



Sussex Botanical Recording Society

Newsletter

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Chairman's Message

A stroll from my house in Yapton to the 12th century parish church of St Mary, passing on my way the redoubtable David Donovan astride his bicycle as he scours verge and ditch for obscure aliens. I give him a cheery wave and secretly resolve to plant something unexpected on his customary route – a Saguaro cactus should fit the bill. The village churchyard is large and perhaps not especially rich in species, but there is always something of interest to find, for example *Umbilicus rupestris* (Navelwort) and a small patch of *Arum italicum* subsp. *neglectum* (Scarce Lords-and-Ladies); in fact I expect the plant list to be rather good once Elisabeth and I have our eyes in. I trust that as many members as possible, mindful of the R in the initials of our Society's title, will contribute to the SBRS Churchyard Survey which was announced at the recent AGM and is being ably headed by Helen Proctor.

You will find details of the project elsewhere in this issue plus, as usual, a lot more. The headline news, of course, is the appointment of David Streeter as our President. Like Mary before him, David was present at that first meeting of the Sussex Flora Committee, whose work resulted in the publication in 1980 of *The Sussex Plant Atlas*. Thus it is more than fitting that he should lead us now, even more so because of his valuable contributions to the production of the new Sussex Flora, contributions which include an introductory chapter which is a masterful re-working of his mentor Francis Rose's monograph on the ecology of Sussex. The Society is set to benefit hugely from his knowledge of Sussex and its vascular and lower plant floras, from his expertise as the Compleat Ecologist and – not least – from his abundant enthusiasm. In fact I have not known the Committee to feel as quietly confident and dynamic as it did when we met in the upper room at Staplefield on the morning of the AGM – on which occasion it was further augmented by Dr Ruth Eastwood and Brad Scott. Later in these pages you will see that Ruth has kindly organised a visit to the Millennium Seedbank. And Brad has been working flat out with Roger Shaw so that by the time this reaches you our exciting new website should be up and running.

But as well as looking forward eagerly I cannot omit from this short note mention of our late and much loved Rita. Many members of the Society came to Woodvale, Brighton in February to say their farewells. In a packed chapel her very full life was celebrated and many of us went back over the Downs to the White Horse in Ditchling to take refreshment and take stock of a dedicated Honorary Secretary and a wonderful companion in the field. As a Society we treasure her memory and send our sincere condolences to her children Teresa, Graeme and Sonia. Rita's departure was sudden but we should draw some comfort from the knowledge that she was with her daughters and had just returned to their car at Piddinghoe after a sunny walk to look at Snowdrops. We shall certainly remember Rita often, but especially on our field trips, at around lunchtime.

Nick Sturt

Dates for your Diary

Saturday 29th October 2016

The Autumn Get-together will be held at Staplefield Village Hall. The doors will be open from 10.00 a.m. and the meeting will start promptly at 10.30 a.m. Trevor Lording will give us a talk on ferns of the British Isles. The meeting will include information on the new Flora and reports of field meetings. Please remember to bring a packed lunch. Tea, coffee and cakes will be available. Members are invited to bring books and plants for sale, plant specimens or other items of botanical interest for display, and digital photographs to show in the afternoon. Offers of homemade cakes are always welcome and prove very popular. Money from the sale of cakes goes towards publication of the new Flora.

Saturday 4th March 2017

The Annual General Meeting will be held at 2.00 p.m. at Staplefield Village Hall. After the AGM, there will be information on this year's field meetings and the progress of the new Flora, and details of interesting records received in 2016. Please bring your digital photographs of Sussex plants to show to the meeting, which will finish with tea and cake. The hall will be available from 1.30 p.m. if you wish to bring any books or plants for sale.

Contents

Chairman's message	1
Dates for your Diary	1
Treasurer's note	2
New SBRS website	2
Wanted: Honorary Secretary.....	3
Obituary: Rita Hemsley	3
Field Meetings update.....	4
New Petasites hybrid.....	4
Churchyard survey.....	5
Do cows eat Buttercups?	5
Millennium Seed Bank visit.....	6
Michelham Priory: help wanted....	6
Interesting records 2015	6
Recording in 2016.....	8
Churchyard survey form.....	11

Treasurer's Note

Welcome to 2016. Following preparation of the Society's Accounts for 2015 I may now update you as to the state of the Flora Fund, which stood at 31st December 2015 at £31,255. Thank you all for such a marvellous effort, with especial thanks to those members who have carried out surveys and arranged for a donation in lieu of the work to be sent to me for the Flora Fund: the Hastings' Ladies and Helen Proctor have been very assiduous in this department. Further donations to the Flora Fund are always welcome so if you are so minded please send any donation to me.

