

The Botanical Section

President—W. WATSON, D.SC., A.L.S.

Committee—H. DOWNES, M.B., N. G. HADDEN, E. J. HAMLIN,
Miss I. M. ROPER, F.L.S., and H. S. THOMPSON, A.L.S.

Secretary and Treasurer—W. S. PARRY, Monkton Elm, Taunton.

THE twenty-fourth Annual Meeting was held at Taunton Castle, on 26 April 1934, Dr. Watson, President, in the chair. Fourteen other members were present. After the minutes were read and the accounts, showing a balance in hand of £7 5s. 4d., passed, the usual 10s. was voted to the upkeep of the Sharpham Moor Plot. Dr. Watson presented the Report, with some remarks on its contents, and it was adopted. He also consented to become Recorder for the County, and Mr. W. S. Parry was elected Secretary and Treasurer.

The arrangement for field days was left to the president and secretary, places suggested being Watchet, Wambrook, Cheddar and Taunton. An autumn fungus foray was also suggested. Some interesting fresh and dried specimens of plants were brought by members for inspection.

From 18–20 May the South-Western Naturalists' Union held its Annual Conference at Bath. Eight members of our Botanical Section attended the meeting on the 20th at Silbury Hill, Wilts., where *Saxifraga granulata* was found in small quantity, with plenty of the blue *Polygala calcarea*. Mr. H. St. George Gray gave an interesting address on this immense artificial mound and its relation to the Stone Circles at Avebury, afterwards conducting the party round Avebury and explaining its main features. Members are again reminded that the Section is affiliated to the Union; and it is hoped that some will attend the 1935 Conference to be held at Ilfracombe, 7–10 June.

A glorious day brought thirty-nine members and friends to the meeting-place at Watchet, on 7 June. An interesting walk across fields and along the cliff edge resulted in the finding of

two specimens of the rare Fly Orchid; the Butterfly Orchid (*Habenaria virescens*) was seen in quantity, and the Burnet Rose (*R. spinosissima*) caused much interest to members who had not seen it before. The local Grass-leaved Vetch (*Lathyrus Nissolia*) was also seen.

After a rather wet and unpleasant morning on 26 June, only eight members met at Cheddar. During a walk along the north slope and then back by the Gorge most of the plants in flower at that period were seen. They included *Cardamine impatiens* in several places and abundance of *Galium sylvestre*.

On 5 July twenty-two members and friends met at Wam-brook, near Chard, and spent the time searching the bog on Bewley Down, where the flora typical of that habitat was observed, including the three species of *Drosera* and *Rynchospora alba*. The party was afterwards entertained to tea by Miss Beviss, to whom a hearty vote of thanks was passed for her hospitality. Many interesting flowers in her garden were then shown to the party.

Ten members met at Taunton on 12 July and examined the river where some interesting plants were pointed out by Dr. Watson. But after half-an-hour a terrific thunderstorm came on, soaked most of the party and caused the meeting to be abandoned. Only four members were dry enough to partake of the tea kindly provided by Dr. and Mrs. Watson.

On 28 July Mr. Hadden led a group of twelve to see the many uncommon plants around Bossington. Several kinds of Mints were seen, including some hybrids; but except on the flats most of the plants were dried up after the long drought. After tea Miss Ellen kindly invited members to look at her specimens of dried plants mostly from the immediate neighbourhood.

The proposed fungus foray in October had to be abandoned, as last year, owing to the very dry conditions.

Dr. Watson reports on the late flowering of many plants owing to mild and open weather. On 20 November 1934 he noticed the following flowering at Uphill: *Geranium pyrenaicum*, Herb Robert, Cow Parsnip, Hedge Beaked Parsley, Stone Parsley (*Sison*), Small Scabious, Yarrow, Knapweed, Scentless Mayweed, Spear-thistle, Musk-thistle, Sow-thistle, Oxtongue, *Crepis virens*, Mouse-ear-Hawkweed, Calamint, and False Oat

grass. Mr. Hamlin comments on the remarkable occurrence of flowers and ripe fruits of whortleberry on the Quantocks till the end of the year.

Spartina Townsendii is still extending further westward and southward, as on the bank of the River Brue near Burnham, and at Steart ; it also occurs in Sand Bay.

Mr. H. S. Thompson has continued his observations on the always changing vegetation at Berrow Marsh, and on the 'strand' zone below the sandhills which is now only separated by a narrow strip of clean sand (4 to 5 yds. wide) from the edge of the salt marsh. On 10 October he noticed on the muddy marsh a large clump of *Juncus maritimus* with at least fifty spikes.

