

THE PLANT LIFE OF FROYLE

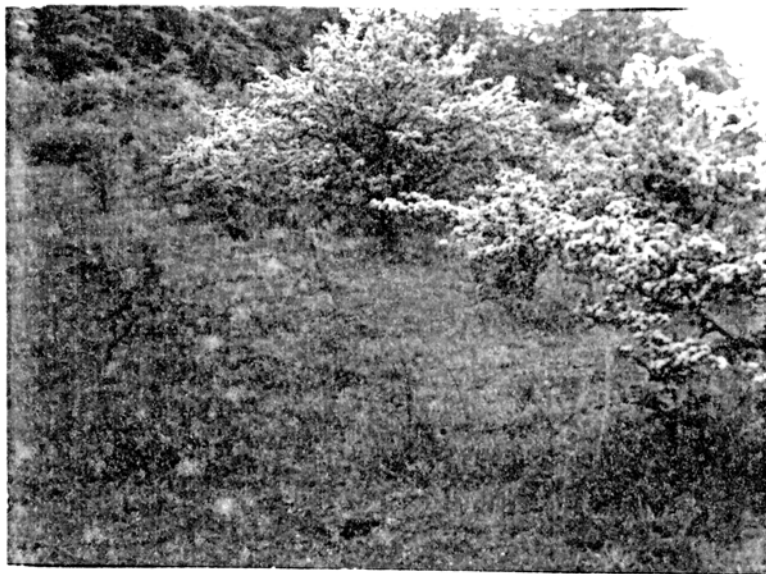
These notes concern the wild and semi-wild plants of the parish and not the cultivated ones, although some of the latter are often found naturalised in the hedgerows.

Froyle is in the Botanical Vice-county 12, North Hamts, (Great Britain being divided into 112 vice-counties,) and in District 10, the Wey, of Frederick Townsend's "Flora of Hampshire."

Soils have a great influence on the growth of plants, so a few notes on the geology will not be out of place here. Except for a strip of Upper Greensand by the River Wey the rest of the parish is on the Chalk, and the upper parts of the valleys are the dry valleys of the chalk. The soil varies in depth from a few inches on top of some of the chalk pits to a few feet in the valleys, at "Froyle Place" there is two feet of soil, a foot of coarse gravel and five feet of clay on the chalk, and at Yarnhams the soil is the typical clay with flints of the upper chalk. The malmstone of the upper greensand is exposed on the roadside near "Highways", and there is a certain amount of gravel in the river valley.

From the Ecological point of view, (that is the vegetation as it grows), there are several special features, the woods, mostly of a mixed type of Oak-Ash-Beech standards, with mainly Hazel coppice under, and in spring beautiful with Primroses, Wood

Anemones, Bluebells, and in autumn with the colours of the leaves. Next comes Foxpen field which is typical chalk scrub land with very few grasses, but the ground is covered with a great variety of plants. the shrubs include Dogwood, Spindle, Guelder Rose, Hawthorn, Dog Rose, Bramble, of the long list of herbs the following are some of the most interesting - The Bee



FOX PEN FIELD. HAWTHORN IN FLOWER.

Orchid, The Butterfly Orchid, The Pyramidal Orchid, The Autumn Gentian, Dwarf Thistle, Ploughman's Spikenard, Fine leaved Sandwort, Common Rock Rose, Heabane, Sawwort, Dodder, Field Calamint, Groomwell,

Clustered Bellflower, Hairy Violet, Bathurst's Flax, Spotted Orchid.

Dutton Common is also scrub land, but although it is on chalk the soil is acid and we have a chalk heath, and in parts the Heather is dominant, trees include Beech, Oak, Birch, shrubs include Gorse, Elder, Heather, Bramble, Honeysuckle, in the herb layer the most interesting is the Violet Helleborine (an orchid), first recorded in 1890 by Miss C. Palmer, in some years it is not seen whether eaten by rabbits is not known, in 1951 one plant had twelve spikes of flowers on it, other plants include the Rose Bay Willow Herb, Heath Bedstraw, Sheep's Sorrel.

Thyme, Spring Hair Grass, Foxglove
 Orpine, Fox Sedge, Heath St John's
 Wort. The Gorse is very pretty
 in the spring, and often large
 patches of Heath Bedstraw, Common
 Speedwell and Thyme are very
 showy, to be followed by Rose Bay
 Willow Herb and Heather.

