

SOUTH LINCOLNSHIRE FLORA GROUP

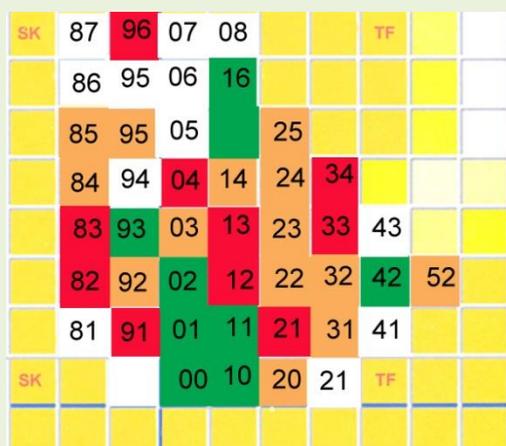
2014 Newsletter

Recording progress

So far I've entered 12,789 records into the MapMate database for 2014. This is an impressive number and I know that some data haven't yet reached me, so I expect the final total to be approaching 15,000. In total we've recorded 915 taxa from 32 hectads.

Recording hasn't been evenly distributed over the vice-county. As might be expected, the largest number of records has come from the southern part of the area where the majority of botanists live. There has also been a significant contribution from Owen Mountford and Jon Graham in the fenland area. The best recorded hectad is TF11, which has had input from both the Fenland Flora recorders and our group.

The map below shows the geographical distribution of records. Green squares have more than 500 records. Orange have 200-499 and yellow squares have 1-199. The white squares currently have no records for 2014.

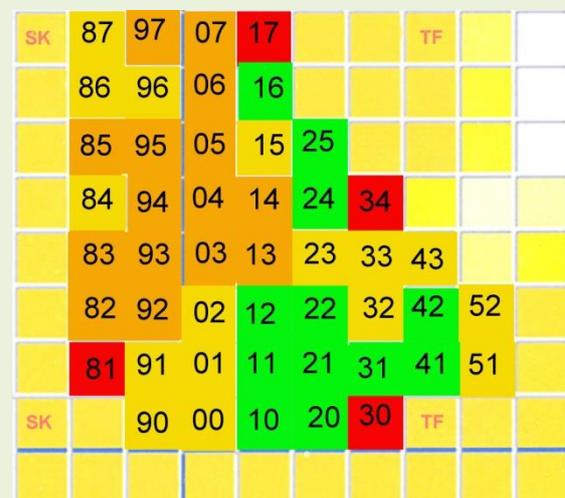
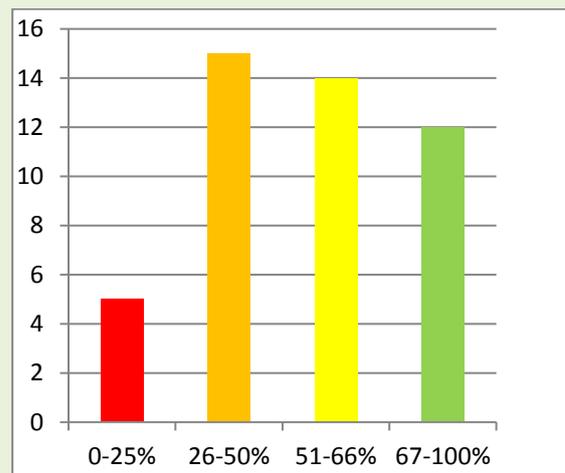


Of course, this is just a snapshot of a single year. For the 2020 Atlas the BSBI consider that a hectad is well recorded when there are post-2000 records for more than 67% of taxa that have ever been recorded.

The map and bar charts below show how we're progressing against that goal. It's clear that the fens are quite well recorded (particularly as I have a backlog of records still to enter), the southern part of the county and the area around Lincoln

are coming along reasonably well, and there's still a lot to do in the area to the north of Sleaford and along the western edge of the vice-county!

Number of hectads in each recording category



Towns and villages

Early spring recording in towns and villages has proved particularly rewarding. Although there's a temptation to get out into the countryside, our more urban areas have a rich and characteristic flora, with many garden species firmly established in almost all south Lincolnshire settlements.

Characteristic members of this 'village' flora include Green Alkanet *Pentaglottis sempervirens*, Stinking Iris *Iris foetidissima*, Stinking Hellebore *Helleborus foetidus* and Purple Toadflax *Linaria*

purpurea. Of course, early in the year Snowdrops *Galanthus nivalis* and Winter Aconites *Eranthis hyemalis* are almost ubiquitous in churchyards and larger gardens.



