



SUFFFOLK TRADITIONAL ORCHARD GROUP

Advice Note 9 (STOGAN9)

TRADITIONAL SUFFOLK ORCHARD GROUND FLORA – NATURAL & PLANTED

Version 1, December 2012

CONTENTS

	Page
<u>Introduction</u>	2
<u>Daffodils in old orchards</u>	2
<u>Records of transplanted and cultivated introductions in orchards</u>	4
<u>Table 1 Plants, native and introduced, planted in Suffolk orchards</u>	5
<u>Table 2 Plant species considered to be natural in Suffolk orchards</u>	9



Fig 1. An old orchard in Palgrave in March. Almost all of the trees fell in the hurricane of 1989, and they were replaced over the next ten years. The original ground flora has almost entirely recovered: in spring there are two snowdrop vars., two *Ornithogalum* species, a double trumpet daffodil, and Italian Arum, *Arum italicum*. In summer the orchard has Sheep's Parsley, Ground Elder, Russian Comfrey and Nettles.

INTRODUCTION

The national UK Priority Habitat of 'Traditional Orchards' includes mention of the ground cover as occasionally being of biodiversity interest. In reality many orchards, both modern and ancient have extremely impoverished and restricted ground flora. The majority of heavily managed orchards have a ground cover dominated by invasive weed species, and the most frequent flowering plants often comprise only common dock species, a few common grasses, hogweed, sheep's parsley, brambles, creeping thistle, elder and, above all, nettles.

Throughout East Anglia, where the grassland is old and relatively unmanaged, and has sufficient light, the closest National Vegetation Classification (NVC) is MG5. MG5 is neutral to alkaline grassland with Common Bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), Sweet Vernal-grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), Black Knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), Crested Dog's-tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*), Cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), Red Fescue (*Festuca rubra*), Yorkshire-fog (*Holcus lanatus*), Common Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), Ribwort Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), Red Clover (*Trifolium pratense*) and White Clover (*Trifolium repens*). A surprising number of these orchards could also be described as NVC W6 (nettle dominated wet woodland ground cover) comprising common nettle with cleavers, rough meadow grass and brambles.

However, throughout East Anglia the oldest existing orchards are all small, rarely more than 2 acres, mixed "family" orchards close to, and associated with, farmhouses and farmsteads, old village houses, cottage clusters, especially estate cottages, and rectories. These orchards are often centuries old and well known as being the domain of the women of the families. They are often fenced against stock, restricted to chicken, geese and ducks and, apart from the tiny railing-enclosed gardens close to old farmhouses, were the only areas that could support flowers, being ungrazed by sheep, cattle and pigs. In the claylands sometimes the orchards were the only parcels of land enclosed by railings, apart from a tiny garden in front of each farmhouse.

Over the last 100 years the majority of these orchards have vanished. However, some still exist even without their fruit trees; others retain the feeling of an enclosed private space, with heavy shade throughout the summer, but a wealth of late winter and early spring flowers from bulbs and early flowering perennials, perhaps overwhelmed by nettles and lank dank grass by summer. Collectors of old daffodil varieties from the 18th century to Edwardian times know that in old orchards they still exist; likewise sweet violets, snowdrops and Star of Bethlehem. Some of these were introduced to England, but many were transplanted from the wild.

DAFFODILS IN OLD ORCHARDS

Snowdrops and daffodils are the most common plants in Suffolk traditional orchards, and daffodils the most diverse group. The English native wild daffodil *Narcissus pseudonarcissus* is still found in Suffolk woods and in orchards with its many cultivated forms, such as "Tenby", but most daffodils found in orchards are selected crosses with imported European species such as *N. poeticus*, *tazetta*, *papyracea* and *jonquilla*.

Over 20,000 daffodil varieties are said to have been named! The large flowered, large trumpet varieties are mostly from the late 19th C (yellow “Alfred” and white “Mount Hood” are examples) as are the pink and red trumpet forms. Older varieties are often small flowered, later flowering and bicoloured in pale yellows and creams. The *poeticus* forms and crosses have pale or white corolla and small red or dark trumets, and the *tazetta* and *papyracea* crosses have multi-headed inflorescences. *N. jonquilla*, the Jonquil, with tiny multi-flowered heads on tall stems and cylindrical leaves is also present.

In one old traditional orchard in Palgrave just one daffodil cultivar exists, a “trumpet double”, where the trumpet is filled with petals; elsewhere doubles exist where both corolla and trumpet corona is replaced by individual petals. One old and apparently locally unique cultivar per orchard is not uncommon, although at an orchard in Wilby over 25 varieties exist as separate clumps. However, as good identification manuals do not exist, naming is very difficult.



