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FOLKESTONE
NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY
1956

FOLKESTONE AND DISTRICT NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1868

President :

MR. T. W. BIRCH, M.SC., M.ED.

Hon. General Secretary :

MISS VERA F. P. DAY, N.D.H., F.R.H.S.

Hon. Treasurer :

MR. J. S. MITCHELL, N.D.H.

The aims and objects of the Society are briefly to work out the natural history of the locality, to promote the study of all branches of natural history and general science and to facilitate mutual help in such study.

The Society has six principal activities :—

- (1) Illustrated lectures and films are given fortnightly in Folkestone from October till March.
- (2) Excursions and Field Meetings are organised during the Summer months.
- (3) An Exhibition of scientific interest and a *Conversazione* are held each Spring.
- (4) Local wild flowers and plants are exhibited throughout the greater part of the year in the Central Public Library. The local Flower Show exhibit is an extension of this activity.
- (5) A publication is issued occasionally.
- (6) A Natural History Essay Competition is held annually open to anyone up to 18 years of age.

All indoor Meetings are open to members on payment of a single subscription of 10/- per annum, and there are no additional charges for membership of Botanical and Entomological Sections.

The business of the Society is carried on by elected officers, and committee members.

Visitors are welcome to the Society's meetings. Those wishing to receive a copy of the programme should complete and return this leaflet to the General Secretary.

To :—The General Secretary, 18 Wear Bay Crescent, Folkestone.

Please send a Natural History Society programme of the forthcoming Session.

Name

Address

Price 6d.



Some Interesting Localities around Folkestone

The numbers in brackets show locations by National Grid Reference. Most of the area is shown on the New Popular Edition 1 inch O.S. East Kent Sheet 173, and Dungeness on the Hastings Sheet 184.

The Folkestone district contains a considerable diversity of soils, and in consequence the flora is especially rich and varied.

The wild flowers occur in four main groups (a) those of the chalk hills; (b) of the woods and fields; (c) of the marsh; (d) of the seashore. While some of these areas are difficult of access except by cycle or car, a number of interesting localities may be reached by public transport, or on foot.

THE CHALK HILLS

Newington to the Valiant Sailor (1837—2437).

The chalk hills behind Folkestone provide a good hunting ground for botanists. In summer the short turf is gay with small, brilliant flowers, such as Milkwort (*Polygala vulgaris*), Horseshoe Vetch (*Hippocrepis comosa*), Rock Rose (*Helianthemum chamæcistus*), Marjoram (*Origanum vulgare*), Yellow Wort (*Blackstonia perfoliata*), and Stemless Thistle (*Carduus acaulis*). The chief treasures, however, are the Orchids. Here may be found several rare species, including the Spider (*Ophrys sphegoides* and *O. aranifera*), and the Lady's Tresses (*Spiranthes spiralis*), while the more common kinds are sometimes abundant, particularly the Bee (*Ophrys apifera*), the Fragrant (*Habenaria conopsea*) and the Pyramidal (*Orchis pyramidalis*).

The clove-scented Broomrape (*Orobanche caryophyllaceæ*, peculiar to Kent, sometimes occurs freely. Several uncommon *Solanaceæ* grow in chalk districts, the Deadly Nightshade (*Atropa Belladonna*), Henbane (*Hyoscyanus niger*), and exotic-looking Thorn Apple (*Datura Stramonium*)—all are poisonous. Where clumps of Wayfaring Tree (*Viburnum lantana*), Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*) and Spindle

(*Euonymus europæus*) afford a little shelter, Sweet Briar (*Rosa rubiginosa*) can be found. If the chalk be newly exposed, robust plants spring up, Mignonette (*Reseda lutea*), Dyer's Rocket (*R. luteola*), Musk Thistle (*Carduus nutans*), and the rare Woolly Thistle (*C. eriophorus*), while the Wild Sea Cabbage (*Brassica oleracea*) and the Horned Poppy (*Glaucium flavum*), normally seashore plants, are here established fully a mile inland.

THE WARREN

Copt Point to Shakespeare Cliff (2437—2538).

The Warren appears from a distance as a narrow strip of broken ground overgrown with scrub and small bushes. It is, however, larger than it seems, for it contains grassy slopes and sizeable thickets with fully grown trees. Narrow paths wind in all directions, but apart from a cinder track running from the first Martello Tower by the railway down to Warren Halt, these other paths are steep and rough.

