

FIELD MEETINGS, 1955

MAY 14th, 1955. FLANDERS MOSS, STIRLING

Leader: B. W. RIBBONS

Coach parties from Glasgow and from Falkirk met at South Flanders Farm for this Junior Field Meeting, which was attended by pupils from seven Secondary Schools and a number of other individuals to a total of about sixty. Mr. Ribbons was assisted by Prof. K. W. Braid, Dr. D. Patton and Mr. R. Mackechnie. Prof. Braid outlined the history of the area, explaining how the Peat Moss had followed the ancient felling of the oak forest, and how later clearances in the eighteenth century had produced the fertile acres of the Carse of Stirling. The area of peat had now dwindled to a few square miles. Mr. Ribbons described the botany of the Moss and indicated the plants and plant communities to be looked for. As few of those present knew the common moorland and bog plants the day was devoted to studying them.

The part of the Moss visited is a large raised bog on carse clays near the port of Monteith. *Calluna vulgaris*, *Eriophorum vaginatum* and *Scirpus cespitosus* are abundant, and in many parts, especially among birch scrub, *Polytrichum commune* is dominant. *Andromeda polifolia* and *Vaccinium oxycoccus* are plentiful and *Drosera rotundifolia*, *Narthecium ossifragum* and *Myrica gale* are locally common. Other mosses included *Sphagnum rubellum*, *S. papillosum* and *S. cuspidatum*.

The Leader wishes to thank his helpers for the part they played in making the meeting a success.—B. W. RIBBONS.

JUNE 11th to 18th, 1955. DUNFANAGHY, CO. DONEGAL

Leader: Miss P. H. KERTLAND

On Saturday, June 11th, 23 members and friends gathered at Arnold's Hotel, Dunfanaghy, Co. Donegal. Dunfanaghy, lying near the shore of a narrow inlet of Sheep Haven, is screened on the north side by the Ards quartzite peak of Horn Head, rising to 835 ft., and southwards, first by low foothills, which towards the south-west rise in successive peaks, of which Muckish and Errigal (2468 ft.), the highest mountain in Donegal, are prominent and further south by the Derryveagh Mountains, the main band of Donegal granite, which corresponding with the Scots Dalradian, stretch from north-east, separating the area we were to visit from the main mass of South Donegal.

Those of us who had arrived early went out to explore the shore and the eastern dunes. Almost immediately we were rewarded by the discovery of a fine group of orchids in full bloom, including *Dactulorchis*

purpurella and *D. incarnata* subsp. *coccinea* (coll. E. M. Rosser, det. V. S. Summerhayes) and a cream-coloured form of *Ranunculus bulbosus*. The Dunfanaghy area was explored further during the week, as time allowed, other interesting records made being:—*Cardamine pratensis* (fl. pleno), *Montia fontana* subsp. *variabilis*, *Trifolium dubium* var. *pygmaeum*, *Aphanes microcarpa*, *Euphrasia confusa* f. *albida* and *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* subsp. *hebridensis* (all coll. and det. N. D. Simpson). *Veronica catenata* and *Polypodium vulgare* (tetraploid form) were also seen. By the evening all had arrived and were greeted by the leader and our host; the leader then outlined a provisional programme which, despite unfavourable weather, was carried out in its entirety.

After a free morning on Sunday we set off after lunch for the lake and dunes to the west of Dunfanaghy; the lake, formerly brackish, is now fresh water enclosed by blown sand. While some recorded species with industry, others noted with interest a hedge of *Fuchsia magellanica* by the roadside, and primroses, not two or three, but clusters, flowering very belatedly owing to the cold winter. The dunes themselves produced no surprising records, being poor in species, in comparison with our west coast dunes. We did however note many familiar plants, including *Euphorbia portlandica*, *Viola tricolor* subsp. *curtisii*, *Erodium cicutarium*, *Anagallis tenella*, *Sedum acre*, *Selaginella selaginoides*, *Glaux maritima* and *Botrychium lunaria*.

On Monday we travelled by coach to the foot of Muckish, there splitting into groups and so covering a wide area during the ascent. On the way we passed a quartzite quarry producing sand for glass manufacture. At the base of the mountain a small clump of *Cladium mariscus* was discovered by Mr. Stelfox, and nearby, at the roadside, a patch of *Epilobium pedunculare* was seen. While we ascended the lower slopes the small, white flowers of *Saxifraga stellaris*, the wet, glossy-green leaves of *S. spathularis* and the golden sheen of *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium* first caught the eye, by a mountain stream, drenching, as it fell, dark green patches of the leafy liverwort *Jubula hutchinsiae*, tucked beneath overhanging rock ledges with purple-red patches of *Pleurozia purpurea*. Above Lough Naboll, at a height of about 900 ft. Mr. Simpson found *Asplenium marinum*, and at about 1200 ft. on the north-east terrace Miss Duncan made a notable rediscovery, that of *Saussurea alpina*, confirming an old record. Over the wide, flat top, lay a low scrub of *Salix herbacea*, with *Carex bigelowii*, *Nardus stricta*, *Armeria maritima* and *Rhacomitrium lanuginosum*, and boulder-strewn ground with *Hymenophyllum wilsoni* growing in well-protected hollows. As we descended a cloud bank wreathed the summit. Near the foot, a lake yielded *Littorella uniflora* and, nearby, *Pinguicula lusitanica* was found.

On Tuesday, a day of driving rain, the coach took us far to the south-west, to The Rosses, a curious lake-studded area remarkable, geologically, for the ring formation of older granite rocks (Granodiorite) which surrounds newer granites of varying types.