Fig 2. An old “Double Trumpet” Daffodil variety in a traditional orchard in Palgrave.

Daffodil References:

R. A. Scamp Quality Daffodils: a major source of old and new varieties. www.qualitydaffodils.com

The Daffodil Society records and describes daffodils and has a newsletter www.thedaffodilsociety.com

The national collection of daffodils is held at Trevarno in Cornwall with over 2,600 cvs. Visit RHS at <http://www.rhs.org.uk/Plants/News/Daffodil-collection--largest-in-Europe-> to find out more.

RECORDS OF TRANSPLANTED AND CULTIVATED INTRODUCTIONS IN ORCHARDS

The following lists (Tables 1 and 2) have a north Suffolk, heavy claylands, emphasis as that area has been most extensively recorded, and for longer than the rest of the county. The Suffolk Phase 1 survey did not aim to record these introduced plants, but we are increasingly being asked about them. So, from some sketchy records, the following list has been prepared – the survey sheets for the orchards will have added the most notable of these records.



Fig 3. *Ornithogalum nutans*

Drooping Star of Bethlehem

Transplanted

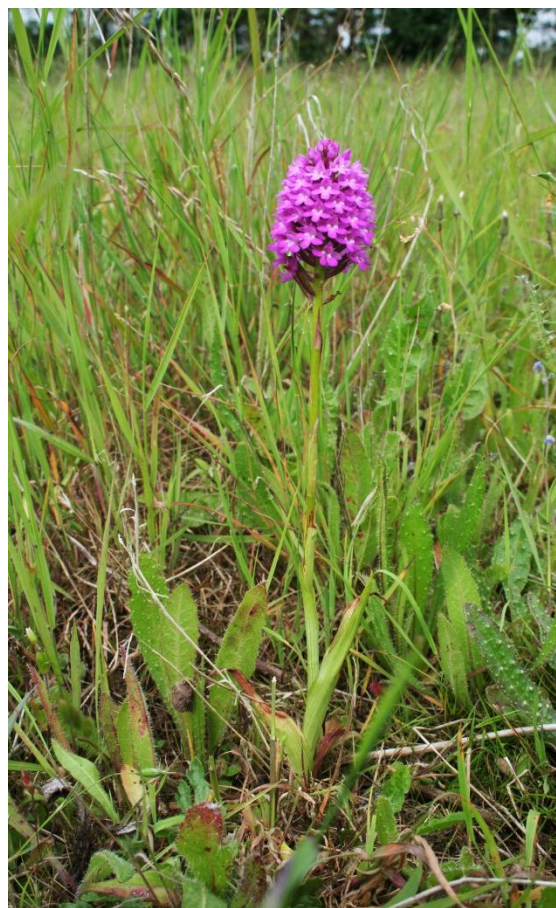


Fig 4. *Anacamptis pyramidalis*

Pyramidal Orchid

Naturally occurring

Table 1 Plants, native and introduced, planted in Suffolk orchards

Species and varieties of plant native and introduced, considered to be planted in Suffolk orchards						
Genus	Species	Var./Cultivar/ form	Common Name	Location example/s	Frequency in Suffolk	Notes
<i>Aegopodium</i>	<i>podagraria</i>		Gound Elder	Widespread	Very common	Ancient weed and once pot herb
<i>Aconitum</i>	<i>napellus</i>		Monk's Hood	Thrandeston	Rare two sites known	Neophyte, said to be common in Chiltern orchards
<i>Ajuga</i>	<i>reptans</i>		Bugle	Burgate	Rare	
<i>Allium</i>	<i>ramosum</i>		Ransoms, Wild garlic	Burgate	Rare	
<i>Allium</i>	<i>triquetrum</i>		Three-cornered Leek	Palgrave	Rare	
<i>Allium</i>	<i>ameloprasum</i>	<i>babbingtonii</i>	Babbington's Leek	Newborne	Rare	May be a garden escape
<i>Allium</i>	<i>sp</i>	<i>E.g. paradoxum</i>	a wide range of escaped garden species, sometimes locally dominant and invasive.			
<i>Aquilegia</i>	<i>vulgaris</i>		Columbine, Grannyhoods	Wilby, Debenham	Occasional	wide range of flower colours and forms
<i>Arum</i>	<i>italicum</i>	<i>neglectum</i>	Italian Arum	Palgrave	One site known	Yellow spadix. Leaf veins without pale borders, native?
<i>Arum</i>	<i>italicum</i>	<i>italicum</i>	Italian Arum	Palgrave, Framsdon	Occasional	Yellow spadix. Forms with pale areas bordering leaf veins.
<i>Campanula</i>	<i>trachelium</i>		Nettle-leaved Bellflower	Mellis	One site known	
<i>Carex</i>	<i>pendula</i>		Pendulous Sedge	Redgrave	Occasional	Native but widely transplanted
<i>Claytonia</i>	<i>perfoliata</i>		Spring Beauty, Miner's Lettuce	Sutton, Brome	Occasional on sand	Native of USA
<i>Colchicum</i>	<i>autumnale</i>		Meadow Saffron	Monewden	Occasional	
