

FLOWERING PLANTS AND FERNS – 2004

Colin R. Pope

Since the publication of *The Flora*, good finds continue to be made. This is a personal selection of the more interesting records made during 2004 with an emphasis upon new sites for our rarest or not recently recorded species, and alien species which appear to be increasing naturally. It is not comprehensive; many more species records have been added to the database. In particular, many alien species, particularly casual records, have not been included here. This report includes records which add significantly to the information already published in *The Flora*.

The abbreviations used at the start of the accounts are:

N. Native; C. Casual Alien; E. Established Alien; and [] Extinct .

Adder's-tongue (*Ophioglossum vulgatum*)

N. A relict population of around 100 fronds found in a patch of turf around 1 metre square outside the south block at St Mary's hospital, Newport. 4990, PS.

Southern Polypody (*Polypodium cambricum*)

N. A single plant of this, the rarest of our Polypody ferns, at Carisbrooke Castle on the wall of the donkey house building, with *P. interjectum*. 4887, PS.

Marsh Fern (*Thelypteris palustris*)

N. Frequent in very wet willow carr at Langbridge marsh, Newchurch 5686, CP. This is a historic site which was last visited in 1972, by Bill Shepard and Reg Kettell.

Black Spleenwort (*Asplenium adiantum-nigrum*)

N. A single plant on scrub-shaded south facing chalk bank at Idlecombe Down. This is a most unusual location for this fern on the Island. 4585, AM.

Mousetail (*Myosurus minimus*)

N. Recorded from two sites where it has not been seen for well over one hundred years. A few plants in a muddy gate entrance at Week Farm, Whitwell 5378, CP. Two plants in a trampled gateway at Hamstead Farm 4091, RL.

Rough Poppy (*Papaver hybridum*)

N. A 'new' site for this arable plant. About 30 plants in a set aside field near Dog Kennel cottage, Thorley. 3788, PS.

Prickly Poppy (*Papaver argemone*)

N. A good year for this scarce poppy. Several plants at Lake Allotments 5883, BSBI. In addition, PS recorded this plant from several 'newly recorded' sites: Field off Strawberry Lane, Mottistone 4184 with *Filago vulgaris*; arable field at Billingham, Kingston 4881; new area of land at Bowcombe 4687; and a set-aside field off Sandy Lane, Heath Hill, Shorwell 4682.

Upright Chickweed (*Moenchia erecta*)

N. A good year for this species. It was recorded from several 'new' sites by PS: Gore Down 4977; Castle Hill, Mottistone 4183; by the track to plantation at Mottistone Down 4084; and on the old raised seawall at Bexley Point, Carpenters, St Helen's 6187.

Annual Knawel (*Scleranthus annuus*)

N. It was encouraging to receive reports of this rare species from two previously unrecorded stations. Frequent in arable field near Sainham Farm, Godshill 5281, GT; field below Burnt House Lane, Alverstone 5885 GT.

Night-flowered Catchfly (*Siliene noctiflora*)

N. Another set of welcome records; this plant has not been confirmed from the Island since 1990. Single plant in maize pheasant crop at Rowborough Bottom, Rowborough valley 4584, SB; about 5 plants in field margin near Dog Kennel Cottage, Thorley 3788, PS/MB.

Amphibious Bistort (*Persicaria amphibian*)

N. Recorded from two new bodies of water in the Brighstone area, which is now the Island stronghold for this species. At Limerstone Farm reservoir and Waytes Court Farm reservoir, Broad Lane, abundant in the latter. Both 4382, DD.

Hybrid knotweed (*Fallopia x bohémica*)

E. A first Island record for this hybrid, recorded during the BSBI weekend. A large clump at Sandown by the A3055 roadside 5984, PG.

[Rock Sea-lavender (*Limonium binervosum* ssp. *binervosum*)

N. We now have absolute proof that Rock Sea-lavender did grow on the chalk cliffs at the Needles headland. A herbarium sheet labelled 'Downs near Freshwater, I.W. July 1889' ex Hb Leslie Beeching Hall BM shows two good flowering specimens (**Fig. 1**). L.B. Hall was only 14 years old when he collected this material. It has come to light through FR, who determined the material to subspecific level. Sssp. *binervosum* was to be expected as this subspecies is the same as the nearest population geographically, on the Sussex chalk cliffs at Cuckmere.]

Hybrid Violet (*Viola x intersita*)

N. Several robust plants on a bank behind a bunker at Porchfield Ranges were determined as the hybrid by Alan Silverside. A first record for this fertile hybrid, which forms readily when the two parents, *Viola canina* and *V. riviniana*, come into contact. 4490, BSBI. Fortunately, pure Heath Dog-violet still survives elsewhere on the Ranges meadows.