Subscriptions for 2016 remain as for 2015 i.e. £8 for an individual and £11 for two people at the same address and receiving one copy of the mailings as they arise. Subscriptions may be sent to me at my home address or paid at the Autumn Get-together in October. If anyone has not paid their subscription for 2015 or earlier, if you are uncertain of your subscription status please contact me and I shall let you know. Please now so do if you wish to remain a member.

Trevor Lording

New SBRS website

by Brad Scott, Webmaster

The new website is now live, so please do have a look at it and let us know what you think: <http://sussexflora.org.uk/>. It contains broadly the same pages and information as before, but has been

restructured and there are now more visual components.

Most obviously, the recent official field meeting reports are now highlighted on the front page. Meeting leaders or a designated person are encouraged to write a brief meeting report as soon after a field meeting as possible and send it to the webmaster, together with some pictures. In this way we can keep the site fresh and up to date throughout the season. Furthermore, if anyone is moved to blog about any of the field meetings, please let me know: email webmaster@sussexflora.org.uk.

We are keen to add as many past field meeting reports to the new website as possible; ideally each would have one good picture of a plant taken that day, and (optionally) a group picture. If you have any such pictures for field meetings from 2014 and earlier, please can you contact me and let me know. I can then let you know if that is a meeting for which we need pictures. Thank you.

In addition, there is now a gallery area for your photos of plants. A preview of this is also available on every page. To submit pictures to the gallery you will need a Flickr account, but it is very simple to do so, and there are instructions on the site.

Those of you who use social media may also be interested to know that we now have a Facebook group, which is linked from every page (see the top right-hand corner of the page). This is effectively the 'forum' of SBRS and may well be a means of attracting other members. To use it you will need a Facebook account.

All the familiar features of the website are there too, including a list of all the field meetings, links to recording documents, and back issues of the Newsletter. We have also started featuring some of the articles from the Newsletter, and will add more in the coming months; do let us know if there are any that you would particularly like to see so highlighted. The contact details of the society's officers are also available, for which you will need a password: H1er4cium.

Finally, at the moment the county map is not on the site. The tetrad lists will no longer be updated now that the work on the Flora is coming to an end, so we are currently assessing how best to present that information on the site.

We thank Roger Shaw for all his help in setting up the new site. We hope you enjoy looking at and using it: please do let us know what you think of it.

Wanted: Honorary Secretary

Are you a team player? Are you possessed of tolerably good organisational and personal skills? Are you prepared at least to try to keep the members of the Committee in order? With the sudden and very sad loss of Rita the SBRS Committee is seeking nominations for the post of Honorary Secretary. Essentially the Secretary deals with queries from those wishing to join the Society, takes minutes at the two committee meetings and AGM every year, and oversees the dedicated team providing refreshments at the indoor meetings. Naturally, the Secretary is also a vital member of the Committee in preparing and discussing the business of the Society. If you feel that you may be interested in performing all or some of these tasks, please contact the Treasurer or Chairman for an informal chat.

Obituary: Rita Hemsley née Jeal 1932 – 2016 by Paul Harmes

As I'm sure was the case with most of you, I was stunned and deeply saddened when I heard the news of Rita's death. Rita, although indirectly, had been a part of my life from quite a young age. She and my mother were passionately involved in the Guiding movement and, although she was one face among many of my mother's guiding associates, it was one I recognised when our paths crossed later in our lives, in the botanical world.

Rita was born on February 13th 1932 in Brighton, the second of two children. She attended Stanford Road Junior School, just at the onset of the Second World War. It was at this time that she became a Brownie, and a Guide, commencing a life-long association with the movement. She did contribute to the war effort when she was in the Guides, by wheeling a trolley around, knocking on doors asking for aluminium saucepans to help build spitfires....! By the end of the hostilities, she attended Varndean Grammar School where, in later life, she worked as a Science Technician and an Audio-Visual Technician. After spending in excess of twenty-five years in these roles, she found a post working at the YMCA in Brighton, and also began to manage the running of the city's Guide Shop as one of a group of volunteers, supplying everything needed to be a member of this organisation. She continued this role until very recently, when the shop moved to a new location, and she decided it was time to retire.

In the mid-1950s, Rita met her future husband through their joint interest in cycling, another way to spend time out in the country. She went on to have three children, Teresa, Sonia and Graeme, and spent many days taking them out for long country walks

and what, in Hemsley family folklore, are referred to as 'memorable picnics.'