Though most of the vegetation is characteristic chalk flora, in places outcrops of the red sand of the Lenham beds, spilling over the cliffs at Capel, give rise to a woodland flora, typical of neutral sandy zones. In spring, the deepest parts of the thickets are full of Primroses; in summer, Tutsan (*Hypericum androsæmum*), and Nettle-Leaved Bellflower (*Campanula trachelium*), can be found, with masses of Hart's Tongue Ferns (*Scolopendrium vulgare*); while in winter the bright scarlet seeds of the Stinking Iris (*Iris fœtidissima*) are conspicuous. A rare plant found in some quantity on the broken chalk ridges is the Nottingham Catchfly (*Silene nutans*); the cliffs are colonized by Viper's Bugloss (*Echium vulgare*), clumps of Valerian (*Centranthus ruber*), Wild Wallflower (*Cheiranthus cheiri*), and Sea Stock (*Matthiola sinuata*); and where sand and chalk meet are large patches of Sea Lavender (*Statice binervosa*). Several small sandy beaches afford homes for some interesting seashore plants, Horned Poppy, Prickly Saltwort (*Salsola kali*), Viscid Groundsel (*Senecio viscosa*), the beautiful mauve Sea Rocket (*Cakile maritima*), and, in one place, the uncommon Golden Samphire (*Inula crithmoides*), a Composite not to be confused with Sea Samphire (*Crithmum maritimum*), an Umbelliferous plant common on chalk cliffs.

Outcrops of Gault in East Wear Bay give rise to damp spots overgrown with Sedges and Rushes; there are a few interesting species, but

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this is a barren area. Owing to this underlying clay moisture is retained even in the hottest weather; and late flowers may often be found in the Warren in a hot, dry season when they have ceased blooming elsewhere.

THE LYNSTORE VALLEY AND SURROUNDING WOODS

(1546—1650)

From the Hythe-Canterbury Road (B2068), a mile or so north of Six Mile Cottages, a side road runs into the Lynstore Valley, describing an S bend and then carrying on between Atchester Wood on the left and Palmstead Woods on the right. A good parking place is provided by a large disused chalk pit halfway through the valley. These woods are of great interest to botanists. The wild Columbine (*Aquilegia vulgaris*), Wood Vetch (*Vicia sylvatica*), Herb Paris (*Paris quadrifolia*), and Green Hellebore (*Helleborus viridis*), may be found; while the Bee, Pyramidal and Scented Orchids have colonized the grassy banks.

West of the Lynstore Valley is the Rose and Crown Inn on Stelling Minnis (142469), a useful landmark; still further west across Stone Street is Dean Hill, with another convenient chalk pit. The aforementioned orchids, together with Man Orchid (*Aceris anthropophora*) grow beside the road. In nearby woods—Yockletts Banks—Butterfly Orchids (*Habenaria bifolia* and *H. virescens*) and the Broad-leaved Helleborine (*Epipactis latifolia*) are well established.

West Wood (1343—1443) is a State Forest extending from Stone Street to the Gate Inn.

Covert Wood lies between Bladbean and Barham (1848). The steep, narrow lanes are practicable for cars, and the scenery is very lovely at all seasons. Green Hellebore can be found here, and Orpine (*Sedum telephium*), and Long Stalked Cranesbill (*Geranium columbinum*). These woods are particularly rich in Mosses.

DUNGENESS (61/0916)

Grim and windswept Dungeness has a unique flora extending over shingle ridges and marshy ground. The prostrate Blackthorns (*Prunus spinosa*) and Brooms (*Cytisus scoparius*, var.: *prostrata*) are very noticeable. The most abundant plants of the shingle beds are Nottingham Catchfly, Sea Pink or Thrift (*Armeria vulgaris*), Hare's Foot Clover (*Trifolium arvense*), Sea Campion (*Silene maritima*), powder-blue Jasione (*Jasione montana*), and yellow, pink and white Stonecrops (*Sedum acre*, *S. anglicum*, *S. album*). During June, these plants, together with the Brooms and Foxgloves, provide mats of colour; later in the summer much of the vegetation becomes smothered with the tangled red threads of the parasitic Dodder (*Cuscuta epithimum*).

Close to the coast grow many seaside plants, Seakale (*Crambe maritima*), Scurvy Grass (*Cochlearia danica*), Sea Pea (*Lathyrus maritimus*) and Sea Convolvulus (*Convolvulus maritimus*).

The freshwater pits are a peculiar feature of Dungeness, and around them several rare marsh plants may be found, notably Marsh Cinquefoil (*Potentilla palustris*), Greater Spearwort (*Ranunculus lingua*), and Buck Bean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*). Marsh Shield Fern (*Aspidium thelypteris*) and Adder's Tongue (*Ophioglossum vulgatum*) are unusual ferns, and it is strange to find Bog Cotton (*Eriophorum polystachion*) in this locality, as it is usually confined to peat bogs on high moorland.

Dungeness is best reached by car, but the Light Railway runs direct to the lighthouse in summer.

Shingle flora is also found at Littlestone-on-Sea; and patches occur at Hythe Ranges, but only part of this area is accessible to the public. Marsh plants may be readily studied along the dykes between the coast line and the hills; and there is much of botanical interest along the banks of the Royal Military Canal.

VERA F. P. DAY, N.D.H., F.R.H.S.
Hon. Secretary.

1952.

SECRETARY'S NOTES



The Society met last winter at the hall of the new Christ Church School, Brockman Road, by the kindness of the Divisional Executive. Events have proved that the move was fully justified ; accommodation at the Lady Sassoon room was becoming more and more restricted owing to the exhibitions held there during the autumn and winter, and in addition, there were not sufficient facilities for the showing of films. The new hall, besides being convenient, is pleasant and comfortable.

