

Somerset Rare Plants Group: Summer Meetings 2018

Please email or ring the leader before each meeting to say you are coming. This helps with planning and can be useful if there are changes to the programme. Parking is sometimes limited so please lift share where possible. Please bring your GPS/Mobile phone if you have one. Meetings usually start at **11am** but please note the **10.30am** start for Leigh Woods, Steart Marshes and East Quantoxhead and **7pm** start for Berrow Dunes. The Blagdon Lake and Walk Farm meetings require booking.

Sunday 8th April Leigh Woods, Bristol (VC6)

Looking at Spring flora in Ancient Woodland and forestry plantation. Paradise Bottom is a part of Leigh Woods less frequently visited and has a rich ground flora on the slopes, stream and marsh. Expect to see Purple Willow (*Salix purpurea*) and Narrow Buckler-fern (*Dryopteris carthusiana*) amongst many other interesting species. Meet at **10.30am** in FC car park at ST55297394 (nearest postcode BS8 3QB) for a brisk 1km walk to the Paradise Bottom area. Bring lunch and suitable footwear for damp terrain.

Leaders: Clive Lovatt & Liz McDonnell lizmcdonnell2005@gmail.com

Sunday 22nd April King's Cliff Woods (VC5)

Recording in large woodland and old quarry. The area has very few recent records, easy walking but some interesting wet areas. Meet at **11am**. Roadside parking at ST277326.

Leaders: Steve Parker stephenjparker1710@gmail.com & Simon Leach

Sunday 13th May Blackdowns SSSIs (VC5)

Recording in Blackdown Hills SSSIs and Local Wildlife Sites. Our aim is to visit a series of sites and habitats, some areas may be wet and muddy. Meet at **11am** at Staple Hill car park (ST246159) before car sharing to selected sites.

Leaders: Steve Parker stephenjparker1710@gmail.com & Ian Salmon

Saturday 19th May Uphill Hill Local Nature Reserve (VC6)

A visit to update records for this LNR / SSSI. Target species include Honewort (*Trinia glauca*), Green-winged Orchid (*Anacamptis morio*) and Somerset Hair-grass (*Koeleria vallesiana*). There should be time to explore Walborough Hill and saltmarsh too. Meet at **11am** in the car park along Uphill Way (ST31605848) – there is additional parking on-street and further down the road if necessary. Hopefully finish with tea at the Uphill Wharf café.

Leaders: Helena Crouch helenacrouch@sky.com & Pam Millman

Sunday 3rd June Bridgwater Canal (VC5)

Visiting a section of the Bridgwater & Taunton Canal for general recording in urban area and then searching for invasive alien aquatic species such as Water-lettuce (*Pistia stratiotes*) and Water-hyacinth (*Eichhornia crassipes*) which were recorded (and removed) in November 2009. Car parks or roadside parking in the town, then meet at **11am** outside Morrisons Supermarket at ST29903665.

Leaders: Steve Parker stephenjparker1710@gmail.com & Ian Salmon

Saturday 16th June Blagdon Lake (VC6)

Aquatic, lakeside and meadow flora. By special permission of Bristol Water, a meeting to record botanically under-recorded parts of the reservoir. Species to look out for include Round-fruited Rush (*Juncus compressus*), Northern Yellow-cress (*Rorippa islandica*), Rough Hawk's-beard (*Crepis biennis*), narrow-leaved Pondweeds & Water-crowfoots. There are species-rich meadows on the north shore, which are not usually accessible to the general public. **Booking is essential for this meeting, as numbers will be limited.** Contact Liz for details of time and meeting place

Leaders: Liz McDonnell lizmcdonnell2005@gmail.com & Clive Lovatt

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Tuesday 26th June

Berrow Dunes (VC6)

An evening walk with Bob Corns of Natural England to explore the southern part of this important SSSI. In particular we should see Lizard Orchids (*Himantoglossum hircinum*) and Sea Bindweed (*Calystegia soldanella*) which grow nowhere else in Somerset. We will also search for the Rush-leaved Fescue (*Festuca arenaria*) seen fleetingly on a previous visit and should see many other coastal plants. Meet at 7pm in the small car park at the junction of Brent Road and Berrow Road (ST30005151). If the car park is full, it is possible to park on-street along Brent Road.

Leaders: Bob Corns & Helena Crouch helenacrouch@sky.com

Sunday 1st July

Chalk Water, Exmoor (VC5)

This is a traditional moorland coombe with stream with the slightly unusual feature that it is heavily grazed by sheep. This results in spectacular displays of species often crowded out. Bird's-foot (*Ornithopus perpusillus*) is present in the thousands and English Eyebright (*Euphrasia anglica*) in the millions. Indeed one of the objectives of the meeting will be to encourage all participants to feel more confident about recording *Euphrasia anglica* with its fairly easily-determined characters in their own areas. The usual damp and boggy plants of Exmoor will also be present in the numerous marshy areas but one key target will be to try to locate Pale Butterwort (*Pinguicula lusitanica*) which may be in decline. There is a short flat walk of about 10 mins to the site and the meeting is on very gently sloping short turf. Meet at 11am at Robber's Bridge Car Park (SS82164647) sorry no nearby post code.

Leaders: Graham Lavender grahamlavender@hotmail.com & Ian Salmon

Saturday 7th July

Walk Farm, nr Bruton (VC6)

SANHS meeting to which SRPG and Somerset Butterfly Group are invited. Visit to unimproved species-rich hay meadows, primarily for butterflies and wild flowers with introductory explanation by farmer Robert Oram. This will be a gentle walk through flower-rich meadows with tall vegetation on level or gently sloping ground. Meet at 11am at Walk Farm (BA10 0LP) ST723333 and park in the farmyard.

