

Friends of Earlham Cemetery

ISSUE **16**March 2021



Contribute:

This newsletter is sent out four times a year, seasonally. If you would like to submit an article, photo or sighting to the newsletter, please send all submissions to alysia.schuetzle@gmail.com, with photos at 300 dpi where possible.

You are receiving this newsletter as part of your membership of the Friends of Earlham Cemetery Group. If you wish to cancel your membership, please contact

Welcome

This is issue sixteen of the newsletter for the Friends of Earlham Cemetery.

I hope everyone is staying safe and well. Spring is arriving, and it seems that there may be some light at the end of the tunnel in terms of the Covid-19 situation and lockdown - perhaps we will all meet again later this year!

Gary and I have recently moved to Wroxham, and so sadly have been unable to visit the cemetery whilst in lockdown. We are very much looking forward to being able to get back to spotting all the wonderful creatures and plants that call it home, as I expect anyone else who hasn't been able to visit is too.

In the meantime, Ian's snowdrop article on page eleven will keep us all busy trying to identify wild snowdrops no matter the location, and Vanna's excellent summary of 2020 finds on page three will have to tide us over until we can get back in the cemetery.

We've also received a lovely submission from someone who isn't a member of the group, but who has been inspired by her walks in the cemetery - Molly Potter. Her lovely poem is on page ten.

Lastly, there are some important notices on the following page - please do read those and send any responses to friendsofearlhamcemetery@yahoo.co.uk.

Alysia Schuetzle

Important Notices

Important COVID-19 (Coronavirus) update

ALL WALKS AND EVENTS ARE CANCELLED UNTIL AT LEAST MAY 2021.

All committee members and officers will continue in their roles until we are able to hold an Annual General Meeting.

We aim to reschedule as many 2020 events as possible for later in 2021. The July 2020 joint meeting with Norfolk & Norwich Naturalists' Society (NNNS) has been rescheduled:

Sunday 11th July 2021 - (10am) - Insects

Joint event with Norfolk & Norwich Naturalists' Society (NNNS).

But please check on the website before attending, in case of further changes.

WANTED: New commitee members

Vanna and I are planning to stand down from the committee at our next AGM, in early 2022.

We will therefore need a new Secretary and Treasurer for our group.

We have both been on the committee since it was set up in 2013 and have been active in the group since 2012. We feel it is time for some new blood and new ideas to carry our group forward.

As Secretary I currently organise walks and events, answer queries (via the website), administer grant applications, and (along with other committee members, principally Ian Senior) liaise with Norwich City Council and Norfolk Wildlife Trust about Cemetery management. I think the work of Secretary could easily be split into two or three parts, to lessen the workload.

The Treasurer maintains details of membership and administers the group's finance (membership fees, occasional outgoings and grant money).

Please let me know if you're interested in taking on any of these roles.

Jeremy Bartlett



New Invertebrates Vanna Bartlett

Circumstances in 2020 dictated that my visits to the Cemetery during the year were infrequent and brief. Despite this, I was still able to add a few more species to the invertebrate lists.

Moths

The large and striking Box Moth *Cydalima perspectalis* is actually a micro moth, belonging to the Crambidae. It is an introduced species, originating in Asia and was first recorded in the UK in 2007. Its larvae feed on Box and where there are large numbers bushes can be completely defoliated, earning it pest status in some areas. It is now well-established in parts of the country and spreading. It was probably introduced with imported Box plants but as it is present in Europe it may also be a migrant. They are certainly powerful flyers, shooting off rapidly when disturbed during the day, like the one I spotted.



Yellow-legged Clearwing on Canadian Goldenrod

The clearwing moths are unusual looking species and resemble wasps or sawflies. Although they are day-fliers they are seldom seen. In recent years pheromone lures have been developed to attract them and they have been found to be more common and widespread than previously thought. I was lucky to see a Yellow-legged Clearwing visiting Canadian Goldenrod.