We are glad that contact with the Public Library is still maintained, as some of the Section Meetings are held there and our posters are displayed in the hall.

The Annual Conversazione was also held at Christ Church School. The increased space for exhibits and better facilities for catering are a great improvement and our thanks are due to Miss Skinner for the excellent tea arrangements.

The exhibition was of high quality, and, it was heard said, almost as good as that arranged last year at the Leas Cliff Hall for the S.E.U.S.S. Where all the exhibits were excellent it is difficult to pick out a few for mention. The demonstration of spinning and weaving by the Art School was specially attractive ; exhibits of home-made wines were colourful and of great interest, as was the large stand of cheeses, with samples for tasting, set up by the Milk Marketing Board. A noteworthy exhibit was a fine collection of geological specimens showing natural forms of calcium and we were pleased to see a well arranged exhibit from Brampton Down School.

Mrs. D. Harris, a life member, whose spinning and home dyeing demonstrations were so popular at the Conversazione, has moved to Chislehurst. We shall miss her.

Our old friend from the Marsh, Mr. Charles Richardson, died last autumn, and a former cadet, Jack Eltham, was lost at sea in tragic circumstances.

In spite of an unusually trying winter, attendance at lectures was very good. We were fortunate in securing for our opening lecture Mr. L. H. J. Williams, with his unique colour film of the 1954 British Museum Expedition to Nepal. Two lectures which evoked many questions were Woodworm Control by a representative of Rentokil Ltd. ; and Antibiotics in the Control of Plant Diseases by Mr. Lawrence Greggain, F.R.H.S., of Pfizers Ltd. Mr. L. W. Adams of British Railways gave an extremely detailed and absorbingly interesting lecture on the Warren Sea Defences, illustrated by many fine photographs, and other lectures of outstanding interest were from Mr. D. Marshall,

D.Inst.P.A., of the Public Parks Dept. with many coloured photographs taken by himself in Holland ; and Mr. G. Fuller's remarkably beautiful films of Kentish orchids and Birds of the Shore. An innovation was a joint archaeological lecture in January with the Historical Association, Mr. Robertson Mackay, of the Ministry of Works, giving a talk on flint implements.

The award of a gold medal for our exhibit at the Flower Show was a great thrill. Those responsible for arranging the stand, Mrs. Walton, Miss Elwin and her friend Miss Meetens, Mr. Merryweather and Mr. and Mrs. Coveney must feel well rewarded. We heard that a friend of the Society, on being told to "look what we've got!", said "What is it? please point it out to me!" Like a true botanist he was looking for an uncommon plant rather than a mere award!

The Secretary attended the S.E.U.S.S. Congress at Tunbridge Wells, and Mrs. Walton the British Association Meeting at Sheffield—where it rained non-stop.

For family reasons Mrs. D. Standford has been obliged to give up the botanical Secretaryship and we welcome Miss G. Fellows as her successor.

We are pleased to welcome Mr. J. R. Parkes, as Hon. Auditor.

We had to begin the wild flower exhibit in April, instead of the first week in March, as vegetation was so retarded. We were asked to continue with it until mid-December to coincide with the opening of the Old Folkestone Exhibition, and we were able to do so with the kind assistance of the Parks Department who provided several lots of specimens of shrubs.

The maintaining of a botanical exhibit at Cheriton Library has not been easy but it is expected that everything will be satisfactory next season.

The Society, with the Nature Conservancy, made strong representations against letting part of the Warren as a caravan site, but without success. We must hope that the Council's decision will prevent the hooliganism that has occurred in the Warren during the past years, in which case it may do good.

SOME FLOWERS OF THE VOSGES

JUST upstream of Strasbourg the Rhine cuts through the mountains, separating the German Black Forest from the French Vosges.

In the Black Forest the rocks are chiefly igneous (granites etc.), there are also outcrops of a brown or creamy sandstone (like those in Sussex) which has weathered to a pure white sand, but the greater

part of the Vosges consists of a pink sandstone that weathers to an attractive "old rose" coloured soil, so that the Plain of Alsace bears a close resemblance to the Herefordshire countryside and the Welsh Marches.

The mountains here are thickly covered with conifers, including Scotch pines *Pinus sylvestris* L. and acid conditions underneath the trees restrict vegetation mainly to Mosses, with Ling *Calluna vulgaris* L. and a dense undergrowth of dwarf shrubs, Bilberry *Vaccinium myrtillus* L., Bearberry *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* L., and Cowberry or Red Whortleberry *Vaccinium vitis-idaea* L., this last with shining box-like leaves and attractive terminal clusters of pinkish white flowers followed by bright red berries. Masses of wild raspberries grow in the open spaces. *Sphagnum* spp. were abundant in the pine forests, not only in boggy patches where the trees thinned out, but in damp spots under the trees and especially along the sides of every small rill and trickle of water. In the Black Forest we saw large cushions of a deep crimson *Sphagnum*, possibly *S. rubellium* Wils., but this only occurred sparsely in the Vosges. Under more neutral conditions, the vegetation is correspondingly varied, and in places there are large patches of Lily-of-the-valley. In one spot, immediately around the hospice of Mont Ste. Odile, I saw many plants of May Lily *Maianthemum bifolium* L. which were no longer in flower, as it was August. Near the lake at Gerardmer, which is very like Windemere but smaller, fields of wild daffodils can be seen in spring. In damp places the large flowered yellow Balsam *Impatiens noli-tangere* L. grew profusely.