Leaders: David Reid and Simon Leach. Numbers limited, book with the SANHS office on office@sanhs.org or tel. 01823 272429

July (dates to be arranged)

Arable surveys

A chance to help with arable surveys for Plantlife – details to follow

Saturday 11th and Sunday 12th August Joint SRPG and WFS Meeting (VC5)

Saturday 11th August

Steart Marshes Reserve (VC5)

We will visit areas of the marshes which are not usually accessible to the public to fill out current records. Habitats range from sub-maritime/brackish to classic grazing marshes where the rhynes have interesting aquatic and emergent species. All areas with easy walking conditions. Meet at 10.30am in the reserve car park at ST25204421 (TA5 2PU). Free parking and toilets.

Leaders: Ro FitzGerald ro@lilstock.eclipse.co.uk (01278 741519) & Liz McDonnell

Sunday 12th August

East Quantoxhead (VC5)

Recording in and around East Quantoxhead village, including having access to the wonderful gardens of Court House (still property of the Luttrell Family after eight centuries!) The estate lies in a highly scenic strip between Quantock ridge and the coast. Habitats include woodland, pasture and arable, and the relict calcareous grassland on the famous 'stripy' lias cliffs. Walking conditions various, but recording in small scatter groups will allow choice. Meet at 10.30am in village car park at ST13724354 (TA5 1EJ) Use the eastern Frog Lane (running due north to the village) to leave the A39. Parking 50p donation to church funds.

Leaders: Ro FitzGerald ro@lilstock.eclipse.co.uk (01278 741519) & Graham Lavender

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Thursday 23rd August Black Down, Mendip (VC6)

A walk up onto Black Down, the highest point in VC6, home to several RPR species. In particular we will search for Hare's-tail Cottongrass (*Eriophorum vaginatum*), not seen here since publication of the flora, and check on Lesser Marshwort (*Apium inundatum*). Meet **11am** in Burrington Combe car park (ST47645879), which has toilets. It is a quite a climb up onto Black Down and steep in places. Tea or ice cream on return.

Leaders: Helena Crouch helenacrouch@sky.com & Margaret Webster

Saturday 1st September Atriplex Field Workshop, Wall Common (VC5)

An opportunity to get to grips with the puzzling range of saltmarsh & shingle *Atriplex* species, including Spear-leaved Orache (*A. prostrata*), Long-stalked Orache (*A. longipes*), Babington's Orache (*A. glabriuscula*) and various hybrids. We will also look at the wide range of saltmarsh species to be found here in Bridgwater Bay. Meet at **11am** at the coastal car park at Wall Common (ST26134531) - nearest postcode TA5 2PU. Bring ID books and lenses. Finish by 4pm

Leaders: Paul Green & Clive Lovatt ([Bookings/enquiries lizmcdonnell2005@gmail.com](mailto:Bookings/enquiries_lizmcdonnell2005@gmail.com))

Sunday 16th September Yarty Moor (VC5)

Mire and wetland habitats last visited by SRPG in August 2002. A good opportunity to update records. The target plants include Wood Horsetail (*Equisetum sylvaticum*), Oblong-leaved Sundew (*Drosera intermedia*), Pale Butterwort (*Pinguicula lusitanica*) and White Beak-sedge (*Rhynchospora alba*).

Meet at **11am** Staple Hill car park (ST246159) before car sharing to selected site.

Leader: Steve Parker stephenjparker1710@gmail.com & Liz McDonnell

Sunday 7th October Frome (VC6)

An urban botany meeting to under-recorded areas of Frome. Depending on number attending, this is planned as a scatter meeting to record in two or more separate monads. A good opportunity to learn late-season plants from their urban setting, including aliens and casuals. Meet at **11am** at Badcox car park at the junction of Nunney Road and Broadway ST77164801 (BA11 4LA). Parking is free on Sunday and if car park is full, there is parking along Nunney Road. Hopefully we can reconvene for tea.

Leaders: Helena Crouch helenacrouch@sky.com & Simon Leach

Saturday 27th October Taunton (VC5)

An opportunity to join in the Wild Flower Society's 'Last Week Hunt' for wild plants in flower during the last week of October. We hope to see a number of scarce or otherwise unusual species, including Wall Bedstraw (*Galium parisiense*), Hoary Cinquefoil (*Potentilla argentea*), Hairy Buttercup (*Ranunculus sardous*), Rye-brome (*Bromus secalinus*) and Annual Beard-grass (*Polypogon monspeliensis*) – although whether they'll still be in flower is uncertain. Meet at **11am** on N. side of Silk Mills Park and Ride car park (ST20862555) where cars can be left for the day. Our aim is to walk into the town centre via the River Tone and Long Run Meadow, returning via Taunton station and Chip Lane, a circuit of 4-5km. Reasonably flat terrain, but some fields could be muddy. Bring packed lunch, but we'll try to include a tea (and loo) stop at either the café in French Weir Park or at 'The Shed' in Goodland Gardens.

Leaders: Simon Leach simonleach@phonecoop.coop & Ian Salmon

Contacts: Liz McDonnell: 01934 712649 or 07732 689703 lizmcdonnell2005@gmail.com
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Simon Leach: 01823 323782 or 07419 373833 simonleach@phonecoop.coop
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