Synophropsis lauri, beaten from Laurel

Bugs

One of the most exciting finds was a single specimen of *Synophropsis lauri*, beaten from Laurel when I was searching for ladybirds. This species hails from the Mediterranean region but has been slowly spreading north through Europe and was first reported in the UK in 2007. It feeds on evergreen broadleaved trees and shrubs, particularly Laurel and Ivy and has also been recorded on Olive trees in Turkey. My sighting was the first reported record for Norfolk at the time.

Another colonist from Europe is *Orsillus depressus*, a member of the Lygaeidae. First recorded in the late 1980s, it is now established in the south and east of England where it is usually associated with Lawson's Cypress. I found three of them on gravestones by Western Red Cedars when out doing a ladybird survey in February and again in December.



New Invertebrates

Vanna Bartlett

My ladybird surveys are in fact one of the best ways in which to find other invertebrates, especially when it comes to beating. The hunt for pine specialists yielded the beautiful *Pilophorus cinnamopterus*, a Mirid bug that feeds on aphids.

I regularly search Ivy throughout the year — on sunny days in spring it reveals all sorts of insects that have hibernated under its cover and when the flowers are out in autumn it is a last nectar source before winter. It is worth a look at other times of the year too. In July I spotted several rather small Mirid bugs that I managed to photograph and then identify as *Campyloneura virgula*. Although it is common and widespread, this was my first record of the species, probably overlooked before due to its small size. Whilst females are commonly recorded males are exceedingly rare, leading to the possibility that they reproduce parthenogenetically.



The diminutive Scymnus suturalis in the net with a Harlequin Ladybird.







Top: Pilophorus cinnamopterus. Bottom: Campyloneura virgula.

Beetles

It is always nice to find new species of ladybird in the Cemetery and this year I made an effort to find some of the conifer specialists with a little bit of gentle beating – holding a net under an overhanging branch and then giving the branch a good tap to see what can be dislodged. In this way I found the tiny inconspicuous ladybird *Scymnus suturalis* and also the 18 Spot Ladybird.

Winter visual searching for ladybirds can be quite productive and I added another inconspicuous species to the cemetery list when I spotted a *Rhyzobius lophanthae* on a headstone under Western Red Cedars at the end of December. This is an Australian species which was first recorded in Britain in 1999. It was used as a biological control for armoured scale insects in Europe for many years and became well established around the Mediterranean. In the UK it has been gradually spreading and is usually found on Leyland Cypress, often in parks and gardens.

Rhyzobius lophanthae photographed down a microscope (it was later returned).

New Invertebrates

Vanna Bartlett

Back in July I found a couple of Jewel Beetles running around on low growing oak leaves. These beautiful shimmering green beetles proved hard to photograph and impossible to identify to species although I was able to narrow them down to *Agrilus* sp. They completely evaded my attempts to catch them and I searched in vain on subsequent visits. Hopefully I will have better luck this year.



Right: Jewel Beetle (Agrilus sp.)

Bees & Wasps

The bee list is still slowly growing with other observers adding more species. Lack of nectar/pollen sources was a severe problem this year due to increased mowing. It was very discouraging to visit the cemetery at this time as the only place with any flowers was the war memorial garden. At least here there was the heartening sight of several Clover Melitta bees (*Melitta leporina*) foraging on White Clover. I also found a new species here, *Sphecodes ephippius*, one of the so-called Blood Bees named after the red abdomen.



Sphecodes ephippius

This year I recorded my first Coelioxys species in the Cemetery. These striking black and white bees are cleptoparasites on leafcutter bees. They are tricky to identify to species at the best of times and the one I saw didn't hang about, making it impossible to say which one it was. Another species to look out for again this year, if I have the opportunity.

One bee of particular note that I found is *Hylaeus pictipes*. These small dark bees are called Yellow-face Bees from the variable amounts of yellow on their faces (reduced to spots in the females). There are nine species in Norfolk and they all look superficially similar. I first came across *Hylaeus pictipes*, otherwise known as the Little Yellow-face Bee, in 2017 when I found a female in my garden. There was only one previous Norfolk record and that was from 1879 (John Bridgman, Norwich). I have recorded it each year since, but in very low numbers so it was particularly gratifying to find four females in the Cemetery on Canadian Goldenrod. Interestingly, I also found a single male on my allotment earlier in the year.