A large part of the Vosges, however, is limestone (similar to that in the Cotswolds) and a great variety of plants grow here, some of outstanding beauty and interest.

From Strasbourg we made several trips into the mountains where I found some enchanting wild flowers. Among the loveliest were two blue flowered lettuces, about 4 ft. tall, one *Mulgedium (Cicerbita) plumeri* L. with loose clusters of powder blue flowers almost as large as those of Chicory, the other *Cicerbita alpina* L. had bold spikes of rich violet blue and dark leaves. Both grew by the roadsides at the edges of deciduous woods. Another spectacular compositae was *Adenostyles albifrons* Reichb. allied to *Eupatorium*, a tall stout plant with huge coltsfoot-like leaves and big fluffy heads of tiny red-purple flowers. The handsome *Senecio sarraceniensis* with broad leaves and sprays of clear yellow flowers was common throughout the district; unlike many members of this genus, which can be coarse or weedy, this was a plant of distinction and refinement. A very extraordinary Composite was *Prenanthes purpurea*. The plant bears a superficial resemblance to the Wall Lettuce *Mycelis muralis* R. to which it is allied, but the purple flowers, each with five reflexed ray florets and the stamens united into a prominent yellow beak, looked more like those of a *Solanum*.

Out in the open grassy places on the limestone hills was another beautiful Composite, *Buphthalmium salicifolium* L., the Yellow Ox-eye, with large orange yellow daisy flowers, and a beautiful clear yellow pansy, *Viola elegans* occurred everywhere. On the bare summits of the hills was a Cat's Ear *Antennaria dioica* (L.) with attractive silky greyish heads, with *Cicendia filiformis* (L.) and Bastard Toadflax *Thesium humifusum* DC. In a few places quantities of the fluffy seed heads of Pasque Flower *Anemone pulsatilla* L. were seen and a brilliant pink Dianthus, possibly *D. sylvestris* Wulf, but I had no opportunity to examine this on the hillside. White spiked Rampion *Phyteuma spicatum* L. grew among the scrub which consisted mainly of the low growing *Rosa alpina* L. with crimson flowers. I only saw one plant of *R. canina* L. the whole time.

Amongst the rocks on a dry hillside I found the pink and white Crown Vetch *Coronilla varia* L. with its round heads of flowers ; this is an old cottage garden plant. Another garden plant was the tall blue *Campanula persicifolia* L. — neither of these were common, being confined to one area in that district. A lilac-flowered Arabis *A. arenosa* also grew on the rocks ; it is more like a rocket *Sisymbrium* L. with its long curving pods and stiff rosettes of finely toothed leaves ; in places too was the blue *Globularia cordifolia* L. like a large version of the *Jasione montana* L. so widespread at Dungeness.

Yellow Foxgloves *Digitalis ambigua* L. grew in some quantity in a number of places in the woods — I was told they were rare in those parts and they certainly aroused the interest of several people on the coach.

A good deal of Spotted Dead Nettle *Lamium maculatum* L. grew under walls and hedges by the roadside but strangely very few leaves showed the characteristic white splashes, and this seems normal across the Channel.

On rocky outcrops and especially on castle ruins, we found many wild gooseberry bushes laden with fruit ; the berries are pale yellowish green with reddish streaks, and are very sweet and juicy and well flavoured, rather like the small old-fashioned yellow variety once common in gardens.

Perhaps one of the most beautiful plants was the red berried Elder *Sambucus racemosa* L. This is a shrub rarely more than 12 ft. high, with yellow flowers followed by dense clusters of small vivid red berries, which showed up brilliantly against the dark foliage. This was very common along all the wooded mountain roads.

I was able to identify most of the specimens I collected from some books lent to me by the librarian at Mont Ste. Odile.

VERA F. P. DAY, N.D.H., F.R.H.S.

ORNITHOLOGICAL SECTION

No meetings were held owing to poor attendance in the previous session.

