

# SOUTH LINCOLNSHIRE FLORA GROUP

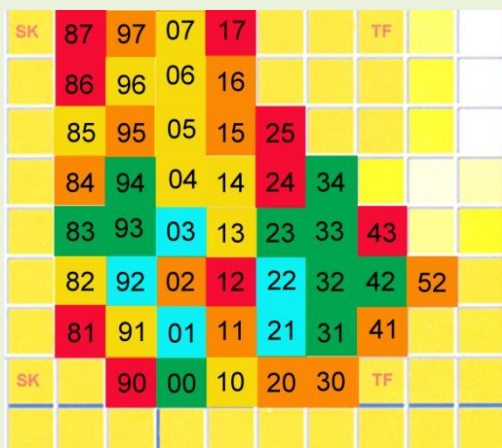
## 2015 Newsletter

### Recording progress

So far I've entered 18,846 records into the MapMate database for 2015. This time last year I'd entered 12,789 records for 2014, and the final total was 19,890, so I'm hoping we'll break the 20,000 record boundary by the time I've finished adding all the data. In total, so far we've recorded 1102 taxa from 38 hectads, a significant improvement on 2014.

Recording has been somewhat more evenly distributed over the vice-county, though still with a southern bias. Pete Stroh has provided many records for some of the western hectads (SK82, SK83 and SK 94), Mary-Anne Creedy contributed records for SK83 and TF03 and Kerry Harrison contributed many records for TF03. There has also been a very significant contribution from Owen Mountford, Jon Graham Stephen Heathcote and Lewis Saunders in the fenland area. The best recorded hectad this year is TF22 (Spalding area) followed closely by TF03 and SK92.

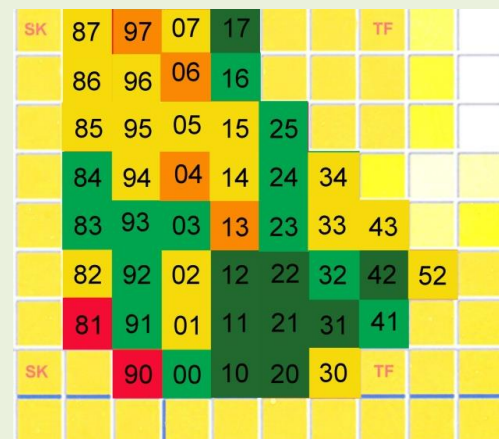
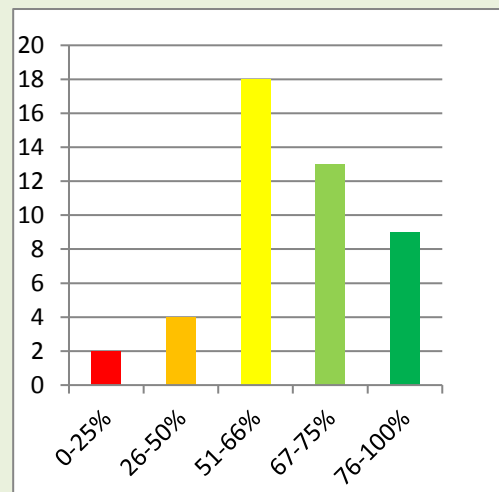
The map below shows the geographical distribution of records. Blue squares have more than 1000 records, green squares have more than 500 records, orange have 200-499 and yellow squares have 1-199. The red squares currently have no records for 2015.



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 75% of taxa that have ever been recorded.

The map and bar charts below show how we're progressing against that goal. We've made huge strides since 2014, and much of the southern part of the county is now well-covered. The use of percentages to assess completion is not without its pitfalls. Many Fenland tetrads were historically rather poorly recorded and are relatively species-poor, so the recent work for the Fenland Flora has produced very high percentage completions. By contrast, hectads such as TF01 and TF02 are very diverse and were well recorded historically, so although the actual number of species recorded is large, the percentage completion appears relatively low. There is still a lot to do in the area to the north of Sleaford, particularly in TF04 and TF06!

Number of hectads in each recording category



## New Additions to the flora of VC53

We have recorded 73 new taxa in 2015, an increase on 2014 and just over a quarter of the 286 new taxa added since 2000. A rough attempt to partition species into categories gives the following breakdown.