Above: Male Coelioxys sp.



Above: Male Hylaeus pictipes. This particular one was caught on my allotment.

New Invertebrates

Vanna Bartlett



Spiders & other arachnids

A chance find in late autumn was the harvestman *Dicranopalpus larvatus*. There are at least three species of *Dicranopalpus* in Britain, all characterised by having forked pedipalps. They aren't that easy to separate into species so their distribution is a little hazy. I have seen them before on gravestones, individuals of *D. caudatus/ramosus* aggregate but the one I found in leaf litter in November seemed different. It was later identified from the photos I took as *D. larvatus*, a rare species that hails from Italy. There are only a scant handful of records for this species in the UK and this was the first for Norfolk.

I didn't get to do much spider hunting this year but searching gravestones for ladybirds (again) yielded a nice Drapetisca socialis back in February and in May I found the crab spider *Xysticus lanio* lurking on some tree foliage.

And finally, a single *Nigma walckenaeri* (pictured left) was a real delight to find. I have high hopes that there will be

more in 2021 as this looked to be a gravid female although as she was on Ivy (where I have only ever found this species) they may be doomed as Ivy is constantly being removed in the Cemetery, much to the detriment of many invertebrates.

The wasp *Astata boops* was a nice find, with a lovely male that posed on a gravestone. The female collects shieldbug nymphs to provision her nest cells with so it isn't at all surprising to discover them in the cemetery as there are plenty of shieldbugs around.

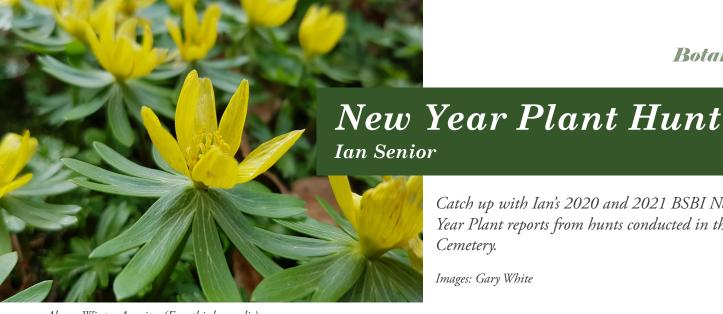
Left: Male Astata Boops Below: Dicranopalpus larvatus





Above: Drapetisca socialis on an algae covered headstone.





Catch up with Ian's 2020 and 2021 BSBI New Year Plant reports from hunts conducted in the Cemetery.

Images: Gary White

Above: Winter Aconites (Eranthis hyemalis)

rganised by the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (BSBI), the New Year Plant Hunt originally started in 2013 when a couple of botanist friends decided to go and see what was in flower on New Year's Day. Each year since, data from across the country is combined and trends are determined, adding to our scientific knowledge of what is happening to our environment as the world warms. In both 2020 and 2021, thousands of lists were generated by groups and individuals across the country and sent in to the BSBI for analysis.

2020

Our own small part in this effort took place on 4th January 2020. It was a bright morning, but not particularly cold. Usually there are only between four and six of us looking for plants, but this year we had our biggest attendance ever with twenty people turning up to help in the search. I gave a short introduction to what we were doing and why, and gave a brief overview of what we have seen in previous years. Then we set off and headed to the woody eastern section where we expected to see Winter Aconites (Eranthis hyemalis), snowdrops and maybe Cyclamen (Cyclamen hederifolium). All three were quickly found, so we were off to a flying start.

Further species were found including Common Knapweed (Centaurea nigra), which hasn't been recorded flowering at this time of year in previous hunts. It probably carried on flowering from the summer as it had not been cut down by the mowers over the autumn months.