New Zealand Bitter-cress (*Cardamine corymbosa*)

E. Ventnor Botanic Gardens 5476 naturalised in gravel; and at a garden centre at Freshwater, 3487, PS. These are our first records for this alien species which seems to be inadvertently spread by the nursery trade.

Danish Scurvygrass (*Cochlearia danica*)

N/E? Spreading on main road verges at Cowes and particularly at East Cowes through to The Racecourse, CP. These plants must have arisen from seed transferred on vehicle tyres from mainland traffic, rather than from local stock. It has taken many years for Danish Scurvygrass to become established on Island road verges, although it is now commonplace on main highways on the mainland. Other saltmarsh species may start to appear in these verge communities and are worth looking out for.

Chaffweed (*Anagallis minima*)

N. An exciting new Island site for this very rare plant. Found in some quantity in a damp ditch alongside a public footpath at Grammars Common, Brighstone 4183, PS. It was found growing with *Isolepis setacea* and *Carex viridula* ssp. *oedocarpa*.



v. 10

Limonium binervosum (G. E. Smith) C. E. Salmon

Herb. - N. D. SIMPSON. 453399

Ex Herb. L. B. Hall. v. - c. 10.

Statice auriculacifolia

a. occidentalis (Lloyd)

Downs near Freshwater, I. W.

July, 1889.

POISONED.

Fig. 1 Herbarium sheet of *Limonium binervosum*
'Downs near Freshwater, I.W. July 1889' British Museum

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Rue-leaved Saxifrage (*Saxifrage tridactylites*)

N. A new site at Carisbrooke, although close to a known extant site. About 100 plants on the first floor roof of the Eight Bells public house 4888, PS.

Spring Vetch (*Vicia lathyroides*)

N. A new Island site for this scarce plant. Four plants in dry, sandy grassland on top of the hill at Stenbury Down 5379, AC.

Narrow-leaved Everlasting-pea (*Lathyrus sylvestris*)

N. A new site at Puckaster Bay landslip; several plants in bracken/bramble scrub. 5175, SC.

White Melilot (*Melilotus albus*)

E. Abundant in a field to the south of Limerstone 4482, MB. It was subsequently reported from nearby Samber Hill 4581, TT.

Water-purslane (*Lythrum portula*)

N. Found on Mottistone Common in a pool on the main track. First modern record from this site. 4084, CP.

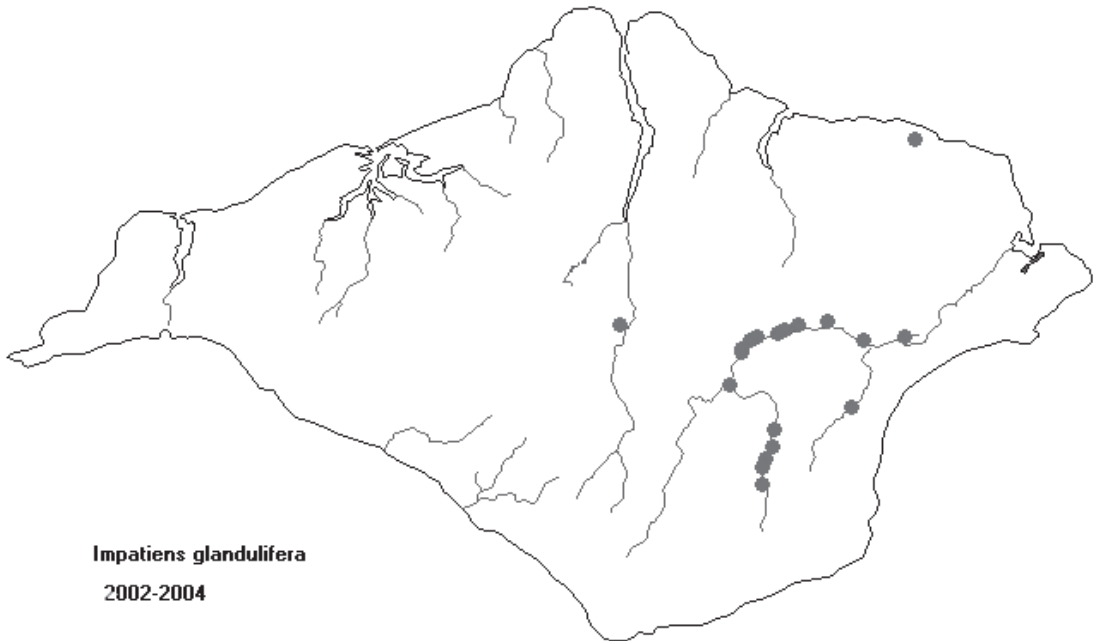


Fig. 2 Map of distribution of *Impatiens glandulifera* 2002-2004

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Pale Willowherb (*Epilobium roseum*)

N. This, the scarcest of our willowherbs of disturbed ground, was recorded from flower beds in Ventnor Park 5577, EC.

Indian Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*)

E. This plant now appears to be establishing itself in suitable places along the banks of the Eastern Yar, and some of its tributaries (**Fig 2**). Evidence suggests that the plants may have originated from one or more introduced populations in the headwaters of the River Yar catchment. AM/JR/DD.