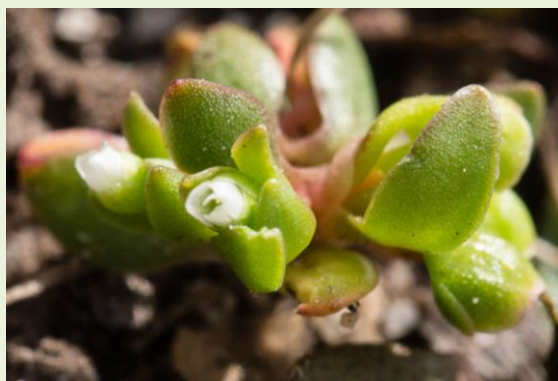
- ❖ 39 (53%) garden species
- ❖ 17 (23%) planted trees and shrubs
- ❖ 7 (10%) subspecies / varieties
- ❖ 6 (8%) weedy neophytes
- ❖ 3 (4%) hybrids
- ❖ 1 (1%) native species

It is clear that more thorough recording of urban areas, including garden escapes and planted trees has accounted for many of the additions, as has the more rigorous recording of subspecies and hybrids.

## Highlights from The Uplands

### Blinks at Raueby Warren

Neil Harris made one of the most significant finds of the year, when he noticed about twelve patches of Blinks *Montia fontana* on dampish soils at Raueby Warren in April. This species has always been exceedingly rare in VC53, as there are few areas of acidic to neutral, seasonally wet ground suitable for it. It has only been recorded from four hectads, and this is the second post-2000 record. There are two pre-2000 records for this species in TF04, but this is the first with detailed information.



### Grasslands around Haceby

While tetrad recording, Mary-Anne Creedy came across some good areas of species-rich grassland

around Haceby, with good populations of orchids, including Southern-Marsh orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*, Common Spotted-orchid *D. fuchsii* and Bee-orchid *Ophrys apifera*, as well as a population of Adder's-tongue *Ophioglossum vulgatum*.

### Distant Sedge at Braceborough

Another good record was Distant Sedge *Carex distans* from a ditch-side near Braceborough. This is predominantly a fen species, with only three records for the 'uplands'. This is the first post-2000 record for the uplands, and interestingly is almost certainly in the same location as a record made in 1960 by Miss Gibbons, a very famous Lincolnshire botanist. Nice to see that it's still present fifty-five years later!

### Another site for Sulphur Clover

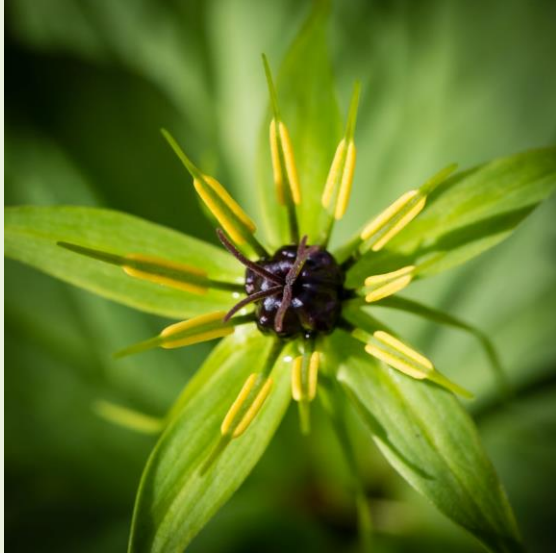
It's been a good year for Neil Harris, who recorded a new population of Sulphur Clover *Trifolium ochroleucon* at Easton Walled Gardens in June. Previously this species has been confined to a very small number of sites around Stamford, the best known being Great Casterton Road Banks NR, so this is a considerable northward extension of its range in the county. Neil also confirmed that the species was still thriving there.



### New locations for Herb-paris and Thin-spiked Wood-sedge

The ancient woodlands, including those that have been at least partly re-planted, have provided some interesting records. Herb-paris *Paris quadrifolia* was recorded from two new sites, Ropsley Rise Wood (see report below) and Ingoldsby Wood, where Peter Kirby and I found a thriving population, with at least seventeen flowering plants and fourteen non-flowering. A

strong population of Thin-spiked Wood-sedge *Carex strigosa* was also present, along a ride edge. This species is definitely local, but may be overlooked. Jeremy Fraser found a new population in Morkery Wood in 2013, so it is worth searching for in spring.



## Highlights from The Fens

### A new record of a hybrid sedge

While visiting Baston Fen, Neil Harris noticed a rather odd looking sedge, growing close to an area of Slender Tufted-sedge *Carex acuta*. This was provisionally identified as the hybrid between *Carex acuta* and *C.nigra* by me, and a specimen was sent to Mike Porter, who confirmed that it was indeed this hybrid, also known as *Carex x elytroides*. This is the first time that this taxon has been recorded from Lincolnshire - it certainly takes a sharp eye to spot it!