Rita's passion for wildlife, in particular birds and plants, encouraged her to join a number of relevant organisations. The Sussex Wildlife Trust (SWT) was one of the first, which she joined in 1980. In 1986, she joined the Sussex Botanical Recording Society (SBRS), gradually becoming a more regular attendee at field meetings and, as her confidence grew, she began to lead them as well. It is a well-known and fun fact that no field meeting could commence until Rita had had her coffee, and she was never slow to remind folk when she thought it was time to break for lunch. She contributed to many botanical projects within Sussex, and lately had helped with the fieldwork leading toward the publication of the New Flora of the county. She added The Wildflower Society in 1993, and the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (BSBI) in 1995. She was also a life member of the Sussex Ornithological Society.

In the early 1990s, when I was chairman of the Brighton Group of the SWT, Rita was not only a member, but also our secretary. Close cooperation with committee members, together with her quiet efficiency, ensured we ran a smooth course. Around this time the SBRS were looking for a new Hon. Gen. Secretary, and I was approached by, among others, our President, Mary Briggs, asking if I knew of anyone who might take on the role. I suggested she ask Rita, and after her 'surely there's someone better than me' initial response, she agreed, and had been in the role up to her death. It was not long before Rita decided to widen her horizons from botanising in the UK, to developing an interest in foreign botany, travelling to various destinations across the globe, including the Himalaya, China, Europe and Australia. It was these last two destinations where I had the pleasure of leading tours she joined. Firstly, she came with me to Western Australia and, latterly, Southeast France. She also travelled with Stephen Clarkson, a WFS colleague, on several trips to the Peloponnese.

In later life Rita moved to Ditchling and was very happy and comfortable in her new surroundings, with many new areas to explore. The Rita I knew was never happier than when she was helping others or enjoying the great outdoors. I was comforted to learn from her family that, on the day of her death, she had been out looking at *Galanthus* (Snowdrops) in a local Churchyard. Her funeral was very well attended, with representatives from all areas of her interests joining her family in a celebration of her life.

Rest in Peace Rita, you will be sadly missed by many.

Field Meetings update

Arundel Park: Wednesday 27th July

The grid reference for the meeting place was given incorrectly in the January Newsletter: it should be TQ024088.

Additional Meetings:

Wednesday 25th May – Tinsley Green, Gatwick

Surrey Flora Society meeting, to which we are invited, to survey an area near Gatwick Stream SE of airport. Recently landscaped but with remnants of original vegetation and newly colonised ground. In VC17 but within administrative Sussex, and covered in the new Flora. Park at TQ29284004 by the Thames Water track, off Radford Road, on rough ground next to the grasslands. Leader: Rachel Bicker. Start time: 10.30am.

Friday 10th June - Millennium Seed Bank and Wakehurst Place

See page 6 for details of this visit to the Royal Botanic Gardens at Wakehurst, and guided tour of the Millennium Seed Bank – you will need to book your place.

Saturday 13th August - Firehills, Hastings Country Park

Judy Clark, Ellen Campbell and Jacqueline Rose would be really grateful for extra help with a heathland survey to monitor the effects of recent clearance of overgrown Bracken and Gorse at Firehills. Wonderful views are guaranteed and interesting plants are highly likely! From Hastings, take the A259 eastwards to Ore. Turn right by the Co-op onto Fairlight Road. Turn left just before Fairlight church on Battery Hill and follow the signpost. By bus from Hastings Station, take the 101 bus and alight at the Coastguard Lane stop. Meet at the visitor centre at Hastings Country Park. There is a car park charge of £2, which goes towards the upkeep of the park.

Sunday 4th Sept.: Shoreham Beach LNR

Leaders: Jacky Woolcock and Nick Sturt. A seaside treat! Meet at the car park near the Fort at the East end of Shoreham Beach, TQ233046: Jacky has kindly arranged free parking. We shall start in the area of the Fort and work westwards along the vegetated shingle. It is hoped to arrange a further visit in early Summer 2017 to complete a thorough survey of this interesting site.

New to science: *Petasites japonicus* x *P. fragrans*

by Arthur G. Hoare

Janette and I decided to take a walk round Borde Hill Garden near Haywards Heath: unfortunately we found the garden closed, but there is a farm track which is also a public footpath running alongside the garden, so rather than return home we chose to take a walk along the track. We had only covered a couple of 100 metres when serendipitously I saw a plant that was a mystery to me. My first thoughts were of *Petasites* but it did not look like any species I knew. There was a large patch so I collected enough material to take and study once I got home. Still not able to get a positive identification, I sent a note to Eric Clement about the find along with a voucher specimen and as much detail about the plants as I could. Eric suggested the possibility of the female *Petasites fragrans* but not having a herbarium specimen to compare it with he advised me to contact Dr Fred Rumsey at the Natural History Museum where they may have a herbarium specimen. He also mentioned that Stace 3rd ed. states that the female *Petasites fragrans* is not known in Britain and that if the specimen was what he thought it was, then this would be a most important find.