Sharpham Moor Plot. As no flowering spikes of *Carex evoluta* were seen in either 1933 or 1934, but a continued extension of vegetative shoots, a thorough but discriminating cutting of Alder, Willow and Birch, was done by Mr. Thompson on 25 August, after consultation with Prof. Tansley and the late Prof. Darbishire, so that more sun and light will penetrate from the south to the border of the jungle where most of the rare sedge grows. Something drastic will have to be done shortly with the ever increasing and encroaching *Molinia* grass, which continues to oust some of the smaller herbaceous plants in the front portion where the peat has never been cut.

The sudden death on 17 October of Prof. O. V. Darbishire came as a great shock to his many friends. He had held the Chair of Botany at Bristol University since 1919, and at the time of his death he was President of the South-Western Naturalists' Union. He was chiefly interested in Lichens and marine Algae, but was ever ready to advise and help in other branches of botany.

The following notes refer to some of the more interesting plants observed during 1934. * New to the division.

Barbarea intermedia Bor. (6)* Longlie Common near Whites-taunton and Bishopswood. That previously recorded from Taunton is *B. vulgaris* var. *transiens* Druce. W. W.

Sisymbrium Thalianum Gay. (3) On a wall-top at Volis Hill near Taunton ; hundreds of plants with plenty of flowers on 2 November 1934. W. W.

- Brassica Napus* L. (2) Watchet. *W. W.*
- Reseda alba* L. (3)* Railway bank, Taunton. Probably brought with the material used for widening the embankment. New to V.C. 5. *W. S. Parry*. A casual not yet naturalized.
- Viola Riviniana* Reichb. var. *memorosa* Neum. (3) Wiveliscombe.
- Sagina procumbens* L. with double flowers, (9) Cleeve Combe, 5 June. *W. W.*
- Melilotus indica* All. (3) Garden weed, Bridgwater. *H. Corder*. A casual alien.
- Ononis repens* L. var. *horrida* Lange. (3) Badger Street, near Taunton. Another inland station for this variety. *W. W.*
- Trifolium repens* L. var. *rubescens* Ser. The plant recorded from Greenaleigh Point, near Minehead, has been grown in Dr. Watson's garden and has produced the rubescent flowers characteristic of the variety.
- Vicia gracilis* Lois. is rare in the Taunton district. Another station was noted near Smoky in Staplegrove (3). *W. W.*
- Rosa rubiginosa* L. The type plant occurs at Badger Street near Taunton (3). Most plants of this group in the Taunton district belong to *R. micrantha* Sm. *W. W.*
- Cotyledon umbilicus* L. is usually a plant of siliceous rocks, but occurs at Wambrook (6) on a calcareous wall and in slight depressions of almost vertical faces of Carboniferous Limestone cliffs in Cleeve Combe (9). *W. W.* It certainly prefers siliceous rock, and perhaps White's comment 'common and well distributed throughout N. Somerset and the Bristol district' is slightly misleading. *H. S. T.*
- Epilobium hirsutum* L. *flore albo*. (9) Near Congresbury. *W. W.*; about a mile towards Weston-super-Mare. *W. W.*
- Senecio viscosus* L. (3) Railway bank, Taunton. *W. S. P.* It is increasing rapidly in S.W. England and S. Wales.
- Lactuca Serriola* L. (3) New to the County, but a casual. Railway banks, Taunton. *W. W.* What was probably this plant was recorded as *L. viride* in 1924.
- Leontodon taraxacoides* Lacaita (*L. hirtum* L.) var. *lasiolaenum* Druce. (8 and 9) Sand dunes, Burnham, Berrow and Brean. This appears to have become more frequent than when first

