

Glamorgan Botany Group

2013 Excursion Report

We held five excursions this year, concentrating on the less intensively recorded eastern side of the vice-county. We were really pleased that all five excursions were well-attended, with a good mix of experienced botanists and beginners allowing us to get some serious recording done as well as exchange lots of useful identification tips! We're currently starting to think about excursions for next year, so let us know if you have any ideas for places to visit.

We look forward to seeing you on our excursions in 2014!

David Barden, Karen Wilkinson and Julian Woodman

Nant Whitton woodlands – Saturday 13 April

Our first-ever excursion was held at the end of an extended period of unseasonably cold weather, and in the preceding week we had been concerned that there might not be much in the way of ground flora to see. However, we need not have worried, as we found plenty to occupy ourselves in Coed Whitton (owned by the Amelia Trust) and the privately-owned Coed Quinnet and Coed Ffynnon Dyfrig, although the lateness of the season made it difficult to make accurate assessments of populations.

Following an introductory welcome to the assembled party of 17, we split into two, David's group heading north-east through Coed Whitton towards more open ground, and Julian's group examining Coed Quinnet further down the valley.

Both groups encountered ash-dominated woodland on deep clayey soils over limestone. These gave rise to a diverse calcareous ground flora, with the only conspicuously abundant species being *Anemone nemorosa* (Wood Anemone) and *Ficaria verna* (Lesser Celandine). Certain other familiar woodland plants were either completely absent (as *Allium ursinum* (Ramsons) and *Moehringia trinervia* (Three-veined Sandwort)), while others were scarce (e.g. *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* (Bluebell), *Mercurialis perennis* (Dog's Mercury), *Ajuga reptans* (Bugle) and all ferns except *Asplenium scolopendrium* (Hart's-tongue)). *Oxalis acetosella* (Wood Sorrel) was restricted to mossy tree-stumps and stream-banks, while *Galium odoratum* (Woodruff) was only found in Coed Quinnet.

Making up for these slight deficiencies, however, were good stands of *Paris quadrifolia* (Herb Paris) with their young leaves still spirally-furled, and in several places the partly rotted leaves of last year's *Carex strigosa* (Thin-spiked Wood Sedge), which is now known to be present in many more localities in Glamorgan than suspected in the 1994 Flora. In one spot, this grew side-by-side with *Carex sylvatica* (Wood Sedge), and we were able to appreciate the distinctively wider leaves of *C. strigosa*. The divided leaves of *Ranunculus auricomus* (Goldilocks Buttercup) and *Orchis mascula* (Early Purple Orchid) were found in several places, and *Sanicula europaea* (Sanicle), *Primula vulgaris* (Primrose) and *Lamiastrum galeobdolon* spp. *montanum* (Yellow Archangel) were also reasonably frequent.

At the north-eastern end of the valley, David's group encountered wide rides and grassy areas managed by the Amelia Trust. Here were found some ruderals and species of rough grassland,

including one patch of *Silene flos-cuculi* (Ragged Robin) and a stand of *Salix viminalis* (Osier). It was, however, too early in the season to be worth spending much time in a large damp meadow, although *Ranunculus flammula* (Lesser Spearwort) was abundant here.



Julian leads the way back through the rain from Coed Ffynnon Dyfrig, after a good morning's botanising.

The two groups reconvened at lunchtime, and then moved down the valley to Coed Ffynnon Dyfrig. Here the underlying limestone had given rise to petrifying springs, coating every stick, leaf and pebble with a layer of calcium carbonate. These areas were also of botanical interest, with the associated flushes holding *Equisetum telmateia* (Great Horsetail), *Valeriana dioica* (Marsh Valerian) and more *Carex strigosa*. Otherwise, the woodland provided few new species, although we were pleased to see some excellent patches of *Paris quadrifolia*. Therefore, given the increasingly heavy rain, we decided to head back to our cars, declining the opportunity to give the waist-deep brambles at the edge of Greendown Wood anything more than a cursory inspection!

Overall, we enjoyed our visit to these woodlands, and many of us were inspired to visit Coed Whitton again later in the year.

David Barden

North Merthyr hills – Saturday 11 May

Our second outing took the group to the northern boundary of our patch – the limestone escarpment and quarries of Morlais, Tyle Haidd and Twynau Gwynion. Again there were some concerns as to what we might see during the excursion, as spring continued to be unusually late!