### Branched Horsetail

Owen Mountford, Jon Graham and Neil Pike confirmed that Branched Horsetail *Equisetum ramosissimum* survives near Boston, with twelve rather straggly plants being recorded from the Slippery Gowt area. It was once regarded as possibly native but is now considered to have been introduced. Nevertheless, this is the only site for this species on the east coast, the other being in Somerset, South Wales and in the Thames valley .

## Towns and villages

### Early meadow-grass at Cowbit

New vice-county records can turn up in the most unprepossessing places! On a cold April day Peter Kirby and I dropped in to Cowbit to do some recording. I noticed a rather flat, yellowish looking clump of meadow-grass on a bare area of soil next to the pavement, and took a specimen back to check whether it was Early Meadow-grass *Poa infirma*, which can be distinguished from the much commoner Annual Meadow-grass *Poa annua* by the size and shape of its anthers. It was indeed Early Meadow-grass, a species that I'd been expecting to appear in the vice-county. Originally very much confined to the south-west and south coast of England, it has been spreading northwards for some time. I had seen it in both Hertfordshire and north Huntingdonshire, and in 2013 it had been recorded in Skegness. It really was only a matter of time!



### Narrow-leaved Ragwort in Grantham

Another expected new species for the vice-county was Narrow-leaved Ragwort *Senecio inaequidens*. This neophyte from Southern Africa is well established in the Thames Basin, is locally frequent in Cambridgeshire and has quite a few records in North Lincolnshire, so, having wind-blown seeds, was bound to turn up in South Lincolnshire at some time. Malcolm Pool spotted it growing in an industrial estate in Grantham, and I'm sure it will soon be turning up on waste ground in other urban areas, with Spalding and Boston prime candidates.



## Reports of SLFG field meetings 2015

### West Deeping 27th March 2015

We were so lucky with the weather on our first field trip of the year. We recorded 180 species, 47 of which were new to the tetrad (and this is a well-recorded one!). Among those were a number of species apparently new to VC53, including Spring Sowbread *Cyclamen repandum*, naturalised in grassland, clearly having spread from a nearby garden. The churchyard also proved interesting, and there we found a large population of Yellow Nonea *Nonea lutea*, only the second time it had been recorded in the county, the first having been in Cowbit just a couple of weeks previously.



### Ropsley Rise Wood and Ropsley village 18th April 2015

Once again we were blessed with glorious weather for our visit to Ropsley. The meeting didn't entirely go to plan, as the picnic site was permanently closed and Ropsley Rise Wood proved not to be open access despite information to the contrary on the OS Get-a-Map site. However, we had a wander in it anyway, and with the adjacent roadside nature reserve and bridleways at the west end, managed to accumulate a respectable total of 163 species for tetrad SK93S.

There were good quantities of a number of ancient woodland species, including the first flowering Early Purple-orchid *Orchis mascula* and Goldilocks *Ranunculus auricomus* of the year, but the highlights were the discovery of vegetative plants of Herb-paris *Paris quadrifolia* by Neil Harris, and a strong population of Greater Chickweed *Stellaria neglecta* along Wood Lane. This is only the eighth locality in VC53 and the first post-2000 record. Definitely a species to look out for in April and May in shady somewhat damp places and which can be

recognised by having more than eight purple anthers and sepals more than 5mm long.



A smaller group went to Ropsley village in the afternoon, and recorded 137 species in SK93X, a good total for a rather over-tidy village with a desperately dull churchyard. Interestingly, a much higher proportion of the records were new to the tetrad, probably because it had previously been visited later in the year. We added 90 species, including an apparently self-seeding population of Garden Peony *Paeonia officinalis* on the edge of an old quarry. This is a new species to VC53, although there are quite a few records nationally, away from East Anglia and the East Midlands.

### Twyford Forest 16th May 2015

After a somewhat chilly start, it turned into a beautiful spring day, ideal for strolling round the varied habitats within Twyford Forest. The combination of woodland and grassland, acid and calcareous soils, wet and dry areas, not to mention the concrete runways, meant there was plenty of interest.

