

# Warwickshire Flora Group

## Newsletter No. 12, November 2016

### BSBI ATLAS 2020 PROGRESS

It's that time of year again. So far we have received tetrad records from John and Val Roberts, Anna Dudley, David Long and David Coles. A few more botanists have offered to survey tetrads this year so if any of you have 2016 records to send in can you do it a.s.a.p., and then I can send them off in one batch. Any problems ring us on 01827 712455.

If you promised to survey and then didn't get round to doing it, don't worry, just let us know.

### New Species for 2016

Twenty four new species were added to the county list during 2016. Most of these were garden escapes or casuals such as the *Iberis sempervirens* seen by Jon Bowley and Louise Sherwell at Clifton Lakes or the bright yellow *Achillea filipendulina* seen on a roadside verge near Curdworth in October.

- The most important find this year was the colony *Epipactis dunensis* (Dune Helleborine) at Cuttle Pool in July. Jo Hamer had posted a photo on an ID website and luckily it was spotted by an expert. *Epipactis* taxonomy is quite complex, but orchid-enthusiast expert Sean Coles visited the site and confirmed the identification. The nearest colony to the one in Warwickshire is in Wrexham.
- The visit to Winterbourne Botanic Gardens produced some rather exotic naturalized surprises. We had amongst others, *Geranium brevicaule* from New Zealand, *Nicotiana sylvestris* from Argentina, a seedling of the dark-fruited *Cotoneaster nitens* and the pretty but invasive "Jack Hawkes's Potato" *Solanum chacoense* from Peru, which has become a real nuisance within the garden.
- Even more invasive was the American subspecies of the horsetail Dutch Rush, *Equisetum hyemale* subsp. *affine*. It was planted as an ornamental in a pond near Barnacle, near Bulkington, and its rhizomes had invaded a whole field with hundreds of metre high horsetails spread out across the field, looking like something out of child's dinosaur book.
- A very satisfying record was *Hieracium fictum* (Lacerate-leaved Hawkweed), found at Wootton Spinnies, which was still thriving 131 years after it was previously recorded in 1875!
- In October I received a mysterious phone call from Brian Laney asking me to ring Paul Stanley. Paul was driving south on the M42 and luckily got held up in a traffic jam where it crossed the M6. He spotted a colony of *Dittrichia graveolens* (Stinking Fleabane), a species fairly frequent on motorways south of London that appears to be moving northwards.
- The most recent new record was of the low-growing *Euphorbia maculata* (Spotted Spurge) seen by Bastiaan Brak in Stoneleigh Park.



*Solanum chacoense*



*Achillea filipendulina*

## COMPUTER-MAPPED FLORA RECORDS SAVED

Birmingham Natural History Society has given a grant of £6,000 to the Warwickshire Biological Records Centre to help digitise twelve large boxes of field data from *A Computer-mapped Flora of Warwickshire* by D. A. Cadbury, J. G. Hawkes, (he of the potato above) and R. C. Readett published in 1971.

This big green book was the first Flora in the world to use a computer programme for mapping. In the Flora each map just shows a plant's presence or absence in each tetrad, whilst the boxes of field notes give much more information, including a date, which site was visited, the surveyor, and details of any critical species. There is also a large collection of letters from referees and references to plant material in the Warwick Herbarium. The Biological Records Centre would like to add all of this extra information to their Recorder database and also hopefully make it available to the public.

Agni-Louiza Arampoglou at the Biological Records Centre in Warwick is coordinating this project and is looking for volunteers to help input data. If you think you could offer her some of your time contact her on [agni-louizaarampoglou@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:agni-louizaarampoglou@warwickshire.gov.uk)

### WARWICKSHIRE'S WINTER WILDFLOWER CHALLENGE

Join us in Rugby for this year's annual BSBI New Year's Plant Hunt. The challenge is to see how many plants in flower we can see in three hours.

Monday 2 January 2016 in the North Street Car Park, CV21 2AF.

I am not sure whether there will be a parking fee as it is a bank holiday,

### ANOTHER RARE EYEBRIGHT FOUND

Two sets of plants from North Warwickshire were sent to the BSBI referee Chris Metherell. A colony from Lea Marston near Kingsbury was identified as the fifth modern record for Warwickshire of *Euphrasia confusa* (Confused Eyebright). The other colony at Windmill Hill in Nuneaton was much rarer, being the first record in southern England of the *Euphrasia arctica x confusa* hybrid. If you know of any other eyebright colonies please let us know.

### BOTANICAL TALKS AT LOCAL NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETIES

Thu 8 Dec	The Vercors – A French Gem	John Roberts	Warwick NHS
Mon 16 Jan	Flowers of Turkey	Pete Sheasby	Warwickshire AGS
Thu 19 Jan	Warwickshire Wild Flowers	Steven Falk	Warwick NHS
Thu 2 Feb	Some of Britain's Rare and Localized Wild Flowers	Brian Laney	Warwick NHS
Thu 2 Feb	Mosses and Liverworts	Steve Woodward	Rugby NHS
Wed 8 Mar	Dolomites Delight	David Burton-Pye	Nether Whitacre NHS

Details of Warks. AGS can be found on the local groups page of the Alpine Garden Society Website and Nether Whitacre NHS details are available from Stephanie Dunbar on 01675 470028. Warwick NHS and Rugby NHS have websites. Be prepared to pay a small visitor fee for each meeting.