The River Wey and the Fish
 Pond are very good for aquatic
 plants, though the river bed is
 periodically cleaned out for better drainage the plants soon
 spread again, in the water grow the Water Crowfoot, Water
 Starwort, the Floating Burreed with its long grass-like leaves
 floating on the surface of the
 water and not often flowering,
 in some of the shallow parts the
 Marshwort also grows. On the
 banks of the river grow a great
 variety of plants, one of the most
 beautiful is the Yellow Mimulus,
 (not Musk) an American plant
 introduced in 1812 and now
 naturalised by many rivers.

(PLATANHERA CHLORANTHA)
 THE BUTTERFLY ORCHID.



THE BEE ORCHID (*OPHRYS APIFERA*)





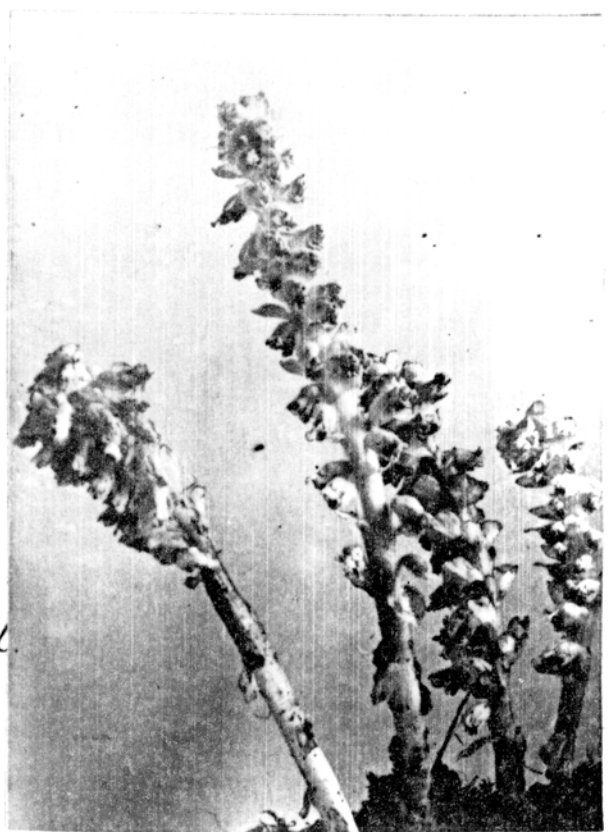
THE WOOD ANEMONE. (ANEMONE NEMOROSA)

In places are large masses of Comfrey, the Hemlock is also common, the Common and the Small Seasels, the Water Forget-me-not, Burreed, Yellow Flag, are also seen.

The Fishpond also contains a variety of aquatic plants, the margin of the pond itself is becoming silted up and is covered with a broad zone of vegetation, with the Bull-rush, (the Reedmace, *Typha latifolia*, of the botanists) Burreed and various Sedges are dominant, amongst these grow various other plants such as the Gipsy-wort, Water Forget Me Not, Water Mint, Marsh Bedstraw, Woody Nightshade and the Marsh Arrow-grass, weeds submerged in the water are sparse and include the Water Crowfoot and the Water Starwort.

The water meadows by the river are very pretty in Spring with the Marsh Marigold, and in Summer are yellow with the Water Ragwort.

TOOTHWORT.
(LATHRÆA
SQUAMARIA)





DOG ROSE. (ROSA CANINA)

This brings us to the cultivated land and its weeds, the hedgerows are very mixed, some are good thorn ones, others are of mixed Hazel, Dogwood, Maple, Elm, and often allowed to grow for several years before cutting, in some places the Blackthorn is pretty in early spring, followed by the Hawthorn, and in summer are the Roses and Travellers Joy,

the feathery awns of the carpels persist most of the winter and so brighten up places where it grows.

Of grassland weeds there are many, the worst from the farmer's point of view is the creeping Thistle, then come the Docks, the Buttercups, of which the Field and the creeping are the most common, the Bulbous Buttercup is much less common.

Other weeds include the Dog Daisy, the Common Daisy, the Common, Ribwort and Hoary Plantains, Selfheal.