Dr Rumsey was contacted by email giving him all the details that I had given to Eric Clement to see if he was prepared to accept the challenge and if possible confirm the identity of this *Petasites*. Thankfully, he readily agreed. This necessitated a return visit to the site to gather fresh material. Since my original find just over a week had passed and the plants were not in a pristine state. However, I managed to collect fresh material that I hoped would be acceptable as a voucher specimen. Arriving at the garden and finding it was open; I entered to inquire at the reception if there was anyone I could speak to about the plants in the garden and in particular my mystery plant. I was kindly directed to Andy Stevens the head gardener. When asked about the plants he said he knew them only as *Petasites* and that there were a number of patches scattered about the garden. He also said that they were a problem plant, which didn't surprise me. He was not sure of the actual species and unaware of the female plant of *P. fragrans*; nor did he know how or when the plants arrived in the garden. One can only assume it was an accidental introduction but going by the size of the patches, and having an idea of the rate of spread of *P. fragrans*, these colonies must be at least 50 years old. I was in no doubt that the source of this alien invasion was in the garden. Although a frequent visitor to the garden I had not noticed these plants before; but then when walking around a large garden I suppose it is easy to overlook

the less showy specimens when confronted by the splendid displays of the gaudy horticultural show-offs.

The collected plants were prepared and voucher specimens pressed and sent to the Natural History Museum. Then only few days later the reply I was hoping for arrived. Dr Fred Rumsey confirmed my mystery plant as the female *Petasites fragrans* and that my voucher specimen is now housed in the Museum's herbarium.

A note was submitted to *BSBI News* and shortly after publication I was surprised to receive an email from Prof. Clive Stace expressing his interest in my account and wondering if it would be possible to get hold of some growing material. It was agreed that living material was available and a suitable amount was collected and despatched to Prof. Stace so that he could proceed in carrying out his studies. He indicated that he would like to visit the site, and I arranged a visit with Paul Harmes, Mike Shaw, David Streeter and Clive Stace in attendance.

It soon became apparent that what we were looking at was something quite special, with certain characters of other *Petasites* species present in the plants so this could not possibly be the female *P. fragrans*. This meeting closed with many more questions to be answered before a conclusion could be reached. Subsequently, Prof. Stace requested DNA samples to be collected and then sent away for molecular analysis. The results of the analysis proved beyond all doubt that the 'Borde Hill Butterbur' is in fact a hybrid between *Petasites japonicus* and *P. fragrans* - a plant that is new to science.

A new churchyard survey for Sussex by Helen Proctor

Over 100 churchyards and cemeteries were previously surveyed in the 1980s and up to 1991. The old record cards make interesting reading: some churchyards and cemeteries contained over 120 vascular plant species, including some less common ones. As announced at the AGM, members of the SBRS are being invited to participate in a new survey. I have agreed to co-ordinate this, and ask members to register their intention to survey particular churchyards, cemeteries etc with me so that we may avoid duplication of recording effort.

A survey form is available to download from the website but a paper copy of this is given on page 11 if you are not an IT user. As much information as possible is welcomed, eg further notes on the

habitats, the current grassland management, and other wildlife interest, but is **not** essential. Vascular plant records should be entered onto the usual Excel recording card. Although this is site recording it is still necessary to make separate lists for each tetrad where a site extends over more than one. Three visits per year in spring, mid and late summer would be ideal for vascular plant recording. Please email copies of your survey forms and recording cards to me; I am also happy to receive paper copies. I shall relay the recording cards to the BSBI Vice-county Recorders.

If you have the expertise to do so, we would also welcome records of bryophytes and lichens. Please let me know if you propose to record lower plants, and submit records on the appropriate record forms. David Streeter points out that, in his original account of the *Habitats and Vegetation of Sussex*, Francis Rose lists the top eleven churchyards for lichens as Sutton, Slindon, Stopham, Trotton, Harting, Fittleworth, Pulborough, Shipley, West Hoathly, Wadhurst and Hartfield, with Stopham leading the list with more than 100 species. David adds that it would be interesting to see whether there is any correlation in the richness of the different plant groups. Recorders have already offered to cover vascular plants at Sutton, Stopham and Trotton, but eight of these especially important sites await volunteers.

Do cattle eat Buttercups?

