

MKNHS Plant Group Information Sheet

(What's that Plant - and Why?)

The purpose of the Group

The Plant Group will launch its activities this summer. Its aim is to stimulate interest in plants and particularly to improve the level of plant identification skills within the Society by sharing knowledge, skills and resources.

Who is the Plant Group for and what kind of activities will it organise?

The Group is open to all those members of the Society who support its purpose and who are able to give more time to the activity than is usually possible through the Summer Programme events which it will complement. Activities will centre on field work at different habitats where we will practice our identification skills at the species level initially concentrating on flowering plants (and, where we can, grasses, rushes, sedges and trees) and listing species observed in a systematic way. Improving identification skills will rely heavily on the sharing of knowledge between participants. Over time, we hope to build up knowledge of local sites including the possibility of working with partner wildlife organisations. We also hope that participants will also enjoy the pleasure of observing plants in their natural setting, and of having a better understanding of their role in the local ecology.

Activities in 2024

Three field events are planned for 2024 each in a different habitat (all on Sunday morning from 10.30 to 12.30):

- 1. Shenley Wood 28th April 2024 Ancient Woodland habitat**
- 2. Stonepit Field 2nd June 2024 Meadow, limestone scrape, and hedgerow habitat**
- 3. Location still to be decided but with a different habitat to the above in July or August**

(Full details will be on the Society website.)

2024 will be a pilot year, which the Planning Team will review in the autumn.

What resources will participants need?

Those participating in events should bring a flower identification field guide: the Society website has an excellent summary of these (See Society Website: Reference then Identification Guides, then scroll to Flowering Plant). A hand lens (x 10 magnification) will also be needed for some species - we hope to have some to lend. Members will be welcome to bring an identification App but at species level we shall concentrate on the botanical features that are needed for greater identification certainty. (Some suggestions of Apps can be found [on](#) the Society's website, with members' comments on their usefulness and limitations – see <https://mknhs.org.uk/identification-recording-apps/>)

Communication

Information about the Group including Planned Events will be publicised on the Society website with short Side Bar reminders about upcoming events as for other Society activities. For those that register an interest, email will be used for circulation of event specific information prior to it and for emergency announcements. An informal Plant WhatsApp group will also be established for those that opt to join (and thereby agree to share their mobile telephone number).

How do Society members register their interest in the Group?

Send an email to joeclinch@btinternet.com.

How are activities being planned and organised?

A Planning Team has been taking forward the work to establish the Group. Charles Kessler leads the Group and chairs the Planning Team: other members are currently: Jenny Mercer, Di Parsons, Carla Boswell (secretary of the Team), and Joe Clinch.

April 2024