Several of us were looking at each Holly (Ilex aquifolium) bush in the hope we could add this species to our list. It had been seen flowering in previous years, so there was a good chance for this year too. After searching a number of trees we eventually spotted some flowers along one of the main drives towards the crematorium.

As it was unlikely we'd find anything else flowering in the wooded areas, we headed to the memorial gardens. In previous years this has been a good spot to find flowering plants. It is always a risky spot though as the gardeners haunt the area with their hoes! Sure enough most of the flower beds had been hoed and few plants found, but we still found a good number of plants lurking on grave areas, under bushes and along path edges. Our tally of plants quickly increased, with Groundsel (Senecio vulgaris), Black Nightshade (Solanum nigrum), Canadian Fleabane (Conyza canadensis) and a number of other species spotted.

While not in flower, we found quite a rare plant for the cemetery, Henbit Deadnettle (Lamium amplexicaule). Normally a rare arable plant, Henbit Deadnettle can also be found in disturbed areas. We spotted it whilst walking along one of the stony paths - it looked familiar, but I wasn't sure of its identity. Luckily Janet Higgins, who is an expert botanist, had come along to the hunt and confirmed the plant as Henbit Deadnettle. We had only seen this species once before, when a new side road was constructed to a gate in the western section of the cemetery. It popped up along with various other arable weeds but has not been seen since. So it's a nice new record for the east cemetery!

After leaving the memorial gardens we ventured to the old yard area. This is a highly disturbed part of the site that regularly has tractors and other machines driving over it. It's a bit rough and ready, which is ideal for a hunt such as ours! As expected, we got a few more plants for our list including Yarrow (Achillea millefolium) and a double form of Feverfew (Tanacetum parthenium).

We now headed west towards Farrow Road as Jeremy and Vanna had spotted some plants in flower earlier in the week. More flowering plants were spotted including Wall Barley (Hordeum murinum), a common grass

New Year Plant Hunt

Ian Senior

normally flowering during early summer months.

Numbers of people still attending were now dropping as lunchtime beckoned, but we still had another hour of the search to go. The next flowers found were by the boundary fence and included two spring flowering species, Garlic Mustard (*Alliaria petiolate*) and Sweet Violet (*Viola odorata*). We also admired a few bracket fungi growing on a few of the boundary trees, before saying goodbye to a few more attendees.

There was just five of us left now and we were getting hungry too. So we started to head back towards the main gates but still had a few target species to find flowering. We normally find Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) trees in flower on these hunts so headed towards one of the native trees to check it out. En route, I discovered Field Scabious (*Knautia arvensis*) flowering on a grave, which was another good record. Once at the Hazel tree it didn't disappoint. It was covered in flowering catkins and the tiny female flowers were seen too. Another tick for the list.

Both myself and Vanna had recently seen Ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*) and hoped we could find them still flowering. After a little search we found them and they were added to the list. Time was now nearly up and we had once last target, the Turkish Hazel (*Corylus colurna*) which looks very similar to our native version. This was back near where we started, so was a good way to finish the hunt. It was found in flower and became our final find of the day. Our total for the 2020 hunt was 38 species. Thank you to all who attended!



Red Dead-nettle (Lamium purpureum)

Species name Common name Garlic Mustard Alliaria petiolata Anthriscus sylvestris Cow Parsley False Oat Grass Arrhenatherum elatius Bellis perennis Daisy Cardamine flexuosa Wavy Bitter-cress Centaurea nigra Common Knapweed Conyza canadensis Canadian Fleabane Guernsey Fleabane Conyza sumatrensis Corylus avellana Hazel Corylus colurna Turkish Hazel Smooth Hawk's-beard Crepis capillaris Cyclamen hederifolium Cyclamen Eranthis hyemalis Winter Aconite Euphorbia peplus Petty Spurge Galanthus nivalis Snowdrop Geranium robertianum Herb-Robert Geum urbanum Wood Avens Hordeum murinum Wall Barley Ilex aquifolium Holly Knautia arvensis Field Scabious Lamium album White Dead-nettle Lamium purpureum Red Dead-nettle Mercurialis annua Annual Mercury Poa annua Annual Meadow-grass Primula vulgaris Primrose Ranunculus acris Meadow Buttercup Ranunculus repens Creeping Buttercup Senecio jacobaea Common Ragwort Senecio squalidus Oxford Ragwort Senecio vulgaris Groundsel Solanum nigrum Black Nightshade Sonchus oleraceus Smooth Sow-thistle Stellaria media Common Chickweed Tanacetum parthenium Feverfew Taraxacum officinale agg. Dandelion Small Nettle Urtica urens Viola odorata Sweet Violet V. × wittrockiana Garden Violet

