



Fen Orchid rediscovered in Carmarthenshire!

11-year old botanist Tristan Moss has just re-found the endangered Fen Orchid (*Liparis loeselii*) during a visit to the MoD Establishment at Pendine. The orchid had not been seen in Carmarthenshire for nineteen years and was thought to have gone locally extinct.

Tristan was visiting the site as part of the annual Carmarthenshire recording week organised by the Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland (BSBI). Ruth Harding, the officer at Natural Resources Wales with responsibility for the site (which is designated as a Special Area of Conservation and a Site of Special Scientific Interest), was thrilled at his find, because site management has been geared to restoring habitat suitable for the orchid to recolonise. Ruth admitted to being quite emotional, having at last achieved success after many years of hard work by her and her colleagues.

Sixteen members of the BSBI attended the meeting and following Tristan's discovery of the first plant in flower and seed, another five plants were found by the party, one in flower and seed and the other four, non-flowering. When fully grown the plant is only about 7cm tall and requires sharp eyes to pick it out from the surrounding dune vegetation.

Several other rare species were recorded during the day including Fragrant Orchid (*Gymnadenia densiflora*), the hybrid orchid *Gymnadenia densiflora* x *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*, Dotted Sedge (*Carex punctata*), Adder's-tongue Fern (*Ophioglossum vulgatum*) and the second record for Carmarthenshire of the non-native Narrow-leaved Ragwort (*Senecio inaequidens*).

Continuing management will seek to further enhance the habitat at Pendine to encourage more Fen Orchids to colonise in future years. Thanks to the staff at the Pendine Establishment for allowing access to the BSBI members and of course to sharp-eyed Tristan!

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The Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland (BSBI) is the leading society promoting the study, understanding and enjoyment of wild plants in Britain and Ireland. Founded in 1836, we are now one of the world's largest contributors of biological records, many collected by our volunteer members, both amateur and professional botanists, who benefit from our research, training and outreach programmes.