ENTOMOLOGICAL SECTION

IN spite of poor weather members of the Section pursued their activities with enthusiasm and some success. Two meetings of the South London Entomological Society were held within our area, at Ham Street on June 16th, and at Folkestone on July 8th. They were attended by several of our members, as were excursions of the Kent Field Club at Challock Woods on May 27th and at Sandwich on July 7th. The Section combined a business meeting with an excursion to Dungeness on September 8th. The meeting at Challock was distinguished by the discovery of larvae of the Buff Footman, *Eilema deplana* (Esper), which were beaten from ancient yew trees by Mr. Bushby, and that at Sandwich by the discovery of a vast colony of the very local burnet moth *Zygaena loniceræ* (von Sch.). At Dungeness insects were generally scarce: a curious absence was that of the larvae of the local Tortrix *Peronea hastiana* (Linn). These are usually to be found in immense numbers in spun shoots of the creeping willow and are collected by those who study variation in this insect. The moth emerges in September and October and oviposits in the spring after hibernation. I can only attribute its disappearance to the effects of the cold weather in February on the hibernators. It should be sought for again next summer.

1956 was heralded by a wet January followed by viciously cold weather in February and March. April and May were dry and bright with a cold wind, the summer months wet and generally cold, the autumn dry with periodic warmth and cold, and now, in early December, it is mild and rather pleasant.

There is little to relate as regards butterflies. The early ones were up to the average in numbers and at Challock on May 27th 17 species were counted, mostly in numbers, particularly the little Duke of Burgundy Fritillary which I have never previously seen so common. June, the first of four wet months, brought the change. A few Painted Ladies were seen in early June, but few of their progeny later; the Clouded Yellow was not recorded at all; the Vanessids were scarce with Red Admirals and Commas unusually rare.

In dealing with moths the picture is brighter. The Death's Head, *Acherontia atropos* (Linn.), had a good year and was taken nearly everywhere in the autumn, mainly in towns. Specimens were usually freshly

emerged, indicating that they had bred locally. Recent additions to the fauna, *Euphyia luctuata* (Schiff.), *Calophasia lunula* (Hufn.), and *Hydraecia hucherardi* Mabille, maintained their numbers. The Clifden Nonpareil, *Catocala fraxini* (Linn.), was very scarce; the Lesser Belle, *Colobochyla salicalis* (Schiff.), was numerous. The Lunar Double stripe, *Phoberia lunaris* (Schiff.), was not observed and may well be extinct. The Varied Coronet, *Hadena compta* (Schiff.) is spreading inland from the coast and was taken at Canterbury and Willesborough. Mr. P. Wachter took a specimen of that puzzling and elusive insect *Jaspidia deceptoria* (Scop.) in the Ham Street Woods on May 28th and Mr. A. M. Morley records a specimen of the Scarce Black Arches, *Roeselia aerugula* (Hueb.), on July 22nd in his light trap. This little moth has not been seen in this part of the country for over 50 years. The Large Footman, *Lithosia quadra* (Linn.), was seen at Dover, Folkestone, Ashford and Wye on various dates from late July to early August. These were fresh specimens, presumably bred locally. Another unexpected capture was that of *Diarsia florida* Schmidt in Mr. Morley's trap on June 26th. This Noctuid has only recently been recognised as British and may have escaped notice in the southern counties. Folkestone also provided what is most probably a specimen of *Procus versicolor* (Borkh.), a species of which the range is at present not fully known. Mr. R. F. Bretherton took a specimen of the Mere Wainscot, *Arenostola fluxa* (Hueb.), in the Ham Street woods on July 27th. The larva of this moth feeds on the handsome Bush Grass *Calamagrostis epigeios* (Roth.) which has not at present been found in these woods and requires a search. Several scarce species were more in evidence than usual, including the Triple Spotted Clay, *Amathes ditrapezium* (Borkh.), the Black Neck, *Ophiusa pastinum* Treit., and the Green Arches, *Anaplectoides prasina* (Schiff.), a species which is always uncommon, occurring at Wye and Westwell. Mr. Cue found it in great numbers at sugar in Hoad's Wood on June 18th. He also records the Gothic, *Phalaena typica* Linn. in his garden at Ashford. This moth, formerly common, has become rare of late years for no apparent reason.

A remarkable capture was that of a fresh ♀ of the Powdered Wainscot, *Simyra albovenosa* (Goeze), taken at Littlebourne by Capt. Dudley Marsh on July 31st. Turning to the Micro-Lepidoptera, that lovely moth *Margaronia unionalis* (Hueb.) appears to be settling down as a resident; specimens were taken at Folkestone, Wye, Chartham, and Dover. On June 30th Lt.-Col. W. L. Manley introduced me to the larvae of *Nephopteryx genistella* Dup. which were webbing a patch of gorse at Dungeness. The moths began to emerge in August. Specimens were taken at Folkestone and Littlebourne of two interesting moths *Deoryctria spendidella* H.S. and *Heterographis oblitella* Zell. The rare and striking Scarce Ermine, *Ethmia decemguttella* (Hueb.), was taken singly at Wye, Folkestone, and Littlebourne. The larva feeds on Gromwell *Lithospermum officinale* (Linn.) which is a local

plant on the slopes of the Downs. An allied and equally striking species, *Ethmia funerella* (Fab.) was taken by Capt. Dudley Marsh at Chartham and larvae on Comfrey *Symphytum officinale* (Linn.) were subsequently discovered. The Tortrices *Cacoecia aeriferana* (H.Sch.), *Pandemis cinnamomeana* (Treit.), and *Spilota lariciana* (Zell.), all larch feeders, re-appeared at Westwell in July. To conclude, Mr. Morley reports the visit to his light of up to 30 specimens of Wakely's Dowd, *Blastobasis decolorella* (Woll.). The origin of this little moth is rather a mystery. It was first discovered by Mr. S. Wakely and is now established in the Herne Hill district.

