in Britain. Plants resembling *Centaurea debauxii* are frequently encountered. These are clearly not *C. nigra* and tend to have variously developed ray florets. However, they seldom have the swelling of the stem below the flowering head that Stace's Flora associates with *C. debauxii*.

Anthemis austriaca (= *Cota austriaca*) is probably a frequent component of these seed mixes, but is seldom recorded.

Prunus domestica x *spinosa* (= *P. x fruticans*) is probably under-recorded because of confusion with its parents.

In the fourth edition of Stace's Flora, *Rosa canina* has been split into three taxa. There is not sufficient data so far to suggest that they are otherwise than more or less equally frequent.

The name *R. canina* is now restricted to plants that have glabrous, uniserrate, eglandular leaflets (= 'group *Lutetianae*' in some earlier literature); and those with a very few hairs on their (uniserrate) leaflet lowerside and/or a few glands on the leaflet and stipule margins and/or on petiole and rhachis (= 'group *Transitoriae*').

R. squarrosa (= 'group *Dumales*') is now the name applied to plants with biserrate or multiserrate leaflets, with small red glands on teeth; stipules densely fringed with these glands; petiole, rhachis and sometimes midrib of leaflets with a few stalked glands.

The third taxon is *R. corymbifera* (= 'group *Pubescentes*') which has variably hairy petiole, rhachis and lowerside of its (uniserrate, eglandular) leaflets.

Until all recorders are familiar with these changes there are likely to be difficulties in determining what is meant by "*Rosa canina*" in lists that they produce. Thus the term ***Rosa canina s.l.*** should be used when it has not been possible to distinguish between the three taxa described above. "*Rosa canina* agg." should usually be avoided: it is not a very useful concept as it embraces the three taxa, the two ssp. of *R. caesia*, *R. obtusifolia* and hybrids between any of these.