Before she died in 2014, our former President Mary Briggs passed many of her botanical papers to the SBRS. It has been an arduous process to sort through them and extract the material of lasting interest. Some fascinating correspondence has come to light. A letter of 1966 from Frank Dougharty of Cattlestone Farm, West Chiltington concerns buttercups, which contain the toxic compound protoanemonin and are known to be poisonous to livestock. Here is an extract:

It must be getting on for a year since you asked me to keep an eye on cows eating Buttercups... There is no doubt that they do eat them, but it is how and what they eat that is so interesting. It is in the early Spring in dense patches of Buttercups that it becomes obvious that they are sought as a vital food because the cows take many mouthfuls, too many to put it down as accidental. Sometimes even leaving lush clover to snatch several mouthfuls. This could be accounted for by a winter shortage, or could it be the flavour? Even if it is the flavour, nature has a way of making the things we need taste good. Anyway, after this period the leaves are eaten with grass in normal

grazing. But the flowering stalk is deliberately avoided and great care is taken to eat only the lower leaves.

Frank was a member of the SBRS for many years, and contributed to the *Sussex Plant Atlas*. He well remembers watching the cattle for Mary, and says that the buttercups were mainly *Ranunculus repens* (Creeping Buttercup). As a pharmacologist and botanist, Mary had a special interest in plant toxins.

Visit to Wakehurst Place and the Millennium Seed Bank Friday 10th June

Leaders: Ruth Eastwood and Stephanie Miles

Wakehurst is a beautiful botanic garden near Ardingly, managed by Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Set in 465 acres of country estate, Wakehurst boasts ornamental gardens, temperate woodlands, a nature reserve, and an Elizabethan mansion. It is also home to the Millennium Seed Bank (MSB), the world's largest native plant species seed bank and hub to the Millennium Seed Bank Partnership (MSBP). After achieving the goal of banking 10% of the world's bankable seeds the MSBP is working towards the ambition target of 25% by 2020.

For more information see: <http://www.kew.org/visit-wakehurst>

The visit will consist of a tour of the MSB in the morning and the opportunity to explore the garden in the afternoon. You are welcome to bring a packed lunch or visit one of the cafes. Meet at 11:30am at the visitor centre.

Please note that parking or entry fees, are applicable. Parking costs £5 for 2.5 hours or £10 all day. Those buying an entry ticket get free parking. National Trust members get free entry. For non- National Trust members the entry price is £12.50. Car sharing will reduce the cost of the visit.

The visit is limited to 15 people on a first come first served basis. To reserve your space please e-mail Ruth Eastwood ruth.eastwood@gmail.com

Michelham Priory: help wanted by Helen Proctor

I am helping the Head Gardener at Michelham Priory to update the inventory of plants, wild and cultivated. I would be grateful for the assistance of a member with a good knowledge of garden plants. Free access to the grounds in exchange for your help!

New and Interesting Records 2015

Selected by Mike Shaw and Paul Harmes from the many interesting records which have been received.

VC13 West Sussex

Species	Location	Tetrad	Status	Comments	Rec.
<i>Allium subhirsutum</i>	West Dean to Lavant	SU81K	E	Verge	DNE
<i>Anisantha madritensis</i>	Pagham Harbour	SZ89Y	C	Shingle spit. Last seen here 1986.	WBS
<i>Aster lanceolatus</i>	Bognor Regis: North Bersted	SU90F	E	Patch in field between houses N of Addison Way and new relief road	MMS
<i>Bromopsis inermis</i>	Chilgrove	SU81H	E	Garden managed as a meadow. 1st VC13 record. Det. TAC.	N&ES
<i>Carex muricata</i> ssp. <i>pairae</i>	Lavington Common	SU91P	N	Scrub S side of minor road.	SBRS
<i>Centunculus minimus</i>	Lavington Common	SU91P	N	Damp track.	SBRS
<i>Cerastium arvense</i>	Amberley Mount	TQ01L	N	By South Downs Way	N&ES
<i>Cichorium intybus</i> ssp. <i>intybus</i>	Strettington	SU80Y	C	Setaside south of Strettington. 1st VC13 record.	HWM
<i>Coeloglossum viride</i>	Fairmile Bottom	SU90Z	N	New tetrad record.	PAC/HOP
<i>Crassula tillaea</i>	West Wittering	SZ79U	N	Car park in West Wittering Estate.	AS
<i>Darmera peltata</i>	Gossops Green, Crawley	TQ23M	U	By Ifield Mill Pond.	GBU
<i>Descurainia sophia</i>	Midhurst, June Lane	SU82V	C	One plant on wall.	DNE