Bur Chervil (*Anthriscus caucalis*)

N. Found in an area of the Island where it has not been recorded since Bromfield's time. Growing on the roadside at Presford Farm, Sandy Way, Shorwell 4682, and in localised patches at Bucks Farm, Sandy Lane, Shorwell 4781. Both PS.

False Alkanet (*Cynoglossis barrelieri*)

C. Persisting in a long-deserted garden at Sandrock Springs, Blackgang 4976, PG. A new Island record for this alien species.

Fly Honeysuckle (*Lonicera xylosteum*)

C. Growing in woodland near Little Hermitage, St Catherine's Down, 4978, JW. A first Island record for this alien species.

Hairy-fruited Cornsalad (*Valerianella eriocarpa*)

N. A new site was discovered this year for this extremely localised, rare plant at Brook Down chalk pit 3985, PS. The plants were growing in a small, discreet area of parched grassland on a sunny ridge. 2004 was a good year for this species. There were very large populations at Afton Down and Culver cliff-top, comprising many hundreds of plants, BSBI.

Meadow Thistle (*Cirsium dissectum*)

N. Confirmed as still present, but heavily grazed, at Bohemia Bog 5183, GT. This was a historic site, originally reported by Robin Attrill.

German-ivy (*Delairea odorata* (*Senecio milkanoides*))

E. A first record of this alien species which will continue to spread if winters remain benign; it flowers very late in the season. Spreading from a garden at Gully Road, Seaview, into surrounding secondary woodland 6391, DB (conf. EJC). The plant was originally brought to this garden from Guernsey. Also present in small quantity in Gully Road, 6390, MB.

Bristle Club-rush (*Isolepis setacea*)

N. Present in remarkable quantity and luxuriance in a ditch in Combley Great Wood 5489, CP.

Cyperus Sedge (*Carex pseudocyperis*)

N. Recorded from two new sites this year: Langbridge marsh, Newchurch, 5686, where there were just two clumps CP/BS/SB; present in a triangular field between Redhill Lane and stream, near Godshill Park Farm 5481, GT.

Lesser Quaking-grass (*Briza minor*)

N. A new site for this arable plant and the first modern record from the south of the Island. Several hundred plants found growing in a roadside field margin at Stenbury, near Whitwell 5279, GT.

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Whorl-grass (*Catabrosa aquatica*)

N. Several records this year for the under-recorded but uncommon wetland grass. Bohemia Bog 5183, GT; small valley west of Moor Farm, Godshill 5282/5382, GT; Hill Farm, Newchurch 5685, GT; and tributaries between Nettlecombe and Stenbury, draining into the Yar 5277/5278, CP.

Drooping Brome (*Anisantha tectorum*)

C. Re-seeded area at St Mary's Hospital, about 20 plants near the education centre 4990, PS. This casual has only been recorded once previously from the Island, in 1858 in a grass crop at Bembridge.

White Helleborine (*Cephalanthera damasonium*)

N. This orchid had a remarkably good year at Ventnor. There were around 180 flowering plants beneath Holm Oak on St Boniface Down, the highest count ever made here. 5678, AB.

Broad-leaved Helleborine (*Epipactis helleborine*)

N. Recorded from an unexpected site. There were at least 20 flowering plants beneath Poplar shelterbelts around greenhouses at Great Budbridge 5283, IB.

Bird's-nest Orchid (*Neottia nidus-avis*)

N. A single spike was found in woodland below the Wishing Seat, at Bonchurch Landslip 5878, JS. This is the first modern record from here.

Recorders

AB	Andy Butler	IB	Ian Boyd
AC	Anne Campbell	JR	John Ralph
AM	Anne Marston	JS	Jonathon Simons
BSBI	BSBI weekend	JW	Jan Wyers
CP	Colin Pope	MB	Margaret Burnhill
DB	David Biggs	PG	Paul Green
DD	Dave Dana	PS	Paul Stanley
EC	Eric Clements	RL	Robin Lang
FR	Fred Rumsey	SC	Simon Colenutt
GT	Geoff Toone	TT	Tony Tutton

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Night-flowered Catchfly (*Silene noctiflora*) in a bean crop at Thorley. The first confirmed sighting of this scarce arable plant since 1994. *Photo Colin Pope*



The first Island record for the rare violet coral fungus, *Clavaria zollingeri*, at Northwood Cemetery growing with the crimson waxcap, *Hygrocybe punicea*. Both are indicators of old, unimproved grassland. *Photo Colin Pope*