Pavements are a very suitable habitat for native species of parched conditions such as Rue-Leaved Saxifrage *Saxifraga tridactylites* and Lesser Stitchwort *Stellaria pallida*, which has historically been under-recorded, but in late spring forms sprawling yellowish mats and can be easily distinguished from Common Chickweed *Stellaria media*.

Walls and buildings are also very important as a habitat, particularly for the smaller ferns of the genus *Asplenium*. Wall-rue *Asplenium rutamuraria* and Hart's-tongue Fern *Asplenium scolopendrium* are the most frequent, but many villages also support occasional plants of Black Spleenwort *Asplenium adiantum-nigrum* on shady walls where the owners aren't too tidy.



Maidenhair Spleenwort *Asplenium trichomanes* and Rustyback *Asplenium ceterach* appear to be much rarer, although there is a good scatter of old records. I'm particularly keen on receiving records of all the smaller ferns in 2015, so do have a hunt for them in your local area (as well as on railway bridges and other suitable structures).

Musk Stork's-bill *Erodium moschatum*



During the 2014 New Year Plant Hunt a large population of Musk Stork's-bill was found in full flower on a south-facing verge in front of the Jolly Brewer pub in Stamford - a very good way to start the recording year! This was only the third record of this archaeophyte in VC53.

Potential new vice-county records



Matted Pratia *Pratia pedunculata*, recorded from a mown grass verge in Weston Hills by Owen Mountford

As I still don't have access to all the historical records, it's difficult to be sure how many species are new to the vice-county. However, on my MapMate database just over 40 taxa were new in 2014, the majority of which are garden escapes.

One new species of particular interest is Hoary Mullein *Verbascum pulverulentum*, which was first recorded on 13th April 2014 near the golf course at Sutton Bridge by Owen Mountford, and was then recorded just under a fortnight later by Jane Squirrel, Graham French and Lynne Farrell at Tallington Lakes. This nationally scarce species is frequent in parts of East Anglia, and is a particular feature of many major transport routes, particularly the A47 near Norwich, where it's tall, branched inflorescences quite striking. It's present in Cambridgeshire and it's perhaps surprising that it has only just been recorded in VC53.



The Fens



As usual, some botanical gems have turned up in the fenland area. In April 2014 Peter Kirby and I found a very large population of Clustered Stonewort *Tolypella glomerata* in a shallow ditch on the Welland Washes just west of Spalding. There are old records for this species, but I haven't been able to track down any detailed localities. This is the first post-2000 record for this Nationally Scarce stonewort in VC53.

Owen has turned up some interesting arable weeds in the fens, most notably a large population of Spreading Hedge-parsley *Torilis arvensis* in Borough Fen, and three distinct populations of Corn Gromwell *Lithospermum arvense*, which is the first record since 2005. Both species are classified as Endangered on the UK Red List.

Other rare species have been turning up quite frequently in fens ditches and drains, particularly Opposite-leaved Pondweed *Groenlandia densa* and Lesser Water-plantain *Baldellia ranunculoides*. Jeremy Fraser surveyed some particularly high quality ditches in the area of farmland to the south



of Baston Fen, and recorded the very local Small-fruited Yellow-sedge *Carex oederi* from the margins of several of them. This species is not rare nationally, but

has a predominantly northern and western distribution, and so far has only been found in this one small area of South Lincolnshire.

Field meetings 2014

Unfortunately, because of a back injury, I wasn't able to organise any group field meetings in the county during 2014.

However, on 18th June 2014 Mary-Anne Creedy organised a very successful field meeting to Grimsthorpe Park. Recording concentrated on the neutral grassland of the deer park and the group split into two to cover a larger area. A number of interesting records were made including Pale Sedge *Carex pallescens*, which was found growing along-side a sloping path through Bracken.

Towards the end of the afternoon a smaller group



of us went down to the Stew Pond area, where we were pleased to find a very thriving population of Round-fruited Rush *Juncus compressus*. This has been recorded from Grimsthorpe previously, but this is the first post-2000 record from the park and only the ninth post-2000 record

in the vice-county. This species has declined nationally and is classified as Vulnerable in the recently published England Red List.