Highlights of the day were finding plenty of Purple Small-reed *Calamagrostis canescens* and re-recording quite a few species that haven't been seen for many years, including a good colony of Adder's-tongue *Ophioglossum vulgatum*. A mystery sedge kept us puzzled, but once I had the specimen under the microscope it keyed out very easily to Spring-sedge *Carex caryophyllea*, which was new to the wood. I'm used to seeing short examples of this in well-grazed calcareous grassland, but apparently its height range is 2-30cm. Ours were about 20-25cm tall. It was also really good to see a fine plant of *Geum x intermedium*, the hybrid between Wood Avens *Geum urbanum* and Water Avens *Geum rivale*, growing close to the car-park.



After everyone else left, I went for a stroll in the eastern part of the site, which became somewhat longer than I'd intended. In areas of damp woodland I added Wood Sorrel *Oxalis acetosella*, Bog Stitchwort *Stellaria alsine*, Wood Melick *Melica uniflora*, Scaly Male-fern *Dryopteris borreeri* and Lady Fern *Athyrium filix-femina*, while a particularly species-rich area of grassland and runway had abundant Dyer's Greenweed *Genista tinctoria*, Salad Burnet *Poterium sanguisorba* and Upright Brome *Bromopsis erecta*, as well as smaller quantities of Downy Oat-grass *Avenula pubescens*, Dropwort *Filipendula vulgaris* and Betony *Betonica officinalis*.

Collectively we recorded 259 species, probably our highest total ever. At some point it just needs a late summer visit to tackle all those tricky willows, roses and willowherbs!

### Rauceby Warren and North Rauceby

The trip to Rauceby Warren and North Rauceby was very rewarding. In total we made 313 records of 256 species.

Neil Harris showed us many of the specialities of Rauceby Warren NR, including Tuberous Pea *Lathyrus tuberosus*, Yellow Vetch *Vicia lutea*, Purple Milk-vetch *Astragalus danicus* and of course the Fine-leaved Sandwort *Minuartia hybrida*. In a couple of hours we recorded 140 species including five new species for the site, including Fairy Flax *Linum catharticum* which seems to have been overlooked previously. A number of other species hadn't been recorded since the 1980's including Common Cudweed *Filago vulgaris* and Dropwort *Filipendula vulgaris*.

We recorded a splendid total of 172 species from North Rauceby and added 51 species to the TFOOI list. The most exciting finds were Pale Pink-sorrel *Oxalis incarnata* growing in a brick wall, the third

locality in VC53 and a well-established population of Bloody Crane's-bill *Geranium sanguineum*, looking very at home on a roadside verge.



### Holywell and Castle Bytham 5 July 2015

A smaller than normal group visited Holywell Mound SSSI in the morning. This limestone grassland site has had a chequered management history, but proved to be in pretty good condition, with short species-rich grassland on the western slope. Among the more widespread limestone grassland species, the sharp eyes of the group managed to find small populations of Fragrant Orchid *Gymnadenia conopsea*, Clustered Bellflower *Campanula glomerata* and Horseshoe-vetch *Hippocrepis comosa*. Having scoured the site, we then made a short detour to Warren Hill RSV where Neil Harris showed us the Bastard-toadflax *Thesium humifusum*.



After a very pleasant picnic lunch in Phil Horton's garden, some of us spent the afternoon recording in SK91Z where records included planted trees, such as the Turkish Hazel *Corylus columna* that had us puzzling in the churchyard, garden escapes, arable species such as Stinking Chamomile *Anthemis cotula* and a magnificent Barberry *Berberis vulgaris*. The addition of a wide range of native species from the River Glen and Lawn Wood and meadows meant that we had a very good total. Fortunately the thunder-storms held off although the skies looked definitely threatening at times!

### Witham-on-the Hill

Despite initially appearing rather pedestrian, the tetrad yielded some good species, the most notable of which was Rye-brome *Bromus secalinus* found by Neil Harris, which has only been recorded from the vice-county a few times. This is the first post-2000 record, and interestingly the only other recent record came from an arable field near Careby Wood, only a couple of kilometres away.



We also found some rather nice acid grassland and woodland, with characteristic species such as Heath Speedwell *Veronica officinalis* and Oval Sedge *Carex leporina*. In total we recorded 228 species, which included 110 additions for the tetrad. Although some of these were garden escapes, most were native species.

### Stapleford

Our trip to Stapleford Wood was definitely worthwhile, with 268 records of 201 species.

In SK85T (our main recording tetrad) we added 65 species to the tetrad, including ancient woodland species such as Hairy-brome *Bromopsis ramosa*, Bearded Couch *Elymus caninus*, Greater Stitchwort *Stellaria holostea* and Wood Sorrel *Oxalis acetosella*. The hybrid between Pedunculate Oak *Quercus robur* and Sessile Oak *Quercus petraea*,

known as *Quercus x rosacea* was present and is only the fourth record for VC53.