Species	Location	Tetrad	Status	Comments	Rec.
<i>Euphrasia officinalis</i> ssp. <i>anglica</i> x <i>E. nemorosa</i>	Red Copse, Goodwood	SU91A	N	Conf. Chris Metherell.	N&ES
<i>Euphrasia pseudokernerii</i>	Chalkpit Lane, Lavant	SU81Q	N	Scattered by ancient trackway. Det. CME.	N&ES
<i>Fumaria capreolata</i> ssp. <i>babingtonii</i>	Bognor Regis: Aldwick Bay	SZ99E	N	One plant in garden shingle.	MMS
<i>Galanthus nivalis</i> x <i>elwesii</i>	Upwaltham churchyard	SU91L	E	1st VC13 record.	DNE/JOA
<i>Galium uliginosum</i>	Binsted Rife area	SU90X	N	Damp fen areas on flushed slope and in valley bottom.	FA
<i>Hippuris vulgaris</i>	Binsted: Tortington Rife	SU90X	N	Frequent along c.15m of rife.	FA
<i>Hypopitys monotropa</i>	Glatting Hanger	SU91S	N	New tetrad, but known from area.	JSI
<i>Isolepis setacea</i>	Easebourne: Great Common	SU82X	N	A few plants by muddy ride.	FA
<i>Isolepis setacea</i>	Lavington Common	SU91P	N	On damp track.	SBRS
<i>Juncus subnodulosus</i>	Binsted	SU90X	N	Two fen areas by Binsted Rife.	FA
<i>Juncus x diffusus</i>	Amberley Wild Brooks	TQ01H	N	1st record for 25 years.	DTS/CAS
<i>Lathraea squamaria</i>	Old Ditcham Wood	SU71U	N	On <i>Corylus</i> and <i>Ulmus</i> . Re-find of old record.	DNE
<i>Luzula x borrieri</i>	Binstead Wood/Tortington Common	SU90Y	N	With both parents	SBRS
<i>Mentha suaveolens</i>	Goodwood	SU81E	E	Lower Trundle car park; det. MMS, conf. EJC.	SBRS
<i>Najas marina</i>	Arundel Wetland Centre	TQ00J	E	Channel through reed beds. 1st Sussex rec.	PSV
<i>Nassella tenuissima</i>	Bognor Regis: Aldwick Bay	SZ99E	C	Top of wall. Conf. EJC.	MMS
<i>Oxalis dillenii</i>	Chichester Walls	SU80S	E	In paving.	SBRS
<i>Parentucellia viscosa</i>	Weaver's Down	SU82E	N	First found by Dr Giles Groome.	MMS/BMI
<i>Phalaris aquatica</i>	Medmerry	SZ89I	C		DNE
<i>Poa infirma</i> x <i>annua</i>	Littlehampton	TQ00F	N	Sterile hybrid with both parents. Grass verge.	AS
<i>Poa infirma</i> x <i>annua</i>	Shoreham	TQ20D	N	As above.	AS
<i>Polypogon monspeliensis</i>	Pagham Harbour	SZ89Y	N	Sandy path nr Caravan Park.	DAG
<i>Portulaca oleracea</i>	Rustington	TQ00L	C	20 plants in gutter.	DMD
<i>Potentilla norvegica</i>	Lavington Common	SU91P	E	On track, The Plantation. 1st recent record.	SBRS
<i>Potentilla recta</i>	Amberley	TQ01G	E	One plant by chain-link fence along FP running E/W N of castle.	MMS
<i>Ranunculus penicillatus</i> ssp. <i>pseudofluitans</i>	S of West Ashling	SU80D	N	In Bosham stream.	MMS
<i>Ranunculus trichophyllus</i>	S of Crows Hall Farm	SU81F	N	Dew pond S of track.	DNE
<i>Ranunculus trichophyllus</i>	Binsted	SU90Y	N	Barn's Copse pond.	FA
<i>Rapistrum rugosum</i>	West Dean to Lavant	SU81K	C	Verge between road and Centurion Way.	DNE
<i>Rubus parviflorus</i>	Linchmere	SU83Q	E	Both sides of shady lane S of church.	MMS
<i>Rubus parviflorus</i>	Forge Wood, Copthorne	TQ23Z	E	Large clump over 4m x 3m.	MMS
<i>Saxifraga tridactylites</i>	Littlehampton/Ford/Clymping	TQ00B	N	Car park, 20 plants.	DMD
<i>Stachys x ambigua</i>	Fittleworth area	TQ01D	N	Horncroft Farm.	MMS
<i>Valeriana dioica</i>	Griggs Green	SU83G	N	Wet woodland N of A3.	FA
<i>Verbascum phlomoides</i>	Broadmere Common	TQ21C	S	In scrub near road; one plant.	BSBI
<i>X Dactyloglossum mixtum</i>	Fairmile Bottom	SU90Z	N	2nd VC13 record.	Robert Johnson