On 5th July a BSBI meeting organised by Richard Jefferson visited the Swinstead Valley SSSI. Ten botanists took part and recorded 193 species, 166 from tetrad TF02B and 99 in SK92W. The highlight of the trip was the species-rich limestone grassland of the steeper valley slopes, where we saw the leaves

of Pasque Flower *Pulsatilla vulgaris*, which was first discovered here by Richard in 2009. Other interesting



species recorded included Purple Milk-vetch *Astragalus danicus* and Horeseshoe Vetch *Hippocrepis comosa*.

Deptford Pink



Thirty three Deptford Pink *Dianthus armeria* plants were discovered on the south-facing bank of Risegate Eau by Jeremy Fraser of the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust on 22 August 2013. Deptford Pink has never previously been recorded in VC53 so this was a very exciting discovery!

This species is listed in Schedule 8 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act, 1981 (as amended), is classified as Endangered on the GB and England Red Lists and has been lost from many sites through lack of or inappropriate management. Less than 20 native populations are currently known, all in Southern Britain, and this Lincolnshire example is one of the most northerly locations.

The Risegate Eau population is restricted to a relatively small strip of rough grassland 1-2m above the water's surface. No other similar bank vegetation occurs nearby; instead there is an abundance of coarse, weedy plants such as nettle and thistles, with common reed also abundant. These competitive plants flourish due to the management regime, which involves a single cut of banks and channel each year in late summer/early autumn.

In May 2014 a site visit was made to discuss sympathetic management with the Welland and Deepings IDB. Unfortunately the banks had just been mown so it wasn't possible to count the plants. A repeat visit was made in August 2014 when it was found that the plants had responded to the early cut by producing stems with abundant flowering heads. In total 41 plants were recorded, with 210 flowering stems, a notable increase from 2013. The population will now be managed by twice yearly cuts, and will be monitored to ensure that this remains the most appropriate management strategy.

South Lincolnshire Field Meetings 2015

*The exact date and times of meetings held by the South Lincolnshire Flora Group will be confirmed nearer the date using a Doodle poll, but will be close to the suggested date.

Date and time	Site name	Meeting Location	Tetrads and habitat types	Organiser
Friday 27th March 10.30-15.30	West Deeping	Car-park of the Red Lion pub TF109088	TF10E Village	SLFG Sarah Lambert 07784 169260 sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com
*Saturday 18th April 10.30	Ropsley Rise Wood and Ropsley village	Picnic-site in Ropsley Rise Wood at SK 972 347	SK93S SK93X Mixed woodland Village	SLFG Sarah Lambert 07784 169260 sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com
Sunday 26th April 12.00 for 13.00 start	Little Haw Wood	Park in turning area off track near west end of Clipsham Wood at SK 9703 1705	SK91T SK91U Mixed woodland	LNU Brian Hedley 07989 665794 brian.hedley@hotmail.com
*Saturday 16th May 10.30	Twyford Forest	Park in car-park at SK 946 238	SK92L Mixed woodland and limestone grassland	SLFG Sarah Lambert 07784 169260 sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com
*Saturday 20th June 10.30	Rauceby Warren and North Rauceby	Park on open space at the western end of Rauceby Warren (off A153) at TF 024 434	TF04G,TF04H Acid and calcareous grassland TF04I Village and arable	SLFG Sarah Lambert 07784 169260 sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com
*Saturday 18th July 10.30	Stapleford Wood	Park in car-park at SK 861 565	SK85T, SK85U Coniferous woodland, acid grassland	SLFG Sarah Lambert 07784 169260 sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com
Saturday 15th August 12.00 for 13.00 start	White House Farm, Branston Fen	Park in farmyard at TF 085 705 (LN3 5UP)	TF07F Grassland, ditches, arable	LNU Brian Hedley 07989 665794 brian.hedley@hotmail.com
Sunday 6th September 12.00 for 13.00 start	Metheringham Delph	Road verge parking alongside Carr Dyke near western end of the Delph at approx. TF 114 620.	TF16A, TF16B Grassland, river, ditches (approx 4km walk)	LNU Brian Hedley 07989 665794 brian.hedley@hotmail.com
*Saturday 19th September 10.30	Hartsholme Country Park & Swanholme Lakes	Park in main car park at SK 946 696	SK96 Aquatic plants, heathland, acid grassland	SLFG Sarah Lambert 07784 169260 sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com
*Saturday 17th October	Stamford	Park in car-park south of River Welland at TF 028 067	TF00I Urban and river	SLFG Sarah Lambert 07784 169260 sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com