- noted (before 1918). It is sometimes mixed with the type (with glabrous involucre). *W. W.*
- Armeria maritima* Willd. (2) Greenaleigh Point. *W. W.*
Also noted there by the late H. H. Slater in his copy of Murray's *Flora*.
- Verbascum pulverulentum* Vill. On the G.W.R. near Taunton.
A casual. See note by Dr. Watson in *Journ. Bot.* (1934), 351. 'Introduced plants in Somerset.'
- Linaria dalmatica*. A casual on the G.W.R. near Taunton.
W. S. Parry.
- Veronica Chamedrys* L. *flore albo*. (3) Adcombe near Taunton.
W. W.
- Chenopodium rubrum* L. var. *pseudo-botryoides* Wats. (9) Near Blagdon Reservoir. *H. Corder* (teste *W. W.*). The small form often so named appears in great numbers after drought at Blagdon and other reservoirs in N. Somerset. The late J. W. White says of this polymorphic plant, 'These diminutive specimens may come under the var. *pseudo-botryoides* Wats., which seems to be only a dwarf state due to deficient nutriment. Dr. Bromfield stated (*Phytol.* iii, 751) that its seeds, when sown in a garden, produced the typical erect form of this species.' *H. S. T.*
- Neottia Nidus-avis* Rich. (3) Higher Blagdon. *W. W.*
- Orchis maculata* L. var. *O'Kellyi* Druce. A similar plant (with pure white flowers and unspotted leaves) to the Thurlbear plant collected in 1929 was found near Norton Manor (3).
W. W.
- Carex divulsa* Stokes. (6) Linnington. *W. W.*
- Panicum sanguinale* L. This grass, which is found in most countries of the world, appeared as a casual in the garden of Miss Miller at Burnham and of Mr. Corder at Bridgwater.
- Setaria viridis* Beauv. A casual in Mr. Parry's garden at Monkton Elm.
- Cynodon Dactylon* Pers. An abundant crop of this grass appeared at Burnham. *Miss A. Miller*. Another cosmopolitan grass, long established at Penzance; but the cause of its occurrence at Burnham will be interesting to hear.
H. S. T.

CRYPTOGAMS

A great deal of work has been done with the cryptogams, especially with the lichens, Dr. Watson and Mr. D. A. Jones having spent some time in the investigation of the rocks and trees in the neighbourhood of Weston-super-Mare and Yatton. A club-shaped fungus of a beautiful bluish-green colour sent by Miss Batchelor from Combe Florey was *Geoglossum viride* Pers., one of the Ascomycetes. Mrs. Watson noticed greyish-white fungoid growth of a double cone-like form on the stems of grasses. However, it was not a fungus but *Mucilago* (*Sporaria*) *spongiosa* Morg., a member of the Mycetozoa, the curious group of organisms which combine some animal-like characters with a sporal method of reproduction similar to that of the fungi.

In the following list numerals indicate the botanical vice-counties, 5 referring to the portion west of the Parret and 6 to the portion east of the river. C. R. and V. C. R. respectively mean a county and a vice-county record. Unless otherwise stated they were all collected or named by Dr. Watson and Mr. Jones.

BRYOPHYTES

Webera albicans Schp. is not infrequent, in wet places throughout the county, but at Watchet it has a peculiar habitat and habit; it grows in a rivulet on calcareous soil and is encrusted with calcareous matter.

Pylaisia polyantha B. & S., Culbone Wood (5, W. R. Sherrin).
C.R.

Marchesinia mackaii Gray, Cleeve Combe (6).

Ricciocarpus natans Corda, Shapwick (6).

Anthoceros husnoti Steph., Shapwick (6). V.C.R.

LICHENS

Usnea ceratina var. *incurviscens* Arn., Hunstrete Wood (6).
V.C.R.

Parmeliopsis ambigua Nyl., on beech, Cleeve Combe. C.R.

Lecanora agardhiana Arch., Purn Hill (6).

