Another year has flown by with about 8000 records added to the database. Meetings started in March on the cliffs north of Maiden Castle in SJ55B where Arum italicum was the most unusual find. Blechnum, Campanula rotundifolia, which seems to be decreasing, Ficaria verna, a Nasturtium species and Arabidopsis were seen among 22 new taxa. Asplenium trichomanes ssp pachyrachis was doing fine but Mad Alan’s Hole held no hidden treasure. A brief excursion into SJ45W yielded Erophila verna. In April, Hough Common, SJ75A, gave us 120 taxa of which 95 were new. The large quantity of Lamium purpureum was commented on and other finds were Malus sylvestris, Pentaglottis, Ribes nigrum and rubrum and Geranium pusillum. A patch of Vinca major was noted. A tour around the Haslington area in SJ75H added Cardamine amara, Cerastium semidecandrum, Spergularia marina, Erophila verna, and Parietaria judiaca. A short stretch of verge had Carex flacca, hirta and leporina in a total of 128 new species. Our route also took us into SJ75M where we added 19 aliens including Claytonia sibirica and Impatiens glandulifera, but also Urtica urens and Fumaria muralis ssp boreoei (new spelling as in Stace 3).

In June, we briefly parked in SJ55V and added 9 species in 10 minutes before relocating to Wrenbury in SK64Y and added 167 new taxa including Malva neglecta, Claytonia perfoliata and Ligustrum vulgare. It was not a dry day and wading through dense fields of wet Holcus and oil-seed rape was not fun! An odd rose awaits diagnosis. July saw us at Wettenhall visiting three tetrads. First SJ65E where Trifolium incarnatum as a fodder plant was among 72 additions, then SJ66A with 29 new including Myosoton aquaticum and Carex pseudocyperus. Finally, we recorded in SJ66F, with more Myosoton and an unexpected colony of Impatiens capensis in 59 additions. Attention then turned to the north-east of the vice-county, firstly with a visit to SK19J right at the eastern boundary, where the weather was lovely and sunny despite a very dire forecast. We got 49 new taxa including Ranunculus omiophyllus, Plantago coronopus far from the sea, Cystopteris fragilis, Epilobium brunnescens and a UK altitude record (370m) for Hirschfeldia incana. Rubus chamaemorus eluded us. Next to SE10A, where we added 36 to the tetrad total with no aliens in sight. Wahlenbergia hederacea was doing well and Potamogeton polygonifolius, Ranunculus omiophyllus and Myosotis secunda also occurred. Across the busy main road we were in SK19E and added 60 making a total of 104 with several aliens including Origanum vulgare, Rosa x nitidula, Rubus laciniatus and Epilobium brunnescens. A nice clump of Epilobium montanum x obscurum made a satisfying conclusion.

Among solo discoveries Stewart Hinsley gets 3 stars for Potentilla indica which flowered at Northwich, Viola odorata var subcarnea on the old railway at Wheelock and best of all, Mentha cervina near Nantwich which seems to be the first genuinely wild location in Britain. Mark Woods found Maianthemum kamschaticum in Knutsford while doing a survey. Eric Greenwood spotted
Muscari latifolium naturalised in a small wood at Gayton and Ian Wallace found Urtica membranacea by a betting shop in Pensby. Hot news from the first week of January 2015 is Des Callaghan’s discovery of more Trichomanes speciosum gametophyte, this time on Alderley Edge. Sad news is that Len Johnson has just died. He contributed a lot to Cheshire botany and general conservation.

CHESHIRE PLANT RECORDING MEETINGS FOR 2015
Meetings begin at 2pm unless otherwise stated and last until about 5pm. It is usually a gentle stroll and all are invited but these days it is at your own risk.

Sunday 22nd March  2pm   Buerton
Park on verge at SJ695418  for a 4 tetrad marathon.

Saturday 18th April   2pm  but earlier for a pub lunch at Walgherton
Park in car park at SJ698489 down lane opposite the Boars Head then head south.

Saturday 9th May  2pm  Bell o’ th’ Hill  pub lunch if desired
Park opposite pub at SJ523454 to go east.

Thursday 21st May  Bradwell Green led by Julie Clarke. 11am at the village hall (SJ752634) to explore lanes and footpaths. Bring lunch. Ring 01539 563504 for details.

Sunday 14th June  11am  Church Minshull. Bring packed lunch.
Park in small layby at SJ674606 to explore footpaths to the east.

Saturday 4th July  11am  Aston nr Frodsham  Bring packed lunch.
Park by chapel at SJ 556785 to go down to R Weaver to see if Carduus tenuiflorus survives.

Sunday 19th July  2pm  Huxley
Park SJ500615 going S to check Anagallis tenella.

Saturday 15th August  2pm  Winsford
Park at SJ632653 to search for Serratula.

Saturday 12th September  11am  east of Tintwistle and bring lunch
Park in layby at SK035979 to try to visit flushes in SK0499.

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Viola odorata var subcarnea at Wheelock.
Muscari latifolium in Gayton.
Urtica membranacea, Pensby, Wirral.
Epipactis dunensis by Blakemere.
Mentha cervina, Chorlton, near Nantwich.