<i>Daphne</i>	<i>laureola</i>		Spurge-laurel	Thrandeston	Rare	
<i>Digitalis</i>	<i>ambigua</i>		Yellow Foxglove	Bures St Mary	One site known	Introduced
<i>Eranthis</i>	<i>hyemalis</i>		Winter Aconite	Widespread	Common	
<i>Galanthus</i>	<i>nivalis</i>		Double Snowdrop	Palgrave	Rare	Double form simil Lord Elphinstone
<i>Galanthus</i>	<i>nivalis</i>		Double Snowdrop	Widespread	Very Common	Double form - smaller and more congetsed flower
<i>Galanthus</i>	<i>nivalis</i>		Snowdrop	Widespread	Very Common	various single forms

<i>Galanthus</i>	<i>elwesii</i>		Snowdrop	Widespread	Common	various single forms
<i>Helleborus</i>	<i>foetidissima</i>		Stinking Hellebore	Mellis, Thornham	Rare	
<i>Helleborus</i>	<i>viridis</i>		Green Hellebore	Nowton	One site known	
<i>Hyacinthoides</i>	<i>hispanica</i>		Spanish Bluebell	Widespread	Common	Blue anthers, inflorescence not one-sided, petals flared
<i>Hyacinthoides</i>	<i>non-scripta</i>		Wild Bluebell	Burgate, Mellis	Rare	Cream anthers. Flowers one-sided, petals recurved, occasionally white
<i>Hyacinthoides</i>	<i>x massartiana</i>		Hybrid Bluebell	Widespread	Common	Blue anthers, inflorescence a spiral, petals partly curled
<i>Hyacinthoides</i>	<i>x massartiana alba</i>		Hybrid White Bluebell	Widespread	Occasional	White anthers, inflorescence not one-sided
<i>hypericum</i>	<i>androsaemum</i>		Tutsan	Ringshall	Rare	
<i>Iris</i>	<i>foetidissima</i>		Gladdon, Stinking Iris	Middleton, Rickingham	Occasional	Native, but widely transplanted, yellow and blue forms
<i>Leucojum</i>	<i>aestivum</i>	<i>pulchellum</i>	Summer Snowflake	Eye	Occasional	Smooth stems, native, <i>aestivum</i> stem has two sharp edges.
<i>Leycesteria</i>	<i>formosa</i>		Pheasant Berry	Sutton, Tannington	Rare	Pheasant cover shrub
<i>Muscari</i>	<i>comosum</i>		Grape hyacinth	Wilby	Rare	
<i>Myosotis</i>	<i>sylvatica</i>		Wood Forget-me-not	Widespread	Common in claylands	Annual or biennial
<i>Narcissus</i>	<i>pseudonarcisus</i>		Wild Daffodil		Rare in orchards	Native
<i>Narcissus</i>	<i>sp</i>	"Tenby"	Tenby Daffodil	Thrandeston	Occasional	Archaeophyte
<i>Narcissus</i>	<i>sp</i>	double trumpet	Daffodil	Palgrave	Occasional	
<i>Narcissus</i>	<i>poeticus</i>	narrow corolla form	Pheasant's Eye	Widespread	Occasional	
<i>Narcissus</i>	<i>poeticus</i>	wide corolla form		Widespread	Occasional	
<i>Narcissus</i>	<i>sp</i>	numerous old cultivars	Daffodils	Widespread	Common	
<i>Ornithogalum</i>	<i>nutans</i>		Drooping Star of Bethlehem	Palgrave	Rare, in claylands?	Native but widely transplanted, called Ghost Flower locally.
<i>Ornithogalum</i>	<i>angustifolium (umbellatum)</i>		Star of Bethlehem	Widespread	Common	Native, but widely transplanted
<i>Ornithogalum</i>	<i>pyrenaicum</i>		Bath Asparagus,	Nowton	One site known	Archaeophyte? Aka Spiked Star of Bethlehem
<i>Pentaglottis</i>	<i>sempervirens</i>		Green Alkanet	Widespread	Common on claylands	