VC14 East Sussex

Species	Location	Tetrad	Status	Comments	Rec.
<i>Calocedrus decurrens</i>	Borde Hill, Haywards Heath	TQ32I	S	Sapling growing on wall by mature trees. 1st Sussex record.	CAS/PAH
<i>Conyza sumatrensis</i> x <i>Erigeron acris</i>	Patcham	TQ30E	N	Persisting on N verge of A27. 2nd or 3rd UK location	AS
<i>Cyrtomium fortunei</i> var. <i>clivicolum</i>	Burgess Hill	TQ32A	S	Stream bank. 1st record of this variety in UK. Det. FJR/AAVP.	ASY
<i>Dipsacus pilosus</i>	Tablehurst Farm, Forest Row	TQ43H	U	Two spikes in damp wood. First record for hectad. Det. PAH.	BSC
<i>Euphorbia palustris</i>	Gray Wood	TQ51I	S	Verge. 1st Sussex record. Det. EJC.	HMP/PSM
<i>Guizotia scabra</i> subsp. <i>schimperii</i>	Eastbourne Old Town	TV69E	C	Birdseed alien. 1st Sussex record. Det. MBE/EJC.	RLU
<i>Lonicera purpusii</i>	New Road, Lewes	TQ41A	S	On wall near parent. First record for hectad.	PAH
<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>	Chelwood Gate	TQ42J	E	Maskett's Wood. Confirmation of 1995 record.	MMS
<i>Petasites hybridus</i> (female)	Pebsham area	TQ70U	A	Bank of ditch. 1st VC14 record of female. Det. CAS.	EMC/JAR
<i>Petasites japonicus</i> x <i>P. fragrans</i> (female)	Borde Hill gardens	TQ32I	N	Well naturalised in the gardens, but now escaped to footpath outside. 1st record. Det. CAS.	AGH
<i>Polypodium x mantoniae</i>	East Hoathly	TQ51N	N	Verge	HMP/PSM
<i>Potamogeton berchtoldii</i>	East Chilmington area	TQ31S	N	Sand pit	JHN/PSM/ HMP
<i>Taraxacum brachyglossum</i>	Brighton	TQ31G	N	Ditchling Beacon	AS
<i>Taraxacum duplidentifrons</i>	Plumpton	TQ31L	N	Semi-improved grassland. 1st confirmed VC14 record.	AS
<i>Taraxacum fulviforme</i>	Brighton	TQ30H	N	Wood Vale. 1st VC14 record.	AS
<i>Taraxacum fulvum</i>	Brighton	TQ31G	N	Ditchling Road. 1st VC14 record.	AS
<i>Taraxacum glauciniforme</i>	Brighton	TQ30H	N	Wood Vale. 1st VC14 record.	AS
<i>Taraxacum lacistophyllum</i>	Brighton	TQ31G	N	Ditchling Beacon. 1st VC14 record.	AS
<i>Taraxacum oxoniense</i>	Plumpton	TQ31L	N	Top of scarp slope of Downs. 1st VC14 record.	AS
<i>Veronica agrestis</i>	Hampden Park	TQ60B	A	Allotment weed.	MBE
<i>Vulpia myuros</i> f. <i>megalura</i>	Eastbourne	TV69E	C	1st Sussex record of this form.	MBE
<i>Wahlenbergia hederacea</i>	Pippingford Park	TQ43K	N	Good sized patch, confirmation of known location.	REA/RIB

Recording in 2016

Following the end of recording for the Flora in December 2014, there was no particular strategy last year apart from a few targeted requests. Some of you continued the very useful work of looking for plants on the 'Records to re-find' list, while others enjoyed field meetings or their own projects.

As well as maintaining the re-find list, which will be augmented by many interesting old finds made by 'Wilberforce' Jones over the last 50 or so years, we would like to introduce some new ideas for recording in 2016. The BSBI recently published a booklet called 'Notes on identification works and some difficult and under-recorded taxa' as an aid to those recording for Atlas 2020. This gives a summary of guides to identification of certain groups of plants, notably the BSBI handbooks, then goes on to give advice on recording individual taxa including hybrids, subspecies and varieties. We strongly recommend that you read this booklet as it discusses how to distinguish

between many similar species and subspecies, what characters to look for, and what literature guides you can refer to. Some of these taxa are on our Excel recording card, but many are not.

Whilst many of you will be happy to continue general recording and enjoy the fellowship offered by the society, some may find in this booklet an opportunity to explore and develop a deeper interest in one or more of the plants mentioned. You may be happy then to share expertise gained in this way with other members during field meetings and other ways such as presentations, articles in the newsletter or website, and workshops. This is a good way for us all to learn and will benefit the SBRS in many ways.

