

Glamorgan Botany Group

2025 Excursions

Welcome to our 2025 excursion listing! As usual, we have aimed for a mix of sites (in the E of Glamorgan), to ensure we see a wide range of plants and to hone our id skills. Excursions are free and open to all interested, but please note the following:

- 🍃 All excursions will start promptly at **10am**, and will end in the late afternoon (although on most excursions there is opportunity to head back earlier if you want to).
- 🍃 Please bring a packed lunch, hand-lens, field-guide(s), and a GPS if you have one.
- 🍃 Excursions may be cancelled if heavy rain is forecast to last all day – please check with David if in doubt.
- 🍃 Be aware that some sites may be wet, rocky, or overgrown – we've indicated below if we expect the going to be particularly tough, but please come appropriately attired.

We look forward to seeing you on one or more of our excursions this year!

David Barden, Julian Woodman and Karen Wilkinson

Sunday 13 April

Fonmon Castle

Meeting place:

Fonmon Castle car park (ST0461.6801, CF62 3ZN). *Follow the brown signs to Fonmon village from the B4265, turn right at the pond and follow the road round for 200m. Numbers will be limited to 20, and we ask that you book by contacting David no later than Wednesday 9 April. This is so we can give the owners a list of attendees prior to the visit, avoiding the need for you to pay at the gate.*

The aim on this excursion is to cover the grounds and surrounds of Fonmon Castle, including the woodlands, where we will keep an eye out for Goldilocks Buttercup (*Ranunculus auricomus*), and the valley-slope grasslands, where we should find Pale Flax (*Linum bienne*) amongst a typical limestone flora including Cowslip (*Primula veris*). Some scrapes were put in on the valley bottom in more marshy floodplain grassland last year, and we will see if anything has colonised these. Further down the River Kenson, the ground becomes brackish, and here we will be on the lookout for the v.c. rarity Hairy Buttercup (*Ranunculus sardous*), previously seen here six years ago. Nearby (if we are lucky) we may see some early signs of another rarity, Small Teasel (*Dipsacus pilosus*).

Saturday 17 May

Llantrisant Common

Meeting place:

Heol y Sarn car park, Gwaunruperra Street, Llantrisant (ST047.836, CF72 8QR). *The upper car park is rather small; but there is plenty of space in the lower car park next to it.*

This excursion offers something a little different from usual – a tour around a well-known SSSI in the company of David Barden, who lives close by and has studied the site intensively for 14 years. We expect to see some v.c.41 rarities including Moonwort (*Botrychium lunaria*), Cornish Moneywort (*Sibthorpia europaea*) and White Sedge (*Carex curta*), as well as many of the classic species of damp, acidic pasture such as Wild Cranberry (*Vaccinium oxycoccos*), Meadow Thistle (*Cirsium dissectum*) and Marsh Cinquefoil (*Comarum palustre*). A cut-and-collect machine was used on large areas in late 2024, and we will examine what effect this has had on the vegetation, as well as taking a look at the adjoining WT reserve of Y Gweira with its more heathy vegetation, including Bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*) and Bottle Sedge (*Carex rostrata*). *Some parts of the Common are very wet and tussocky – you may wish*

to wear wellies. David's book (*The Wild Plants of Llantrisant Common*) is still available for sale at £8 a copy – see contact details below.

Saturday 14 June

Miskin

Meeting place: Footpath entrance to Miskin Manor Cricket Club, at the S end of 'The Chestnuts' (ST0488.8070, CF72 8PE). *Please park considerately on nearby streets; there is a reasonable amount of space along 'The Chestnuts' on the way to our meeting point.*

The intention on this excursion is to explore some of the woodland, floodplain grassland and ox-bow lakes adjacent to the River Ely. There are modern records of Rough Horsetail (*Equisetum hyemale*) not far away that we might hope to see, while Wood Club-Rush (*Scirpus sylvaticus*) and Bladder Sedge (*Carex vesicaria*) are known from the wider area, and might be found here too.

Sunday 20 July

Cwm-du, Llangynwyd

Meeting place: SE corner of Parc-Tyn-Y-Waun, Llangynwyd (marked as 'Pont Rhyd-y-cyff' on OS maps) (SS8708.8876, CF34 9RG). *Please park considerately on the road leading down to our meeting place.*

On this visit, we'll explore the valley of Cwm-du, which contains large areas of Sessile Oak woodland (for which it is notified as a SSSI) and pasture, as well as narrow lanes, bridleways, streams, and the dramatic Cwm-du viaduct. We'll see where the paths lead us, but we may continue round via the dry grassland of Garth Hill to complete a circuit. The records we have for this area are limited to a modest selection of common species, and we're sure close inspection will turn up more interesting things.

Saturday 16 August

Cwm Cyffog & Cwm Nant-y-ci

Meeting place: Junction of Caedu Road and Vale View, Ogmore Vale (SS9305.9004, CF32 7DR). *Please park considerately on nearby streets.*

The boggy upland at the head of Cwm Cyffog is known as only one of two sites for White Beak Sedge (*Rhynchospora alba*) in the E of Glamorgan, but modern records are lacking. We'll therefore examine the site to assess the health and extent of the population. We'll then head 1km S across moorland to the remote Cwm Nant-y-ci, which features hillside springs, and (at least from aerial photos) appears to have pockets of promising vegetation. *For part of the route, we will be walking along tracks and paths, but the ground in both the valleys is likely to be very wet and uneven – wellies are advised.*

Sunday 14 September

Tylorstown

Meeting place: Main entrance (SE end) of Rhondda Fach Leisure Centre, East St, Tylorstown (ST0114.9578, CF43 3HR)

Tylorstown in the Rhondda Fach has been little-visited by botanists, and on this excursion we'll aim to fill in some gaps in the database. Specifically, we'll be looking at the environs of the river, the slopes heading up to Tylorstown tip ('Old Smokey'), and the tip itself. On the way, we will likely pass near remediation works following the landslide that happened in November 2020, and we will keep an eye out for any associated effects on the flora. We'll then head S to an area of heathy ground, before circling back round to our starting point via Stanleytown and the cycleway.

Any enquiries about these excursions to:

David Barden
glamorgan.botany@yahoo.co.uk
Tel.: 07791 153262

...and also find us on facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/459413357740225/>
...and the BSBI website: <https://bsbi.org/glamorgan>