The arable crops include corn,

DOG DAISY. (CHRYSANthemum LEUCANTHEMUM)



roots, (including sugar-beet)-hops, the most serious weed is still the Charlock, though of recent years spraying has reduced it, in some fields creeping Thistle is bad, of small weeds the Field Speedwell, Red Bartsia, Knotweed, Corn Crowfoot, Corn Parsley and Field Madder are generally common. The little Common Mousetail appears in one field near Round Wood.

Whilst considering arable land mention must be made of some alien weeds which appeared in a field at Yarnhams in 1947, the reprint under is from "Watsonia", the Journal of the Botanical Society of the British Isles, this shows the

WATSONIA I, PT. IV, 1950.

SHORT NOTE

ALIENS IN FIELD AT FROYLE, N. HANTS, V.C.12

On October 12th, 1947, the gamekeeper reported to me that he had seen some strange weeds in a field at Yarnham's Farm, one of which I knew by his description to be *Datura Stramonium* L. I visited the field, which is of about six acres, with soil of clay with flints on upper chalk. The 600 ft. contour line crosses the field about the middle, the ground sloping to the south. The lower part was planted with potatoes and the top 1½ acres with ridge cucumbers, and it was in this piece that the aliens were growing. The manures used were:—Farmyard, Fisons potato manure, potassium chlorate, and castor meal.

In addition to the one *Datura* plant and fifty species of weeds common on arable ground, the following aliens were found. They have been identified at the British Museum (Natural History) and by Mr J. P. M. Brenan (the latter are marked *):—

Abundant—*Amaranthus chlorostachys* Willd.*, *A. Dinteri* Schinz var. *uncinatus* Thell.*, *Chenopodium carinatum* R. Br., *C. carinatum* × *cristatum* (F. Muell.) F. Muell. (det. Dr Aellen).

Occasional—*Erodium cymorum* Nees*, *Medicago minima* (L.) Bartal. var. *recta* (Desf.) Burnat, *Xanthium spinosum* L., *Physalis ixocarpa* Brot., *Chenopodium pumilio* R. Br., *C. cristatum* (F. Muell.) F. Muell.

Rare—*Erysimum* sp.? (too young for identification), *Malvastrum spicatum* (L.) A. Gray, *Medicago laciniata* Mill. var. *brachyacantha* Boiss., *Nicandra physaloides* (L.) Gaertn., *Sorghum vulgare* Pers., *Eragrostis poaeoides* Beauv., *E. pilosa* (L.) Beauv.

Soon afterwards the ground was ploughed, and again during the spring of 1948. It was then harrowed and in July planted with Broccoli in rows 3 ft. apart. It received no more cultivation and soon became covered with weeds of which *Stellaria media* L. was dominant, covering most of the ground. Only about twenty species were found in 1948, and only three of the aliens, *Amaranthus chlorostachys* fairly abundant in one part of the field, and one plant each of *Erodium cymorum* and *Medicago laciniata* var. *brachyacantha*.

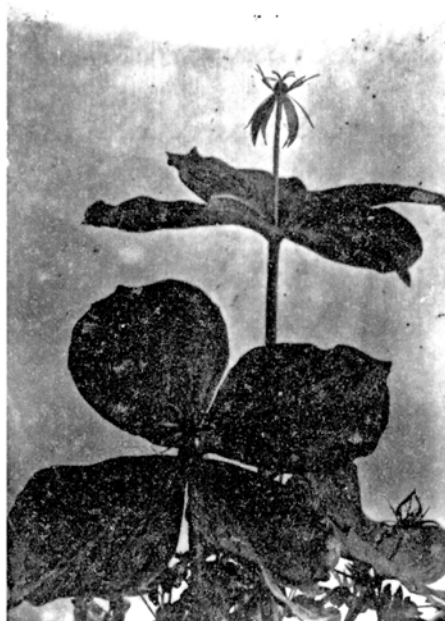
C. LANGRIDGE.

importance of any-one finding a strange plant to report it to some-one who can identify it or get it identified, but for Mr Worsfold all of them would have been ploughed in without anyone knowing them, as it is there are now specimens in the herbariums of Cambridge, The Natural History Museum,

South Kensington, J.E. Lousley and the Alton Museum. Specimens of each were exhibited at the Exhibition Meeting of the Botanical Society in London in October 1949, Mr Brennan said that it was the first time that the hybrid *Oenopodium carinatum* x *cristatum* had been reported growing in this country, also the specimen of *Physalis ixocarpa* which went to the Natural History Museum was new to the British Collection there.