Leaving Pant Station (Brecon Mountain Railway), our group of 8 headed along the easternmost edge of the now-disused Morlais Quarry, where we compiled a list of over 70 mostly common species. We then walked through the fields on the western side of Pant Road, and here we found young plants of *Hypericum maculatum* ssp. *obtusiusculum* (Imperforate St John's-wort), lots of *Alchemilla xanthochlora* (Pale Lady's-mantle), and a little *Cruciata laevipes* (Crosswort).



***Carex montana* in flower on the steep slopes below Tyle Haidd Quarries.**

We then headed across the road and up a steep bank, where we saw the dark flower-heads and pale green, hairy leaves of *Carex montana* (Soft-leaved Sedge). Passing under the railway line, a highlight was the small clump of *Gymnocarpium robertianum* (Limestone Fern) growing on the railway embankment wall. Moving on up through slightly wet, flushed vegetation and on to the slopes above Tyle Haidd Quarries, we frequently passed clumps of flowering *Carex montana*. In the short,

calcareous grassland, species such as *Cirsium acaule* (Dwarf Thistle) and *Carex caryophylla* (Spring Sedge) were abundant, and other typical limestone species were noted, such as *Helianthemum nummularium* (Common Rock-rose). Occasional very young vegetative shoots of *Galium sternerii* (Limestone Bedstraw) were also seen (and distinguished by the very strongly deflexed hairs on the leaf-edges), along with a small number of plants of *Botrychium lunaria* (Moonwort).



A young plant of *Botrychium lunaria* in short turf.



A young frond of *Gymnocarpium robertianum*.



***Asplenium viride* in the scree, showing the characteristic green midrib.**

Carrying on north into the scree slopes, we were amazed by the abundance of *Gymnocarpium robertianum* amongst the boulder scree. Many of the fronds were yet to unfurl (although there were still plenty to see and photograph), and it was clear from the amount of last year's dead vegetation how extensive this species is here. Also noted in the cracks and crevices were both *Cystopteris fragilis* (Brittle Bladder-fern) and *Asplenium viride* (Green Spleenwort). Some small patches of *Saxifraga hypnoides* (Mossy Saxifrage) were also seen on this slope. Intriguingly, the *Euphorbia amygdaloides* (Wood Spurge) recorded as frequent/ abundant here in the past appears to have disappeared.



Speed-eating our lunch in one of the brief gaps between showers. Note the absence of any leaves on the hawthorn.

After a very wet and cold break for lunch (was it really spring?), we pushed on up to the areas known to support *Antennaria dioica* (Mountain Everlasting). It was well worth the effort, with 3 more patches recorded than last year, giving 6 patches now within the enclosed site. Some plants were about to flower but we were not able to determine the sex of the flowers; those seen last year were all female. One more small clump of *Antennaria* was seen just the other side of the enclosure wall on the common, giving a total of 7 patches / clonal clumps. The return trip back down the hillside revealed a bulbous form of *Arrhenatherum elatius* (False Oat-grass), var. *bulbosum*, growing along the old railway line.

A quick cuppa in the Mountain Railway Station revitalised the spirits, and a slightly smaller group of hardy souls headed back out into Morlais Quarry. Moving further west than on our morning visit, of particular interest were the large patches of *Saxifraga hypnoides* growing on and around the edges of stone slabs on the quarry floor. Other species also noted in these areas of thinner soils were *Sedum acre* (Biting Stonecrop), *Saxifraga tridactylites* (Rue-leaved Saxifrage) and *Arabis hirsuta* (Hairy Rock-cress). The surrounding short calcareous grassland was investigated, and typical species recorded included *Aphanes arvensis* (Parsley-piert), *Arenaria serpyllifolia* (Thyme-leaved Sandwort) and *Helianthemum nummularium* (Common Rock-rose). Particular attention was given to the as-yet non-flowering grasses; both *Festuca rubra* (Red Fescue) and *F. ovina* (Sheep's Fescue) were seen, along with *Briza media* (Quaking-grass).



A fine clump of *Saxifraga hypnoides* on the floor of Morlais Quarry.