The list of taxa in the booklet is considerable, but we feel there are several examples which could interest members and help the SBRS as well:

Mimulus

Most of our old records are for *M. guttatus* and seem to have been replaced lately by the hybrid *M. x robertsii*. This may be because the hybrid is now much commoner or because early records were mis-identified. It would be interesting to survey known sites to see which is correct. There is a very good key in *The Plant Crib* and we would be happy to provide record details. A survey needn't cover the whole county, at least in the beginning, as a regional sampling would give a good indication if wider study was required.

Taraxacum

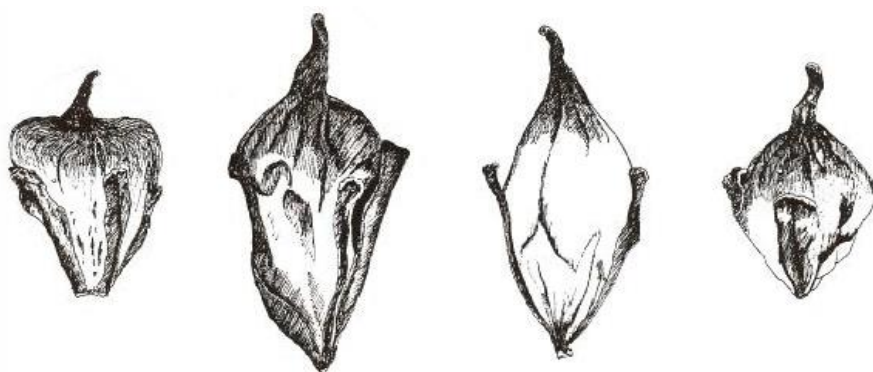
This is the one critical group where very little work has been done in Sussex. It would be really helpful if one or more members, singly or as a team, could develop an interest. We now have the BSBI Dandelion handbook and the referee Prof. John Richards is very willing to identify any specimens you send him (although he does like you to have a go at naming them first yourself!).

Roses

Most of us can identify the common species, but there is a huge range of hybrids and many must be present in Sussex, but we have few records. Wolley-Dod was an expert in this area, so why not you?

Sparganium erectum

Few recorders try to identify the subspecies: *erectum*, *microcarpum*, *neglectum* and *oocarpum*. The national distribution is little understood, let alone that in Sussex. Identification can only be done reliably from checking ripe fruit from October onwards, so this is something you can do after regular recording is finished. *The Plant Crib* provides very useful information, including the following drawings of the fruits.



a **b** **c** **d**
Fruits of *S. erectum* (a) subsp. *erectum*, (b) subsp. *microcarpum*, (c) subsp. *neglectum*, (d) subsp. *oocarpum*.
(del. R. V. Lansdown).

Juncus hybrids

These include: *Juncus inflexus* x *effusus* (*J. x diffusus*), *J. articulatus* x *acutiflorus* (*J. x surrejanus*) and *J. effusus* x *conglomeratus* (*J. x kern-reichgeltii*). We have few records so why not try to look for them where the parents grow together.

Salicornia:

A challenging group whose taxonomy has changed, and an up to date survey in Sussex would be very valuable.

There are many more groups like *Epilobium* hybrids, conifers, *Viola odorata* varieties, *Centaurea nigra/debeauxii* and so on. Don't forget that the BSBI referees are willing to help with identification and, even if you aren't a member, someone who is can always act on your behalf. The Booth Museum is happy to accept any pressed specimens from the SBRS.

Another project could be to monitor and re-find sites mentioned in the *Sussex Rare Plant Register*. Many have been checked during recording for the Flora, but a significant number haven't been searched for or re-found. It will soon be twenty years since publication of the *Register* and an update will be needed in due course, so any data gathered will be valuable. Why not adopt a rare species (or more) and provide regular monitoring?

Apart from the above we have the Churchyard project for the next year, overseen by Helen, and our regular array of field meetings. Don't forget to send your records to us as soon as you get them; don't wait till the end of the year! Remember to ask one of us, or Matthew, for help and advice, details of known records etc. and to collect voucher specimens of anything critical or potentially new to Sussex - check the list of all taxa ever recorded in the county which is published on the website if in doubt.

Finally, please continue to report new *Hieracium* sites, and collect specimens from them if possible to give to Mike at the autumn meeting.

Happy recording!

Paul Harmes and Mike Shaw

Sussex Churchyard Survey 2016

Name of Church or cemetery:
Location:
Grid reference at main entrance:
Name of incumbent or manager:
Recorder's name:
Dates of visits:
Number of vascular plant species at end of year:
Habitats - please describe:
Grassland - please describe:
Regularly mown very short?
Rough cut - occasionally cut?
Are the cuttings removed from the grassland?
Notable plants:
Other wildlife interest: