

SOMERSET RARE PLANTS GROUP

Recording all plants growing wild in Somerset, not just the rarities



Meeting Report



The Church of St Margaret's Tintinhull Photo © Steve Parker

Sunday 18th September 2022 Tintinhull VC5

Leader: Steve Parker

Report: Steve Parker

On a bright and sunny day five members of the Somerset Rare Plants Group gathered by the entrance to the National Trust gardens in Tintinhull for a day recording in and around this small village.

The recording target for the meeting was to focus on updating records for ST4919; this monad had previously been recorded in August 2017 by John Poingdestre.

Since 2000 over 200 taxa have been recorded in the one km square, so it was sure to have a wide range of fascinating plants to find.

Our first interesting plants were found by the community tennis courts. Here under planted trees, there was a small patch of Lesser Caucasian-stonecrop (*Phedimus stoloniferus*). This is an uncommon garden escape in Somerset and on entering the data on to Mapmate after the meeting this was found to be the 5th record for VC5.



Phedimus stoloniferus growing under trees Photo © Fred Rumsey

Moving from the sports fields and play areas we followed a footpath to the church, where along the narrow path there was a well-established population of Yellow-flowered Strawberry (*Potentilla indica*).



Potentilla indica fruit by footpath to the church Photo © Fred Rumsey

The path then led us into the grounds of St Margaret's, the churchyard had some interesting neutral grassland with Hoary Plantain (*Plantago media*), Rough Hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus*), Oxeye Daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), Common Bird's-foot-trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) and Burnet-saxifrage (*Pimpinella saxifrage*). Diligent searching by Ellen resulted in the discovery of Spreading Meadow-grass (*Poa humilis*).



Ellen and Helena in church yard Photo © Steve Parker

Sowbread (*Cyclamen hederifolium*) was well naturalised around the graves, while over the wall a few plants of Argentinian Vervain (*Verbena bonariensis*) were flowering along the road edge. This garden plant is frequently naturalised in villages and towns.



Plantain in churchyard Photo © Fred Rumsey

Leaving the village, the party followed that footpath past Tintinhull Court then along the field margins of a series of arable fields, here and there were a few spikes of Meadow Brome (*Bromus commutatus*). The corner of one field that had recently been cropped supported a large patch of Corn Mint (*Mentha arvensis*) with a few remnants of a previous year's potato crop (*Solanum tuberosum*) and a few heads of Alsike Clover (*Trifolium hybridum*).



Mentha arvensis corner of arable field Photo © Helena Crouch

Overhanging the footpath of a maize field there were about forty or so large and mature Small-leaved Elm (*Ulmus minor*), this species had not been recorded from this 10km square.



Large Elm trees beside footpath Photo © Steve Parker

We headed towards a large White Willow (*Salix alba*) thinking this could be a good spot to sit down and enjoy lunch. Sitting by the path watched as two Clouded Yellow butterflies (*Colias croceus*) enjoyed the late summer sun.

A short length of ditch on the OS map promised the possibility of a few wetland species. Peering over the fringing vegetation it was quickly evident that the watercourse was completely covered in Parrot's-feather (*Myriophyllum aquaticum*) an invasive non-

native species This also turned out to be a less welcome 10km record.

What open water could be seen had also Common Duckweed (*Lemna minor*) and a few plants of Square-stalked St John's-wort (*Hypericum tetrapterum*). Helena scrambled along the edge of the pond and found a large specimen of Red-osier Dogwood (*Cornus sericea*) which had been planted by the ditch.

Continuing to follow the public footpath and with advice of some local residents we made our way to road leading back to the village. Planted along this road were some youngish specimens of Small-leaved Lime (*Tilia cordata*). Close to the end of the walk we navigated our way through a modern housing estate. A single specimen of Silver Ragwort (*Jacobaea maritima*) was growing as a pavement weed and close to this Helena and Fred identified the hybrid with Common Ragwort (*J. vulgaris*).



Jacobaea maritima x *vulgaris* (*J. x albescens*) Photo © Fred Rumsey

Roads in the housing estate had a few interesting alien species such New Zealand Wind-grass (*Anemanthele lessoniana*) and in the gutter there were many seedlings of Butterfly-bush (*Buddleja davidii*). The last plant of the day was Druce's Crane's-bill (*Geranium x oxonianum*) which was growing in the car parking space by the church.

At the end of the meeting, a very nice pub just down the road from the gardens was able to provide us with a much needed and refreshing cup of tea. When tallied up a total of 80 new species were added to the monad, taking the total number of taxa recorded in the monad to 282 species.