These records are only selections from the wealth of material accumulated by the Section. It remains for me to thank the members and to apologise for omissions. Much is learnt from the use of + U.V.R. light which collects moths in overhead flight. In some cases new moths are those that have previously escaped notice but most of them are indicative of the changes that are rapidly occurring in our island fauna, presumably in response to a climatic stimulus. In 20 or 30 years notes such as these may provide strange reading.

DR. E. SCOTT, D.S.O.

+ M.V. = Mercury vapour.

+ U.V.R. = Ultra Violet rays.

Two names for the same thing.—A.M.M.

BOTANICAL SECTION

DURING the winter Session four meetings were held at the Public Library.

Miss Johnson Bird brought from Denmark a considerable number of pressed flowers and other material, including a metal silhouette of a wading bird, used as a decoy.

Mr. C. W. Merryweather's talk on plants used as sources of drugs and medicines was illustrated by many specimens of great interest.

Unfortunately Mr. W. S. Nevin's talk on Plant Damage by Birds coincided with a heavy snowfall, and a very small audience was present. Bad weather and illness also kept members away from the last meeting.

On the first walk of the season — to Sandling — Mr. Harland kindly allowed us to pass through the grounds of the Garden House. This added greatly to the interest of the ramble, as wild plants were much retarded by bad weather.

There were two walks in May. The first was to Hayton Manor, Stanford. It was noticeable that there were very few weeds of cultivation in the cornfields, owing to the use of selective weed killers, which may have accounted also for the strong smell of disinfectant. The second walk, through the woods at Lydden was led by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Rowlands of Dover. Some fine specimens of Lady and Fly Orchids — *Orchis purpurea* Huds. and *O. insectifera* L. — were seen. At Kearsney the party was shown the saprophytic Bird's Nest Orchid *Neottia midus-avis* (L.) growing under a Pine.

For the first time for years, the June walk had to be cancelled on account of torrential rain.

In September, Mr. Trevelyan conducted the party round his beautifully kept nurseries, glasshouses and gardens at Lower Court, Ottinge. He pointed out a rare form of Sea Buchthan *Hippophae rhamnoides* L. brought from the West Coast of Ireland, and which is said to occur also in Portugal.

This specimen bore both male flowers and berries — usually the sexes are on separate bushes. It was a small tree about 10 ft. high, umbrella shaped, with a straight trunk rather like that of a hawthorn. Edward Step, F.L.S. in "Trees and Flowers of the Countryside" says that when planted as a specimen in a shrubbery, Sea Buckthorn may grow into a small tree, very different in appearance from the usual bush form.

It is a native English plant, rather local in its distribution, and naturalised in parts of Scotland and Ireland.

Mrs. Trevelyan kindly provided tea, which was much appreciated.

Owing to the difficulty with buses, the October walk took place at Bishopsbourne instead of Burmarsh, as originally planned. The weather was sunny and the walk was much enjoyed — except when we became mixed up with a pheasant shoot !

D. G. STANDFORD.

BOTANICAL NOTES FROM THE FOLKESTONE DISTRICT

AFTER a mild January, when much fine Fragrant Butterbur, also called Winter Heliotrope, *Petasites fragrans* (Vill.) was in bloom, snow lay for six weeks, and was followed by cold and rainless conditions most unfavourable for plant growth. Persistent cold, wet and sunless

conditions from Whitsun onwards meant that wild flowers were not abundant. Most of the Sea Beet, *Beta maritima* L. was killed during the winter ; this is very unusual. Early Orchids were scarce, except for the Early Purple and Lady Orchids but later in the year several colonies of Isle of Wight Helleborine *Epipactis vectensis* (T. & T. A. Steph.) appeared in different places. There appeared to be less than usual of Herb Robert *Geranium robertianum* L. and Lady's Bedstraw *Galium verum* L. and it was difficult to find enough for the display in the library. Broomrapes *Orobanche* spp. were also very scarce; Cowslips *Primula veris* L. and Meadow Sweet *Spiraea ulmaria* L. were abundant, and there were large quantities of Viviparous Garlic *Allium virreale* L. at Lydd. In gardens, Chickweed *Stellaria media* Vill. and Shepherd's Purse *Capsella bursa-pastoris* Medit. were a source of much trouble.