<i>Petasites</i>	<i>fragrans</i>		Winter Heliotrope		One site known	
<i>Primula</i>	<i>veris</i>		Cowslip	Widespread	Occasional	Native but widely transplanted
<i>Primula</i>	<i>vulgaris</i>		Primrose	Widespread	Common	Native but widely transplanted
<i>Pulmonaria</i>	<i>officinale</i>		Common Lungwort	Wilby, Framsdén	Occasional	Archaeophyte
<i>Pulmonaria</i>	<i>obscura</i>		Suffolk Lungwort	Burgate	One site known	Possibly native, unspotted leaves
<i>Ruscus</i>	<i>aculeatus</i>		Butchers Broom	Sutton	Rare	
<i>Symphytum</i>	<i>orientale</i>		White Comfrey		Rare	
<i>Symphytum</i>	<i>grandiflorum</i>		Dwarf Comfrey		Rare, in sandlings	Very early to flower in April
<i>Symphytum</i>	<i>officinale</i>		Common Comfrey	Mellis	Rare?	Almost always the pale pink/purple form
<i>Symphytum</i>	<i>x uplandicum</i>		Russian Comfrey	Widespread	Common in claylands	<i>officinale</i> x ? Very common - tall bristly, dark flowers
<i>Vinca</i>	<i>minor</i>		Lesser Periwinkle	Widespread	Common in claylands	Native
<i>Viola</i>	<i>odorata</i>		Sweet Violet	Palgrave, Middleton	Occasional	Native



Fig 5 *Pentaglottis sempervirens*, Green Alkanet against a background of *Aquilegia vulgaris*, Columbine, leaves.

7



Fig 6. Foliage of *Arum italicum italicum*, Italian Arum and *Iris foetidissima*, Gladdon.

Table 2 Plant species considered to be natural in Suffolk orchards

Species considered to be natural, that contribute to the flowers in Suffolk orchards, and unlikely to have been planted.			
Genus	Species	Common Name	Location example
<i>Adoxa</i>	<i>moschata</i>	Muscatel, Town Hall Clock	Palgrave, Mellis
<i>Arum</i>	<i>maculatum</i>	Cuckoo Pint, Wild Arum etc	Widespread (brown spadix)
<i>Anacamptis</i>	<i>pyramidalis</i>	Pyramidal Orchid	Framsden
<i>Bromus</i>	<i>ramosus</i>	Wood Brome	Thrandeston, Ringshall
<i>Digitalis</i>	<i>purpurea</i>	Foxglove	Sutton
<i>Listera</i>	<i>ovata</i>	Twayblade	Palgrave, Wortham
<i>Moehringia</i>	<i>trinervia</i>	Five-veined Sandwort	Mellis
<i>Ophrys</i>	<i>apifera</i>	Bee Orchid	widespread
<i>Orchis</i>	<i>morio</i>	Green-winged Orchid	Laxfield
<i>Orchis</i>	<i>mascula</i>	Early Purple Orchid	Burgate
<i>Petasites</i>	<i>hybridus</i>	Butterbur	Widespread
<i>Prunella</i>	<i>vulgaris</i>	Selfheal	Widespread
<i>Ranunculus</i>	<i>fiacria</i>	Lesser Celandine	Widespread
<i>Ranunculus</i>	<i>repens</i>	Creeping Buttercup	Widespread
<i>Ranunculus</i>	<i>bulbosus</i>	Bulbous Buttercup	Widespread
<i>Ranunculus</i>	<i>auricomus</i>	Goldilocks	Mellis, Wortham
<i>Scrophularia</i>	<i>nodosa</i>	Common figwort	Widespread
<i>Scrophularia</i>	<i>auriculata</i>	Water figwort	Palgrave, Wilby
<i>Stellaria</i>	<i>holostea</i>	Greater Stitchwort	Widespread
<i>Stellaria</i>	<i>graminea</i>	Lesser Stitchwort	Occasional where sheep grazed
<i>Verbascum</i>	<i>nigrum</i>	Dark Mullein	Middleton,
<i>Viola</i>	<i>hirsuta</i>	Hairy Violet	Palgrave



Fig 7. A Suffolk orchard with a wide variety of everything!