***Lathraea squamaria* was seen in some quantity on the wooded slopes of Cwm Taf Fechan, characteristically growing under hazel.**

Then we moved downslope into the *Corylus avellana* (Hazel) woodland on the southern slopes of Cwm Taf Fechan. This really is a fascinating and unusual habitat type in this part of the world, with a northern, upland feel. The ground flora here was particularly diverse, probably due both to the varying ground conditions and its upland location. Here we saw some species typical of calcareous woodland, including *Galium odoratum* (Woodruff), *Lathraea squamaria* (Toothwort), *Lamiastrum galeobdolon* ssp. *montanum* (Yellow Archangel) and *Euphorbia amygdaloides* – but strangely just one small plant of *Asplenium scolopendrium* (Hart's-tongue). In the rockier areas small quantities of *Gymnocarpium robertianum* and *Asplenium viride* were found once again, and we noted the leaves of *Meconopsis cambrica* (Welsh Poppy) in a couple of places, identifiable by their white sap (rather than the yellow sap of the superficially similar *Chelidonium majus* (Greater Celandine)). The group split up here, with some of us encountering a little *Geum rivale* (Water Avens) in the wetter flushed areas and some early sprigs of the local speciality *Melica nutans* (Mountain Melick).

Overall we found this to be a diverse area, with some habitats and community types that are rare in the rest of the county. Unfortunately, we did not have time to visit the more acid habitats of the adjacent Merthyr Common as planned, but that just means we have an excuse to go back to this wonderful area!

Karen Wilkinson

East Aberthaw saltmarshes – Sunday 23 June

Despite an unpromising forecast, the rain kept off, and the day turned out reasonable for botanising, if rather windy and decidedly chilly for June. Starting from East Aberthaw village, our party of 8 (later 10) headed south through scrubby secondary woodland, identifying a number of common species on the way, and appreciating the differences between the ferns *Dryopteris filix-mas* (Male Fern), *D. affinis* (Scaly Male Fern), *D. dilatata* (Broad Buckler Fern) and *Polystichum setiferum* (Soft Shield Fern). *Viola hirta* (Hairy Violet) and *Centaureum erythraea* (Common Centaury) were abundant in two patches of calcareous grassland, presumably unpalatable to the rabbits that clearly kept the scrub in check; here too were *Euphrasia nemorosa* (Eyebright) and *Blackstonia perfoliata* (Yellow-wort).



The tiny pink flowers of *Trifolium ornithopodioides* on a stony track near the old lime workings at East Aberthaw.

Further south the scrub opened up, and we were pleased to locate in very short dry turf three uncommon *Trifolium* species, all in rather small quantity – the pink-flowered *T. striatum* (Knotted Clover), the white-flowered *T. scabrum* (Rough Clover), and the highly inconspicuous *T. ornithopodioides* (Bird's-foot Clover). We also saw a single plant of the county rarity *Torilis nodosa* (Knotted Bur-parsley), distinguished from *T. japonica* (Upright Hedge-parsley) by its smaller size and nearly sessile flower clusters. There were also colonies of *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* (Common Spotted Orchid) and *D. praetermissa* (Southern Marsh Orchid), along with a couple of robust plants likely to be the hybrid, with (as is often the case) some ring-spotting on the leaves.



A robust clump of putative *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* × *D. praetermissa*.

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The nearby damp grassland on the edge of the pool had a slight saline influence, with a large amount of *Bolboschoenus maritima* (Sea Club-rush), abundant *Juncus gerardii* (Saltmarsh Rush) and a reasonable quantity of the sedges *Carex distans* (Distant Sedge) and *C. extensa* (Long-bracted Sedge). The young flower spikes of *Epipactis palustris* (Marsh Helleborine) were abundant over a substantial area, and we also saw vegetative plants of the narrow-leaved umbellifer *Oenanthe lachenalli* (Parsley Water-dropwort).



***Frankenia laevis* formed substantial patches on the gravelly bank where we stopped for lunch.**

We then crossed the sea wall, finding the prickly leaves of *Rubia peregrina* (Wild Madder) en route, and ate lunch overlooking the gravelly bank leading down to the saltmarsh. Here *Frankenia laevis* (Sea-heath) was abundant–dominant in a broad strip towards the top of the bank, clearly having increased greatly since it was first noted in the 1990s. This plant, a rare native of the east coast of Britain, is a relative newcomer to these parts, and although here occupying a rather sparsely-vegetated microhabitat is nevertheless of concern because of its rapid spread. *Limonium binverosum* agg. (Rock