On July 29th a devastating gale left the countryside, especially near the sea, looking as though it had been attacked by a flame gun. The "Gardener's Chronicle" said that the previous occasion when there was a comparable storm on July 29th was during the time of the Spanish Armada. Let us hope that it will be another 400 years before this happens again ! When the vegetation had recovered somewhat, there were untimely autumn blossomings of many spring flowering trees such as apple, lilac and laburnum and shrubby honeysuckle *Lonicera xylosteum Thomsoni* ; a pear tree in Beachborough Road was in full blossom.

A dry sunny October and November did much to make amends for the disastrous summer and enabled most of the harvest to be saved. In November there was a fine display of autumn colouring ; it was a warm autumn, except for a sharp frosty spell in November ; and there was the first white Christmas for nearly 20 years.

VERA F. P. DAY, N.D.H., F.R.H.S.

BOTANICAL NOTES FROM THE ASHFORD DISTRICT

THE season was late in starting because of the intense cold of February and March, but in the cool damp summer that followed plant life soon recovered and produced flowers as abundantly as ever.

The Pale Poppy *Papaver argemone* L. was found in bloom near Hothfield during May and again some weeks later near Potter's Corner. This poppy is easily distinguished by its long narrow seed pods sparsely covered with bristles. Another of the less common species, the Bristly Poppy *Papaver hybridum* L. was seen at Westwell downs in October. This poppy has egg-shaped seed pods covered with many bristles.

A new record for the district, Floating Spike Rush *Scirpus fluitans* L. was found in a pond near Spot Lane. The Lesser Snapdragon *Antirrhinum orontium* L. appears to be increasing its range; it was found this year growing by the roadside near Potters Corner.

Knapweed Broomrape *Orobanche elatior* Sutton was refound on its old site by the Pilgrims' Way, Westwell, where it has not been seen for several years. The Common Broomrape *Orobanche minor* Smith appeared but not as abundantly as usual, near Sevington.

Near Hinxhill, in a wet field containing many ponds, the Water Violet *Hottonia palustris* L. was again abundant and Narrow-leaved Water Plantain *Alisma lanceolatum* Withering, Marsh Speedwell *Veronica scutellata* L., Pink Water Speedwell *Veronica catenata* Pennell, Marshwort *Apium inundatum* (L.) (a new record for the district) were locally abundant.

The tiny annual, Chaffweed *Centunculus minimus* L. was found in Priory Wood, Ruckinge, also the pale blue-flowered Slender Speedwell *Veronica filiformis* Smith a garden escape now becoming established in the wild. Another introduced plant Himalayan Balsam *Impatiens glandulifera* Royle (about twenty plants) flowered well beside a ditch off Sandyhurst Lane.

A surprising find in a field on Weald clay near Mersham, was a colony of White Mullein *Verbascum lychnitis* L. — possibly chalk from Westwell has been dumped there recently!

Several small plants of Gallant Soldier *Galinsoga parviflora* Cavanilles were found in October on Hothfield Common where huts recently stood. This plant has become increasingly common in London and is now spreading into Kent. It has this year been recorded near Maidstone and at Faversham.

The Corn-Cockle *Agrostemma githago* L., now rare in cornfields because of improved methods of seed cleaning, appeared last year on a railway bank at Willesborough; this year it has increased and may well become established there as it is unlikely to be disturbed.

A lovely sight at Willesborough this summer was a field of Chicory *Cichorium intybus* L. in full bloom. Although often grown as a crop on the Continent it is unusual in Kent. Next summer it will probably appear as a weed in nearby fields.

C. N. POPE AND DR. E. SCOTT, D.S.O.

TWO INTERESTING NESTS

TWO nests of special interest were observed in the garden this summer.

1. A pair of Spotted Flycatchers made use of an old Blackbird's nest in our porch which had already been used more than once by the

Blackbird. A smaller nest was constructed inside the Blackbird's nest from an old Chaffinch's nest which had been tucked in beside it, and the Flycatchers then successfully reared a family of four.

2. Wasps were observed busily crawling through a small hole where a knot of wood had come out of the wooden wall of the tool shed. This seemed strange as there was a large opening just below. It was then discovered that the wasps were making a very large nest. On completion a small porch was built over the entrance to the nest on the outside of the shed. The wasps were observed fertilising a cut spray of *Epipactis violaceae* Bor. which had been brought in from some distance away.

D. M. ELWIN, Lyminge.

EXCURSIONS

EXCURSIONS of 1956 were to centres dealing with scientific developments and travel. As numbers were limited seats were allocated in the order of application.

In June we visited Pfizers (Sandwich). On arrival members were welcomed, then followed guides through the works. Details may not be given but we learned that their scientists are employed in discovering new drugs and their uses in combatting diseases.

The tour ended and all were entertained to tea. On the return journey a halt was made at Deal.

The Kent Oil Refinery on the Isle of Grain was visited in July. Owned by the British Petroleum Co., it is the largest of their major refineries in the United Kingdom.

To the surveyors the marsh and river offered possibilities which justified the spending of millions. Work started in 1950, by 1953 twenty five acres of marshland had been reclaimed and the Refinery's distillation unit was working. Each year ocean-going tankers bring in four million tons of crude oil.