New Year Plant Hunt

Ian Senior

2021

The 2021 hunt was a very different affair - instead of twenty people joining in, there was just me. COVID-19 restrictions meant it simply wasn't feasible to run a proper event, but I still wanted to get data for both our own use and to contribute to the BSBI study. People up and down the country still went hunting but either alone or with close family. I did my own hunt on the 2nd January this year.

Being on your own has disadvantages. Put simply, there were only my eyes looking for flowering plants in the vast area of the cemetery. This must lead to missing some species, as I will have walked straight past them while looking the other way. Even so, I still managed to find twenty one species flowering. This is much reduced on last year, but not too bad considering!

As with all hunts we have undertaken, its not just the weather that influences which species can be found flowering. It also depends on what the cemetery staff have been up to. Last year, mowing didn't stop until mid November, which removed any late flowering species in the grassland. There has also been excessive strimming over the summer months which, again, has removed plants that could have been flowering in January. Another factor is that the old yard area was tidied up, removing yet another source of late flowers. Finally, the memorial gardens have also been hoed recently - so few plants had survived there too.

While this years New Year Plant Hunt was a lonely affair, I am hopeful that this time next year we shall be back to running walks again once we have all been vaccinated. If so, I look forward to being back in a group of Friends doing the New Year Plant Hunt together!



Common name
Petty Spurge
Blackberry
Hazel
Smooth Hawk's-beard
Lesser Periwinkle
Small Nettle
Guernsey Fleabane
Shepherd's-purse
Annual Meadow-grass
Daisy
Holly
Groundsel
Snowdrop
Cow Parsley
Herb-Robert
Common Ragwort
Annual Mercury
Ivy-leaved Toadflax
Canadian Fleabane
Winter Aconite
Primrose



Above: Primrose (Primula vulgaris) Left: Petty Spurge (Euphorbia peplus)

"I have to ask"

I rush past your maze of graves
To cut my journey short
But what I might save in distance of travel
Is paid back with passages of thought

I have to ask.....

So, tell me of all of you, who was most mourned? What were the people at your graveside thinking As you were lowered into your last resting place? And is there anyone still doing the remembering?

Which of you were serious, who laughed the most? Whose life was hardest and whose privileged? Which of you would I have enjoyed spending time with? And from which of you would I have fled?

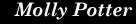
Now that you're dead, does a fancy grave matter? Would you have chosen that spot? Would you get on with your underground neighbour? Or turning away in your grave, really not?

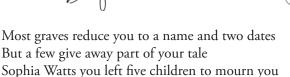
And if you could see your grave this day? Would its lichen or lean distress thee? Would you need your grave to still shout out your name? Or be content about its dense cloak of ivy?

So Susannah Smith, 'wife of above'
I'll never know you, we'll never meet
What were you proud of, did you have shame?
And what was your idea of a treat?

And Edward Squire, with all your details eroded What was the most remarkable thing you did? And now your life's over and totally gone What pertinent advice would you give?

And you Googes – Dick, George and Susannah Is there comfort in being together? Unlike Robert Nursewigg in his lone grave Died eighteen ninety-two in November





And poor sisters: Rose and Sophia Smith Departed this life far too young A stone covered in verse about sacrifice and rest Did this really appease the fact that you'd gone?

Did they stand where I am standing and wail?