Pausing at Lough Ibbey fragments of *Naias flexilis* were obtained with a grapple; *Potamogeton perfoliatus* and *P. gramineus* (coll. E. M. Rosser, det. J. E. Dandy and G. Taylor) were also gathered, and nearby *Orchis mascula* and *Dactylorhiza maculata* subsp. *ericetorum* were seen. The coach then continued to Lough Mullaghderg, stopping between dunes and lough. Near the lake shore here, just above sea-level, grew *Juniperus communis* and *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*. On the dunes were seen *Arabis hirsuta* and two interesting eyebrights, *Euphrasia occidentalis* var. *calvescens* (coll. and det. U. K. Duncan, conf. E. F. Warburg) and *E. brevipila* × *nemorosa* (coll. U. K. Duncan, det. E. F. Warburg). Other species noted were *Saxifraga tridactylites* and *Valerianella locusta* at Kincasslagh Head (coll. N. D. Simpson), *Dactylorhiza maculata* subsp. *ericetorum*, ranging in colour from white to mauve, and with leaves spotted and unspotted, *D. purpurella* (coll. E. M. Rosser, det. V. S. Summerhayes) and *Platanthera bifolia* (coll. E. M. Rosser, conf. V. S. Summerhayes).

On the following day the weather improved as we left for Dunlewy and the Poisoned Glen. This Glen lies at the edge of the main band of Donegal granite, stretching from Glen in the north-east to Ardara and Trawenagh in the west. In a peaty bog by the side of Lough Dunlewy the leader showed *Erica mackaiana* and the hybrid *E.* × *praegeri* (*E. mackaiana* × *tetralix*), and at the head of the lough, near the foot of Errigal, *Sisyrinchium bermudiana* in flower was an interesting sight. After lunch most of the party left for the Poisoned Glen, two members remaining to climb Errigal where, on the rock-strewn summit, *Vaccinium vitis-idaea* was seen, just below the ridge. Hopes of confirming the old record of *Chamaenerion angustifolium* were not realised though the view from the summit of the moraine-blocked lakes of Dunlewy and Nacung and the Poisoned Glen rewarded the climb. Rain and mist rolling downwards hastened the descent over the sliding scree of the northern slope between two walls of solid rock, in one of which a natural 'window' afforded a glimpse of the lower bulk of Muckish and of Lough Altan, but *Sedum rosea* and *Saxifraga stellaris* were observed on the way and *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* near the foot.

Meanwhile, the main party in the Poisoned Glen searched for *Trichomanes speciosum*, finally seen by Mr. Simpson and Dr. Williams in an inaccessible crevice; so it was re-discovered after more than fifty years. During the day *Hymenophyllum wilsonii* was also seen, as were the three spp. of *Drosera*, *Leucorchis albida*, *Festuca vivipara* and *Osmunda regalis*.

In sunshine on Thursday morning the coach set off for the Fanad Peninsula, east of Dunfanaghy, stopping first at Lough Fern to see *Trollius europaeus*, rare in Ireland. Near Milford, at the head of the long, narrow sea-inlet of Mulroy Bay, Miss Parkes gave a brief talk on the interesting sea-weed flora of the bay. A further stop was made at Lough Magheradrumman, where *Potamogeton filiformis* (coll. Miss Isherwood, det. J. E. Dandy and G. Taylor) and *Tolypella glomerata*

(coll. Miss Muirhead and Mr. Simpson) were seen. By Lough Kinney, Miss Duncan collected *Equisetum* × *litorale* (det. A. H. G. Alston) and in the nearby lough were seen *Myriophyllum alterniflorum* var. *americanum* (coll. and det. N. D. Simpson), a new record for the lough, and *Potamogeton crispus* (coll. E. M. Rosser, det. J. E. Dandy and G. Taylor). In the surrounding area *Veronica filiformis*, *Sparganium erectum* subsp. *neglectum* and *Rosa pimpinellifolia* were seen; other interesting discoveries were a plant of *Myrica gale* bearing both male and female catkins, by the leader, and *Petasites albus* found by a stream on the coast by Miss Duncan. Near Lough Kindrum were seen pink-flowered forms of *Veronica officinalis*, *Hieracium caledonicum* (coll. N. D. Simpson, det. P. D. Sell and C. West) and *Rosa canina* var. *globularis* (coll. Miss Isherwood, det. R. Melville).

A short journey on the following day took us to Ards, where the plantations were visited by permission of the Irish Forestry Commission. A walk through these dark coniferous plantations, with *Lobularia pulmonaria* on tree stumps, produced *Neottia nidus-avis*, *Orobanche alba* (coll. Miss Muirhead) and *O. minor* var. *compositarum*. We also saw *Pernettya mucronata* and *Leycesteria formosa*, together with very fine *Epilobium pedunculare*. Reaching the shore we found *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* among the rocks just above high tide level, with *Asplenium adiantum-nigrum* and, nearby *Listera ovata* (coll. E. M. Rosser, conf. V. S. Summerhayes). Other Ards records of interest were *Luzula multiflora* var. *pallescens* (coll. U. K. Duncan, det. N. D. Simpson), *Dryopteris aemula*, and *Cirsium* × *forsteri*, found by Mr. Stelfox on the headland, 3 to 4 miles from Ards House.

Leaving Ards we returned via Lackagh Bridge, where Miss Duncan found *Aphanes microcarpa* (conf. S. M. Walters), to Dunfanaghy. There Miss Kertland was thanked for her inspiring leadership, which for many of us had provided a happy introduction to Ireland, and Mr. Arnold for his kindness during our stay.

At this point I should like to add my own special thanks to Miss Kertland and all the collectors and referees who have provided data for this report.—E. M. ROSSER.