In the laboratories chemists experiment in seeking new ways of improving the refining processes and of maintaining efficiency. Finally the oil is stored in huge containers previous to being distributed by ship or road tanker.

Fresh plant is being laid down, land reclaimed from the sea, but space forbids further comment so we thank B.P. for their generous hospitality and our guide for his interesting account of the works.

The last excursion was to Dover Harbour Car Ferry Terminal. Here we were met by a guide, conducted through offices to the Custom House and shown a trapdoor in the floor. This could be lowered, a car suspected of carrying smuggled goods be placed over the space and X-rayed. On we passed to the quay and awaited the coming of the Lord Warden. Soon she appeared and was berthed. Quickly passengers and cars of all descriptions made their way to the Custom House. Members now set out for Selsted where an enjoyable supper was served. Before leaving here, the President, in a few well chosen words commented on the success, from all angles, of the 1956 excursions.

A. J. WRIGHT, F.R.G.S.

BALANCE SHEET

FOLKESTONE, NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY, 1955/56

RECEIPTS		PAYMENTS	
	£	s.	d.
Balance brought Forward 1/10/55	32	6	10
Subscriptions	78	8	6
Donations Conversazione	2	14	9
Historical Assoc. Lantern	1	3	0
Box	2	5	0
Publications	2	13	0
Donations	3	3	0
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Lecture Fees and Expenses	5	15	0
Printing and Stationery	30	11	6
Lantern Expenses	4	1	1
Insurance	1	5	0
Secretary's Expenses	1	3	3
Hire of Rooms	7	6	6
Conversazione Expenses	1	1	0
S.E. Scientific Society	12	6	
Flower Show Expenses	3	4	0
Sundries	1	16	9
Bank Charges and Cheque Book	15	6	
Balance in Hand :			
Bank Deposit A/C	50	0	0
Current A/C	14	14	6
Cash	7	6	
	65	2	0
	<hr/>		
	£122	14	1
	<hr/>		

NEW MEMBERS

- Mrs. S. Alexander, 7, Grimston Gardens, Folkestone.
Miss E. R. Bidnell, Redbourne, London Road, Hythe.
Miss Janet Bragg (student), Grantacot, Old Road, Elham.
Lt.-Col. G. C. Bloxam, 2, Turketel Road, Folkestone.
Miss D. Brown, 2A, Brockman Road, Folkestone.
Miss M. Stuart Clarke, 14, Varne Road, Folkestone.
Mr. Albert Harman, Norden, Lympne.
Miss Joyce Harman, Norden, Lympne.
Mrs. A. W. Howard.
Sister Geraldine, Marist Convent, Hythe.
Miss E. Hotchkiss, 9, Wiltie Gardens, Folkestone.
Christine Ann Gardner (cadet), 23, Charles Crescent, Folkestone.
Miss W. M. Keens, Clewer, Cooling Lane, Folkestone.
Mrs. G. Laws, 20, Wear Bay Crescent, Folkestone.
Mr. and Mrs. K. Long, 14, Seabrook Road, Hythe.
Miss Betty Lunn, Yew Tree Cottage, Radnor Cliff Crescent, Folkestone.
Miss Manning, 77, Morehall Avenue, Folkestone.
Mr. R. R. Minikin, 86, Cheriton Road, Folkestone.
Miss D. Osborne, 9, Varne Road, Folkestone.
Miss E. Ratcliffe, Ingleside, Pay Street, Hawkinge.
Miss E. Steed, 7, Claremont Road, Folkestone.
Miss F. Steed, 7, Claremont Road, Folkestone.
Mrs. Stokes, 18, Clifton Gardens, Folkestone.
Miss Vost, 22, Queen Street, Folkestone.
Mrs. H. A. Wheeler, 10, Turketel Road, Folkestone.
Mrs. G. Plim, Hayter, St. Leonards Road, Hythe.

(Included in the above are several names of members who were omitted by mistake from the previous list).

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Mr. R. Casey, F.G.S., Reading University.
Mrs. D. G. Harris (Life member), Wootton, Elmstead Lane, Chislehurst.
Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Howard, 6, Charlotte Street, Folkestone.
Mrs. R. E. Hore, 32, Westbourne Gardens, Folkestone.
Miss J. Halls, 16, Boscombe Road, Folkestone.
Commander and Mrs. de Spon, 29, Millfield, Folkestone.
Miss V. Lee, 1, The Crescent, Sandgate.
Mrs. Constance Parker, 16, Radnor Park Road, Folkestone.
Miss B. Washer, 63, Shorncliffe Crescent, Folkestone.

HON. AUDITOR

Mr. J. R. Parkes, 7, Guildhall Street, Folkestone.

LOSSES BY DEATH

Jack Eltham.
Mr. Charles Richardson.

AFFILIATED SCHOOL

The Marist Convent, Hythe.

RESIGNATIONS

V. Dacombe.
Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Gilbert.
Mrs. Leakey.
Mr. H. E. Philpott.
Mr. F. Wise.



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