Sea-lavender) was also frequent here, and there was a small amount of *Parapholis strigosa* (Hard-grass) – but none of the plants examined proved to be the hoped-for rarity *P. incurva* (Curved Hard-grass). Further on, the vegetated bank of compacted shingle resembled a neglected cobbled street, although with a distinctly maritime flora including an abundance of *Honckenya peploides* (Sea Sandwort), a colony of *Cerastium diffusum* (Sea Mouse-ear) and a small quantity of *Glaucium flavum* (Yellow Horned Poppy). The nearby grassland between the groynes was especially rich, holding lots of flowering *Anacamptis pyramidalis* (Pyramidal Orchid) and frequent *Linum bienne* (Pale Flax) with the flowers mostly tightly-furled. We also saw a small tree of *Malus domestica* (Cultivated Apple) with odd-looking elongated young fruits, and also the ferns *Asplenium trichomanes* (Maidenhair Spleenwort) and *A. adiantum-nigrum* (Black Spleenwort), both in a rather unusual habitat (being typically found in hedge-banks and mortared walls).

We then moved on to the saltmarsh proper, finding many typical species including *Atriplex portulacoides* (Sea Purslane), *Triglochin maritima* (Sea Arrow-grass), and an abundance of *Plantago maritima* (Sea Plantain). Walking south-east, the marsh behind the shingle bank was a virtual monoculture of *Elytrigia atherica* (Sea Couch), but the short grassland further on was much more diverse. Here we found a range of typical calcareous species, as well as small amounts of *Trifolium scabrum* and the tiny-flowered *Myosotis ramosissima* (Early Forget-me-not), fairly frequent *Geranium columbinum* (Long-stalked Crane's-bill), and a couple of plants of *Orobanche minor* (Lesser Broomrape).

We then walked out towards Watch House Point in the company of Marc Hampton, who showed us the population of *Sorbus domestica* (Service-tree), a species that was new to Glamorgan when he discovered it in 1983. Further on, we were pleased to see the enormous colony of *Adiantum capillus-veneris* (Maidenhair Fern) on the sheer cliffs, extending for at least 100 metres and associated with tufaceous deposits caused by water seeping through the limestone. Having satisfied ourselves with this and with spotting the remarkable algal-symbiont flatworm *Symsagittifera roscoffensis* in sandy flushes on the beach, we headed back to our cars, noting on the way a single plant of pink-flowered *Myosotis arvensis* (Field Forget-me-not) and a good colony of *Lithospermum purpureocaeruleum* (Purple Gromwell) on the path leading up the cliff.



Ceri and Karen inspecting the large colony of *Adiantum capillus-veneris* on the cliffs at Watch House Point.

Being a well-botanised site, we did not find anything new or surprising on this excursion, but we made over 400 individual records, and it was satisfying to confirm the continued presence of the majority of the uncommon species for which this area is noted. It also proved excellent botanical training on a range of habitats in a remarkably small space.

David Barden

Cefn Onn – Sunday 14 July

Nineteen enthusiasts met at Cefn Onn Country Park on a sunny morning in the middle of the summer's hot spell, though before the lack of rain had dried up too much of the vegetation. A small area of damp grassland within the park occupied our attention en route to the ridge, and there we found a number of common species including *Stellaria alsine* (Bog Stitchwort) and a single *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* (Common Spotted-orchid).

We then proceeded along wooded footpaths to the foot of Transh yr Hebog, finding a range of species typical of shady places on limestone such as *Allium ursinum* (Ramsons) and *Melica uniflora* (Wood Melick), as well as one plant of *Epipactis helleborine* (Broad-leaved Helleborine). The large glossy leaves of *Festuca gigantea* (Giant Fescue) were also noted. Further on we were able to compare *Polystichum setiferum* (Soft Shield-fern) and *P. aculeatum* (Hard Shield-fern), with the soft, distinctly stalked pinnules of the former contrasting with the more glossy, sessile pinnules of the latter.

Partway up the hillside we came to an area of short grassland on the top of a large mound of spoil thrown up during the construction of the railway tunnel in the early 1870s. Spending about an hour here, we were able to draw up a reasonably comprehensive list of 52 species, including (after a bit of concentration) 14 grasses, amongst which *Briza media* (Quaking Grass) and *Cynosurus cristatus* (Crested Dog's-tail) were predominant. Many of the species were indicative of calcareous grassland, with small quantities of a few species more typical of more acidic substrates, including *Polygala serpyllifolia* (Heath Milkwort), *Danthonia decumbens* (Heath Grass) and *Teucrium scorodonia* (Wood Sage). We later found such 'acidic' species elsewhere on Cefn Onn, and these included *Ulex gallii* (Western Gorse), *Digitalis purpurea* (Foxglove) and *Vaccinium myrtillus* (Bilberry). A patch of the uncommon *Epilobium lanceolatum* (Spear-leaved Willowherb) was the most interesting find on this spoil heap – unless you count the single Marbled White seen flying over the sunny scree slope!