And Thomas and Alice Emma Jeckell Your canopy of a weeping beech What was planted first? Your matching graves Or this drooping, weary symbol of grief?

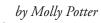
And a wry smile crosses my face as I wonder Why are so many of you called Mary Ann? Pooley, Starkey, Miles, of Smiths there are two And some whose last names have gone

Preserved in the neat lines of soldiers' graves The discipline and regimentation of war Your individuality stripped from you in death Are you happy with this collective honour?

And the 1910 graves all batched together Grouped by your year of passing Might you have known that you were to share Not just an era but also an area?

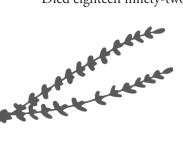
And how did you die? What was your demise? An illness or disastrous accident? What were your thoughts about death when alive? Was there comfort to be had as you went?

Tell me, what would you make of this present day? What would shock you most? Technology, globality or attitudes? Or that we have not achieved more?













Search the cemetery for snowdrops this spring!

As I write this, it is now the very end of January and you can already see the days lengthening. Spring is slowly approaching. Regardless of season, the cemetery always has plenty to show visitors, and at this time of year we are approaching peak snowdrop season.

While there are not extensive patches of these snowy flowers, there are areas where these early flowers can be seen en masse. You may notice the majority of snowdrops you come across are growing under tree, and this is because this location provides the right conditions for survival. Snowdrops like to be in fairly moist - but sunny - conditions while growing, but over the summer months they tend to prefer a location that is fairly dry and shaded from the hot sun.

Most people assume snowdrops are a native British flower, but sadly this isn't the case. Only the south west has any possible claim that the snowdrop might be a native, but even this is unlikely as snowdrops are native across mainland Europe and Asia. There are now twenty snowdrop species recognised, with several new snowdrop species discovered this century, and more likely to come to light in future.

The first mention of snowdrops in the UK was in John Gerard's *General Historie* of *Plantes* printed in 1597 (and then amended in 1636 after his death. The snowdrop was originally listed as *Leucojum bulbosum praecox minus* – 'Timely flouring bulbous Violet'. It wasn't until 1753 that the Swedish botanist Carl Linnaeus in his book *Species Plantarum* reclassified the snowdrop to *Galanthus nivalis*.

G.nivalis, the Common Snowdrop, is the species seen in swathes across parts of the old woody eastern side of the cemetery. If you go for a walk here between January and March, you are likely to come across areas thick with these lovely plants.

Not all snowdrops in the cemetery are *G.nivalis* though - there are four species currently known to be growing there. These are:

- 1. Galanthus nivalis
- 2. Galanthus woronowii
- 3. Galanthus elwesii
- 4. Galanthus plictatus



Spring cometh

Ian Senior



One of the things that gets a lot of interest from snowdrop growers is the patterns that can be found on the inner 'petals' (actually the inner perianth). The amount of green on the white flower vary from one cultivar to another and a whole industry has been created breeding varieties with these different markings. Breeding has also produced plants with different shapes to the outer petals (perianth), as well as double flowers. *G.elwesii* and *G.nivalis* seem to have been used most in these breeding experiments resulting in lots of commercial varieties. It's interesting to see what patterns you can find on cemetery plants. If you spot any unusual patterns do let us know!

Of the four, the easiest to identify is *G.woronowii* as this has broad, bright green leaves. The remaining three are harder to identify from each other as their leaves are the same blue - green colour. The Common Snowdrop has narrow strap-like leaves which do not wrap around each other. The other two species are harder to identify but both have leaves much wider than *G.nivalis*. Anything wider than an average little fingernail is likely to be *G.elwesii* or *G.plicatus*.

Separating the last two from each other is much harder, as superficially they look the same. The first clue to look for is whether the leaf tip is hooded or not. This means that the very tip of the leaf comes together forming a little 'cave' at the tip. If you see this, check the leaf bases. Do they wrap round each other or lie flat? Those that wrap around are *G.elwesii*, and those that don't, and do not have the hooded tip, are *G.plicatus*.