L. sambuci Nyl. and *L. urbana* Nyl., Uphill (6).

- L. effusa* Ach., Seven Ash, etc. (5), Uphill (6). C.R.
Aspicilia prevostii Th. Fr., Purn Hill and Uphill (6).
Biatora micrococca Krb., Cleeve Combe (6). V.C.R.
B. metzleri Krb., Purn Hill (6).
Lecidea subsequens Nyl., Uphill (6). C.R.
L. jurana Schaer., Goblin Combe (6).
L. albocoerulescens Ach., Blagdon (5).
L. latypha Ach., Ashton Court (6). V.C.R.
Biatorella campestris Th. Fr., Clevedon (6). V.C.R.
Biatorina episema A.L.Sm. and *B. lenticularis* var. *erubescens*
 Krb., Purn Hill (6).
Toninia syncomista Th. Fr., Cleeve Combe (6). C.R.
T. squamulosa Mudd, Crowcombe and Merridge (5). V.C.R.
Bilimbia albidocarnea var. *alborubella* A.L.Sm., Cleeve Combe
 (6), C.R., var. *albovirella* A.L.Sm., Brean Down (6). C.R.
B. cuprea Mass., Purn Hill (6). C.R.
B. naegelii Anzi, Uphill (6). V.C.R.
Placodium pusillum var. *tegulare* Oliv., and *Callopisma epixanthum*
 Mudd, Uphill.
C. lacteum (Mass.), Cleeve Combe, Purn Hill and Uphill (6). C.R.
C. tetrastichum (Nyl.), Purn Hill. *C. cerinellum* (Nyl.), Uphill.
Rhizocarpon alboatrum var. *venustum* A.L.Sm., Purn Hill (6).
 C.R.
Diploschistes gypsaceus Zahl., Cheddar.
Gyalecta truncigena Hepp, and *G. carneolutea* Boist. (a saxicolous
 form) at Cleeve Combe (6). C.R.
Crocynia finkii B. de Lesd., Goblin Combe (6). C.R.
Cladonia foliacea var. *convoluta* Wain., Purn Hill.
Baeomyces roseus Pers., Black Down (6). V.C.R.
Leptogium fragile Nyl., Cleeve Combe.
L. cretaceum Nyl., Purn Hill (6). C.R.
Dirina repanda Nyl., C.R. and *Arthonia gregaria* Krb., Cleeve
 Combe (6).
A. excipienda Cromb., Tetton Wood near Kingston (5).
A. aspersella Leight., Wiveliscombe (5).
Allarthonia patellulata Zahl., C. R. and *Opegrapha herpetica*
 Ach., Cleeve Combe (6). V.C.R.
O. atra form *parallela* Leight., Cleeve and Weston (6). V.C.R.
O. betulina Sm. and *O. saxicola* var. *persoonii* Stiz., Uphill. C.R.

Chaenotheca melanophaea var. *flavocitrina* Paulson, Cleeve. C.R.
Normandina pulchella Cromb., *Leptorhaphis carrollii* A.L.Sm.,
Porina leptalea A.L.Sm., and *P. olivacea* A.L.Sm. all V.C.R.,
 Cleeve Combe (6).

Lecidea aglaea Somm. The plant previously recorded from
 St. Audries (5) as a form of this is a form of *L. sylvivola* var.
infidula Cromb. *Cladonia symphycarpia* Arn. must be
 deleted from Somerset lists as Hebden's determination was
 incorrect, the plant referred to the above being *C. caespiti-*
ticia Flk.

The following articles and notes referring to Somerset botany
 or written by our members are among those published in 1934.

W. Watson. 'Flowering-time and its evolutionary signifi-
 cance.' A paper given at the Linnean Society, 4 January 1934,
 and summarized in the *Proceedings*. 'Introduced Plants in
 Somerset,' *Journ. of Bot.*, 1934, 350. 'Sisymbrium Thalianum
 flowering in November,' (*idem*).

I. M. Roper. 'South-Western Naturalists' Union Con-
 ference,' *Journ. of Bot.*, 1934, 208.

H. S. Thompson. '*Myosotis sylvatica* in N. Somerset,'
Journ. of Bot., 1934, 320. For 'in a shoot of *M. sylvestris*'
 (line 1 of par. 2) read 'in a sheet of *M. sylvatica*'.

The Fiftieth Annual Report of the Watson Bot. Exch. Club,
 1934, edited by H. S. Thompson, contains a brief history of the
 Club since 1884. The Club has now ceased to exist, but most
 of its members belonged to the larger Botanical Exchange Club.
 The Watson Club reports contain useful notes on a great many
 Somerset plants throughout the long series. Many of the back
 reports may be obtained *gratis* (except for postage) from Mr.
 George Goode, M.A., 63, De Freville Avenue, Cambridge.

Rose Bracher, PH.D. 'Field Studies in Ecology', 1934.
 Some of the plant communities dealt with refer to districts in
 Somerset.

A. J. Wilmott, M.A. 'Some interesting British Sorbi',
Proc. of Linn. Soc., 1933-34. In this *S. bristoliensis*, from the
 Avon Gorge and Leigh Woods, is described. It has orange
 fruit and was formerly placed under *S. latifolia* and the var.

decipiens. *S. subcuneata* is the name given to the Greenleigh plant, collected by Marshall, and others. *S. anglica* is a broader leaved red-fruited plant known from Somerset (Cheddar), and some other counties.

A. Thompson. 'New Moss Records', *J. of Bot.*, 1934, 81. *Sphagnum obesum* var. *sanguineum* Warn., *S. squarrosum* var. *spectabile* Russ., *S. fimbriatum* var. *robustum* Braith., var. *validius* and its form *compactum* Warn., all from Hodder's Combe, Quantocks; *S. auriculatum* var. *canovirescens* Warn., from Hopcott Hill, Minehead. All given as new vice-county records for v.c. 5.