Moving on up through the woodland, Tim Rich detected *Hieracium stenstroemii* (a hawkweed) on a rocky outcrop, and *Oxalis acetosella* (Wood Sorrel) was found somewhat untypically growing on a limestone wall, but there was otherwise nothing to attract particular attention until we came to the open grassland on the crest of Cefn Onn.

Here, back in the hot sunshine, we set to work on hands and knees looking for the day's main target *Coeloglossum viride* (Frog Orchid) at the first of its two known subsites – a rocky outcrop, cleared of scrub last winter. Plants proved surprisingly elusive, but eventually we found 27



Searching for *Coeloglossum viride* on a rocky outcrop.

spikes in five groups; many plants were under 5 cm high and just coming into flower. Similar habitats nearby were also examined closely, but without success. However, we did find some white-flowered *Prunella vulgaris* (Self-heal) and *Poa angustifolia* (Narrow-leaved Meadow-grass).



Coeloglossum viride in full flower – most plants were not this large. Thanks to Tim Rich for the photo.



Carex pulicaris above the quarry, showing the deflexed fruits.

Moving westwards to the quarry, the group split into two, those surveying the quarry floor finding a number of plants typical of damp places, including *Isolepis setacea* (Bristle Club-rush) and *Alopecurus geniculatus* (Marsh Foxtail). On the short grassland immediately north of the quarry, we noted a selection of mostly calcareous species, including thinly scattered young shoots of *Gentianella amarella* (Autumn Gentian). *Carex pulicaris* (Flea Sedge) was locally abundant here; this was something of a surprise to many in the group, as although its wide habitat tolerance includes limestone grassland, it is most commonly thought of as a species of mires and damp flushes. *Pedicularis sylvatica* (Lousewort) also seemed to be slightly out of place on this apparently well-drained calcareous substrate.

Moving on, we briefly examined the second of the two known subsites of *Coeloglossum*, and were pleased to locate a total of 16 plants in two colonies. Here too was a patch of *Galium verum* (Lady's Bedstraw), normally ubiquitous in limestone grassland but curiously rare on Cefn Onn. Other notable absentees for the day included *Poterium sanguisorba* (Salad Burnet) and *Helianthemum nummularium* (Common Rock-rose).

Following a tip-off from Rob & Linda Nottage, we headed further west to an area of beech woodland where about 10 years previously they had found the county rarity *Hypopitys monotropa* (Yellow Bird's-nest). The vegetation of the woodland floor was typically sparse, and (after compiling a list of just 18 species) we were on the verge of giving up, when David spotted three very young spikes, growing in an area nearly devoid of beech litter. Plants were more prominent when he revisited the site in early August, and 20 spikes were seen on that occasion. With flowers by that time open, he was able to confirm them as ssp. *monotropa* due to the hairy insides of the petals.



The bare patch in the beech woodland where we saw three tiny plants of *Hypopitys monotropa* (circled). Top right: The largest of the three plants! Bottom right: Much larger plants seen by David in the same area of woodland two weeks later.

In the late afternoon heat, the energy of the remaining members of the group was now fading, so we headed back to the car-park via Cefn Onn Farm and Graig Road. However, we did pause near Pant Glas to muse over a specimen of *Heracleum sphondylium* (Hogweed) with both wide-lobed and narrow-lobed leaves – variation that is commonly encountered, but not on a single plant!

David Barden

Rest Bay & Sker – Saturday 31 August

Thirteen people gathered at Rest Bay on a largely sunny, pleasantly warm day with light winds – excellent conditions for botanising! Heading north along the coastal boardwalk, we found lots to interest us, including a locally abundant yellow-flowered crucifer, eventually identified as *Diploaxis tenuifolia* (Perennial Wall-rocket). We also saw *Carex extensa* (Long-bracted Sedge), the blue-green leaves of *Festuca rubra* ssp. *juncea* (Red Fescue), and – causing us some trouble in identification – lots of *Sonchus arvensis* (Perennial Sowthistle) and rather less of *S. asper* (Prickly Sowthistle).

