

Kempshott Conservation Group



January 2013

Newsletter No. 21

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Annual subscriptions for 2012/2013.....

.....are now due. "Thank you" to those members who have already paid. Membership at £2.00 per household is unchanged - what a bargain! As always, it will save a great deal of time and shoe leather if a cheque or cash could be sent or delivered as early as possible to any of the addresses above.

Some members who undertake telephone or internet banking have found it quicker and easier to pay direct to our bank account, the details of which are:-

Bank	NatWest Old Market Square Branch 3 London Street, Basingstoke	Sort code 60-02-49	A/C number 71148523
A/C name	Kempshott Conservation Group		

Whichever method you use, don't forget to include your name. For details of a free seed offer associated with your subscription renewal, please read on to the next article.



Wildflower seeds for your garden

Kempshott Conservation Group is part of a thriving seed collecting team which harvests wildflower seed from several sites in and around western Basingstoke with the objective of reintroducing wildflowers to green spaces in the borough. We have been collecting seed for three years and our sites are now beginning to contribute to this seed bank, having been the recipients of seed for several years.

We would like to offer members a free packet of seed when they renew their subscription for the current year, now due, and further packets of seed, while stocks last, for 50p per packet - see our website for further details. If members who have already renewed would like to take advantage of this offer, please do contact us

Continued....

Wildflower seeds for your garden - cont'd

All these selections are wildlife and insect friendly plants and, whilst some may flower in their first year, others could take two years. The seeds should be thinly scattered and lightly covered in an area where they will not be disturbed too much or sown in a tray for later transfer to the final growing site. Each pack includes a small quantity of Field Poppy which is a good marker plant to remind you later in the year just where the seeds were sown. Three selections are available:

Cowslip & Yellow Rattle



Low growing (to 15cms) spring/summer flowers
particularly suitable for growing beside or in short grass

Cowslip can take two years to flower. Yellow Rattle is a freely seeding annual.

Foxglove, Chicory & Musk Mallow



Tall growing summer flowers (to 80cms)
Good for the back of borders

Foxglove is biennial and seeds freely. Chicory and mallow are perennial and may take two years to flower.

Campion (red and white), Sainfoin & Red Clover



Medium height perennials that may take two years to flower



Opportunities to learn more.....

.....about wildlife and conservation are available in Basingstoke and Hampshire. It's quite some time since any members took advantage of the chances to learn new skills like hedge laying or to gain a greater understanding of wildlife. Courses such as Understanding Bees and Identifying Insects for Beginners are available during the year. If you would like to take part, please do check our

website www.kempshottconservationgroup.org.uk under "Events" or contact us to find out what is being planned and let us know what you are interested in. We can then put your name forward and there is every chance you would get a place. The course fees are very modest and sometimes free.



What's in a name? (Part 1)

Wild flowers in fields and hedgerows all have names, even if we don't know or can't remember them. An individual species may have a number of common or vernacular names, some of which may be widely used while others may be regional or local. Names can be descriptive, may refer to some characteristic, its herbal or culinary use, or have an old name going back to Elizabethan times.

An example is Goat's Beard, which flowers from June to September. It is one of the many of the "yellow" flowers found in Down Grange Meadow, but one that will only open on sunny mornings and closing up around midday, giving rise to its other "folk" names of "Jack-go-to-bed-at-noon" or "Noon-flower". A member of the Daisy or Aster family that produces lots of fluffy "parachute" seeds, the seed head can be up to four inches across like a very large dandelion and gives Goat's Beard its name.



Partially open Goat's
Beard

Goat's Beard seed head

So far so good, but these common names can be misleading and flowers with similar sounding names can be totally different. For example, Goat's Rue looks nothing like Goat's Beard, has masses of pale pink flowers and is a member of the pea family. Garden flowers can add even more confusion. For example, the garden plant that is sometimes called Goat's Beard or False Goat's Beard is in fact an Astilbe. There is another Goat's Beard found in Scandinavia and is a member of the Rose family.

A better method of identifying flowers is to use the "scientific name". This is sometimes,

inaccurately, called the "Latin" name, inaccurate because some of the names use Greek. The scientific name consists of two elements, the first specifies the genus and the second identifies the actual species. The genus provides a way of grouping related species and always starts with a capital letter while the species name always starts with a lowercase letter. In documentation, both names are printed in italics.

Our own Goat's Beard has the scientific name *Tragopogon pratensis*. *Tragopogon* is formed from two Greek words, *Tragos* meaning "goat" and *pogon* meaning "beard", a fairly literal translation.

The second part, *pratensis*, is Latin and means "of meadow or grassland" and occurs quite frequently in plant names. For example, the Red Clover, which is abundant in Down Grange Meadow, is called *Trifolium pratense*. This can be translated as a plant with three leaves (Tri-folium) that occurs in meadows.

Another species name often encountered is *officinalis*, *officinale* or *officinarum*. It derives from the Latin for a store room where monks kept medicinal herbs. In all its forms, it indicates that the plant

What's in a name? (Part 1) - cont'd.

was, or still is, used for medicinal purposes. Over the years, this meaning has been expanded to include culinary herbs and spices.

The species element is often a descriptor for the habitat where the plant can be found, its habit, its colour or some other characteristic. Thus these species names are often repeated across genera. Some other common descriptor species names include:

Latin/Greek	Translation	Common Examples
<i>arvense, arvensis</i>	Of field, meadow or grassland	Creeping Thistle <i>Cirsium arvense</i> Field Scabious <i>Knautia arvensis</i>
<i>campestre campestris</i>	Of fields or plains	Hop Trefoil <i>Trifolium campstre</i>
<i>repens</i>	Creeping or crawling	White Clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> Creeping Buttercup <i>Ranunculus repens</i>
<i>Sylvaticum, sylvatica</i>	Of woods or wild	Woundwort <i>Stachys sylvatica</i> Wood Forget-me-not <i>Myosotis sylvatica</i>
<i>Sylvestris</i>	Of woods, forests, rural areas or wild	Common Mallow <i>Malva sylvestris</i> Crab Apple <i>Malus sylvestris</i>
<i>hirsutum, hirsuta</i>	Hairy	Hairy Tare <i>Vicia hirsuta</i>

If no other characteristic can be found, the default species name for a large number of wild plants is *vulgare* or *vulgaris*!

Getting to grips with the scientific name has other benefits. A couple of years ago, members of the group visited Alençon on a twinning visit and undertook some plant surveying with our French hosts. Using vernacular names in French was impossible, but by using the scientific names, all confusion over plant names disappeared as we could use reference books to do the translation for us, even if we could not recall the scientific name.



Our Work Party programme.....

.....is published every month in the *Kempshott Courier*. For easy reference, Work Party dates between now and the end of the season in April are shown below. Why not make a point of joining us one Sunday morning or Thursday afternoon to see what we get up to? You are assured of a warm welcome and all you need to bring are gloves and sensible footwear. If you need to know more our contact details are on page one.

Date & time	Location
Sunday, 10 February. 10 00	Old Hedgerow
Thursday, 21 February. 14 00	Down Grange Meadow
Sunday, 3 March. 10 00	Old Orchard
Thursday, 14 March. 14 00	Old Hedgerow

Date & time	Location
Sunday, 24 March. 10 00	Down Grange Meadow
Thursday, 4 April. 14 00	Old Orchard
Sunday, 14 April. 10 00	Old Hedgerow