We also added a number of arable species from a field corner including Corn Spurrey *Spergula arvensis* (which had been recorded from adjacent tetrads) and Pale Persicaria *Persicaria lapathifolia*, which was growing alongside Red-leg *P. maculosa*. A straggly knot-grass *Polygonum* keyed out to Cornfield Knotgrass *P. rurivagum*, which is a new VC record. In total we now have 189 post-2000 records (59% of the total ever recorded). Unfortunately the magnificent burdocks just turned out to be Common Burdock *Arctium minus*.

In SK85N we added 13 new species, including Devil's-bit Scabious *Succisa pratensis* which had last been recorded from an adjacent tetrad by Miss Gibbons in 1973, and several willows. This tetrad now has 152 post-2000 records, which is 61% of the total ever recorded.

After the main excursion I visited SK85U just to the north. I spent about 90 minutes there, and recorded just over 90 species, most of which were ones we'd seen earlier in the day. An extensive clear-felled area had much Heather *Calluna vulgaris*, Purple Moor-grass *Molinia caerulea* and Wavy-leaved Hair-grass *Deschampsia flexuosa*, and on a forestry track within this area I found a small population of Common Cudweed *Filago vulgaris*. Further along I came across a very tiny sandwort which turned out to be Slender Sandwort *Arenaria leptoclados* (a new tetrad record) and a significant population of Trailing Tormentil *Potentilla anglica*, which is distinguished from the much more frequent Tormentil *P. erecta* by larger flowers which have a mix of four and five petals, more carpels and a mix of ternate and palmate leaves. It's been known from the area since 1954 but this is the first post-2000 record. Still plenty of work to do in this tetrad as only 36% of the total flora has been re-recorded since 2000.





## South Lincolnshire Field Meetings 2016

\*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
Saturday 19th March 10.30-15.30	Heckington	Meet in car-park of Heckington Mill TF145345	Village TF14L and TF14M	SLFG Sarah Lambert 07784 169260 sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com
Saturday 23rd April 10.00-16.30	Potterhanworth and Nocton Woods and villages	Meet in the car-park of The Chequers at Potterhanworth TF054662	Ancient woodland Villages TF06N TF06T TF06W TF06X	BSBI / SLFG Sarah Lambert 07784 169260 sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com
Sunday 24th April 10.00-16.30	Skellingthorpe Old Wood / Hartsholme CP & Swanholme Lakes	Community Centre car park in Skellingthorpe village SK 925718	Ancient woodland Acid grassland SK97A SK97B SK96P	BSBI / SLFG Sarah Lambert 07784 169260 sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com
*Saturday 16th May 10.30	Woodnook Valley SSSI SK938325	Roadside parking along Woodnook Valley (limited places, please car-share)	Limestone grassland SK93G SK93L	SLFG Sarah Lambert 07784 169260 sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com
*Saturday 20th June 10.30	Holywell and Lincolnshire Gate	Roadside parking at Robert's Field SK999149 (subject to change)	Limestone grassland Ancient woodland SK91X	SLFG Sarah Lambert 07784 169260 sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com
*Saturday 9th July 10.30	Ancaster Valley SSSI and village	Park near cemetery in Church Lane SK 982436	Limestone grassland Village SK94W	SLFG Sarah Lambert 07784 169260 sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com
Sunday July 17th 12.00 for a 13.00 start	Stanton's Pit NR	Use reserve car park at TF034173	Lake, marsh, acid grassland and scrub TF01I	LNU Brian Hedley 07989 665794 brian.hedley@hotmail.com
*Saturday 13th August 10.30	Doddington	Parking to be arranged, possibly at Doddington Hall if we can negotiate access	Parkland Arable SK87V SK96E SK97A	SLFG Sarah Lambert 07784 169260 sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com
*Saturday 3rd September 10.30	Wilsford Village and Warren	Park near church in village TF006430	Acid grassland, arable, village TF04B TF04G	SLFG Sarah Lambert 07784 169260 sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com
Saturday 24th September 10.00 (joint meeting with Cambridge Flora Group)	Tydd St.Giles, Tydd St. Mary and Sutton St. James	Meet at Tydd St. Giles church TF427164 at 10.00 or Nutwalk Corner TF394163 at 13.00 for the shorter walk	Arable, ditches, Villages (c. 11km or 5.5km)	SLFG / CFG Sarah Lambert 07784 169260 sarah.lambert7@ntlworld.com