Further along, flushes at the base of the low clayey ‘cliff’ were particularly interesting, and here we saw *Samolus valerandi* (Brookweed), *Hydrocotyle vulgaris* (Marsh Pennywort), *Juncus gerardii* (Saltmarsh Sedge), *Anagallis tenella* (Bog Pimpernel) and *Ranunculus flammula* (Lesser Spearwort). There was also one clump of non-flowering *Sagina nodosa* (Knotted Pearlwort) on a grassy hummock. A number of very small plants of *Centaureum* occupied our attention for quite some time; we plumped for *C. pulchellum* (Lesser Centaury) in the end because of the plant size, apparent absence of a basal rosette, and narrow, dark-pink petals, but we were by no means convinced, and thought this population probably deserved more expert attention. Nearby, we were pleased to see plenty of *Isolepis cernua* (Slender Club-rush), distinguishing it from *I. setacea* (Bristle Club-rush) by the paler green foliage, and by the main bract equalling or just slightly exceeding the inflorescence.



One of the plants of *Centaureum* that caused us so much trouble.



Left: A fine clump of *Isolepis cernua* on a damp flush. Right: Even the longest bracts only slightly exceed the inflorescence.

A number of typical seaside species were seen on this stretch, including *Euphorbia paralias* (Sea Spurge), *Raphanus raphanistrum* ssp. *maritimus* (Sea Radish), *Crithmum maritimum* (Sea Holly), *Cakile maritima* (Sea Rocket), *Glaux maritima* (Sea Milkwort) and *Calystegia maritima* (Sea Bindweed). The soft fruiting heads of *Trifolium arvense* (Hare’s-foot Clover) were also seen in a couple of spots, as well as plenty of *Senecio sylvaticus* (Heath Groundsel) by the main path... and a single female Common Lizard, sunning itself on the boardwalk!

The habitat changed as we crossed the Porthcawl–Kenfig parish boundary, with the first find being numerous flowering spikes of *Spiranthes spiralis* (Autumn Ladies'-tresses). Stopping for lunch here, we quickly built up a good list of species typical of short maritime-influenced turf, which included some *Centaureum erythraea* (Common Centaury) with 4-petalled flowers as well as the usual 5-petalled form.

Rosa spinosissima (Burnet Rose) became increasingly abundant as we approached the sandy dunes of Sker Point, and it was here that we kept an eye out for *Gentianella campestris* (Field Gentian), though without much optimism, having been forewarned that the summer's dry spell had resulted in a no-show this year. Heavy grazing by a herd of rather stern-looking cows provided confirmation, if any was needed, that the crispy-dry brown turf would be unproductive this time, but we instead examined a damp hollow nearby. Here we saw some typical marsh species, including *Carex demissa* (Common Yellow Sedge) and *Nardus stricta* (Mat Grass).



There was plenty to see in the short turf close to the shoreline, including good flowering specimens of *Spiranthes spiralis*.



***Bidens tripartita* on the margins of the pool at Sker Point.**

Heading east towards Sker House, we spent some time examining the cattle-poached margins of a large pool, with finds including *Alopecurus geniculatus* (Marsh Foxtail), *Myosotis laxa* (Tufted Forget-me-not), plenty of *Spirodela polyrhiza* (Greater Duckweed) and *Spergula arvensis* (Corn Spurrey), and one plant of *Bidens tripartita* (Trifid Bur-marigold).

With so much to see, and with our plant guides having been in constant use, there was relatively little time left to examine the privately-owned fields that we had obtained permission to enter. However, we did investigate one dry

grassy field to the west of Sker House where *Hypochaeris glabra* (Smooth Cat's-ear) had been seen recently. Not finding anything at first, we resorted to GPS equipment and eventually located a good number of plants over a restricted area. Unfortunately, because all the plants were in seed, we weren't able to appreciate the form of the flowers that provides the 'jizz' for this species, and it was fair to say that many in the group were a little underwhelmed by this rarity!

In the same field, however, we did encounter *Anchusa arvensis* (Lesser Bugloss), some vegetative *Ornithopus perpusillus* (Bird's-foot) being rather overtaken by taller vegetation, and a sizeable clump of a sedge that on close inspection proved to be the uncommon *Carex muricata* ssp. *pairae* (Prickly Sedge).

With the afternoon drawing on, we retraced our steps to Rest Bay, reflecting on the rich and varied habitats we had seen, and finding on the way a few plants of *Papaver dubium* (Long-headed Poppy) to complete an enjoyable excursion.

David Barden