A full list of species growing in the parish is a long one and except to the botanist would not be of very much interest to read, so it would be better to consider now some of the more interesting ones.

Probably the most notable from the ~~most~~ botanical point of view is the Wild Tulip, (*Tulipa sylvestris* L.), this was recorded in "A Supplement to Townsend's Flora of Hampshire" by J.H. Rayner, in 1929. There we read "Froyle chalk-pit, quite naturalised: Vaughan (Herb Druce), known to me here since about 1912, visited several times in the interval; never seen in bloom; Quirk," Vaughan was the Rev John Vaughan who was Curate of Alton and a very keen botanist. (Herb Druce) means that specimens from that locality are preserved in the Druce Herbarium at Oxford. For several years nothing was seen of this plant, but in March 1951 the leaves were seen, but no flowers, and it is very doubtful whether in view of the shade of the trees and the competition of the Dog's Mercury and Stinging Nettle that it will flower.



HERB PARIS. (PARIS QUADRIFOLIA)

Herb Paris is an interesting woodland plant which is sometimes difficult to see on account of it often growing with Dog's Mercury which is of the same green colour.

Of Orchids, the Violet Helleborine was mentioned in the note on the flowers of Dutton Common, in addition we have the Bee Orchid, Butterfly Orchid, The Spotted Orchid, the Pyramidal Orchid, the Early Purple Orchid, the Marsh Orchid, Twayblade, the large White Helleborine. Twayblade is very plentiful in Spollicombe Wood.

The Rue-leaved Saxifrage (*Saxifraga tridactylites*) and the Fine-leaved Sandwort (*Arenaria tenuifolia*) grow on some of the walls, and Gussone's Chickweed (*Arenaria leptoclados*) was found in Foxpen Field in 1951.

Toothwort (*Lathraea squamaria* L.) is a parasite which grows on the roots of sycamore, hazel, and maple and is to be seen in the spring in some of the woods.

Mistletoe is to be seen on Maple trees but is very weak growing.

SPURGE LAUREL.

Another beautiful flower

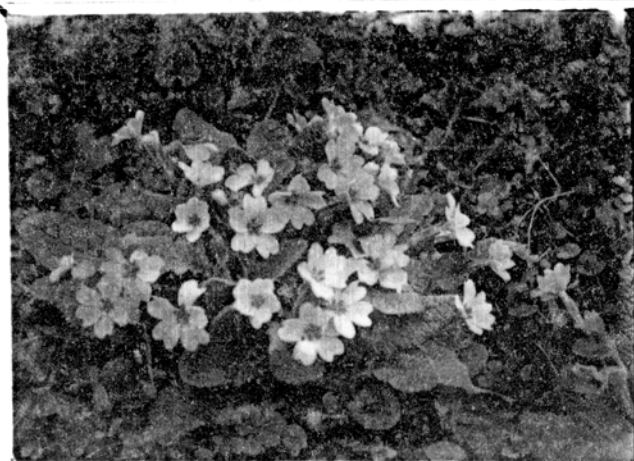


is the Nettle-leaved Bellflower (*Campanula Trachelium*) sometimes called the Wild Canterbury Bell but wrongly as the latter is *Campanula medium*.

Orpine (*Sedum telephium*) grows and flowers near Sutton Common, and nearby are some large patches of the Common Rockrose, (*Helianthemum vulgare*).

The Yellow Vetchling (*Lathyrus aphaca*) grows in one field, and the Strawberry Clover (*Trefolium fragiferum* L.) grows near the river and can easily be mistaken for the White Clover. Three smaller clovers are also found, the Hop Clover (*Trefolium procumbens*), Lesser Clover (*Trefolium minus*) and the Slender Clover (*Trefolium filiforme*). The Black Medick (*Medicago lupulina*) is a flower easily mistaken for one of the yellow clovers but the flower heads are longer and the seed pods are curved.

THE PRIMROSE. *PRIMULA VULGARIS*



AUTUMN GENTIAN
GENTIANA AMARELLA

The Sweet Woodruff (*Asperula odorata*) is common under beech trees in some of the woods.

The Celery leaved Crowfoot (*Ranunculus sceleratus* L.) and the Spearwort (*Ranunculus*



MOSCATEL ADOXA MOSCHATELLINA.

Flammula L) grow by the river, and opposite is a drawing of the little Moscatel (*Adoxa Moschatellina* L) or Town Hall Clock, because the four side flowers face different ways, it is common in some

of the hedgerows and woods.

The Wild Mignonette (*Reseda lutea* L) and the Greater Knapweed (*Centaurea Scabiosa* L), Marjoram (*Origanum vulgare* L), Basil (*Clinochodium vulgare* L) Wild Parsnip (*Pastinacea sativa*) are to be found on chalky banks.

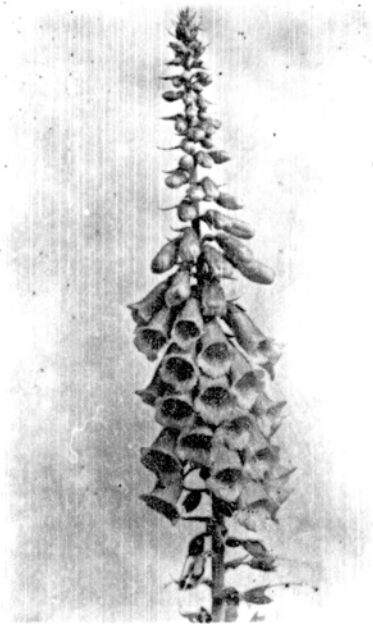
Ragged Robin (*Lychnis Elos-cuculi* L) grows by the river and the Red and White Campions (*Lychnis dioica* Mill) (L alba) are common in hedgerows.

Of the St John's Worts we have the Perforated (*Hypericum perforatum* L), the Imperforate (*H. dubium* Less) the Square Stalked. (*H. tetrapterum* Fr) The Hairy (*H. hirsutum*) and the Slender (*H. pulchrum* L)

In addition to the Common Mallow (*Malva sylvestris*) we have the pretty Musk Mallow (*Malva moschata*) and one of the alien small flowered Mallows (*Malva pusilla*)

A common plant in the Foxpen field is the small Cathartic Flax (*Linum catharticum*)

A pretty little plant flowering in moist places by the river in



spring is the Golden Saxifrage (*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*)

Another alien weed which has become very common of recent years is the Fine Apple Weed (*Matricaria matricarioides*) from North America, and grows on waste ground, it is like a Chamomile but has not any ray florets.

THE FOXGLOVE (*DIGITALIS PURPUREA*) Primroses and Cowslips are common and often the False Oxlip is to be found, this is a hybrid between the two former species, and not the true Oxlip, (*Primula elatior*) In some of the hedgerows the Hemp-nettle is common and in some years the Red Hemp-nettle (*Galeopsis ladanum*) is to be found in some of the arable fields.

The Spurge Laurel (*Daphne laureola*) is uncommon, but the Wood Spurge (*Euphorbia amygdaloides*) is very common in the woods in spring, whilst the Sun Spurge (*Euphorbia helioscopia*) and the Dwarf Spurge (*Euphorbia exigua*) are to be found in arable fields.

Solomon's Seal (*Polygonatum multiflorum*) is common in some of the woods and hedge rows, and both the White Bryony (*Bryonia dioica*) and the Black Bryony (*Tamus communis*) grow in the hedgerows, the White Bryony is interesting from the fact that it is the only member of the cucumber family native in this country and is locally known as Mandrake.



CORN CROWFOOT

RAMUNCULUS ARVENSIS

Of the Rushes in addition to the Common Rush (*Juncus effusus*), we have the Jointed Rush (*Juncus articulatus*) and Toad Rush (*Juncus bufonius*). The Field Wood-Rush (*Luzula campestris*) is very common on Sutton Common.

The Marsh Clubmoss (*Eleocharis palustris*) grows by the fish pond, and of the Sedges we have the Fox Sedge (*Carex*

vulpina). Remote Sedge (*Carex remota*). Vernal Sedge (*Carex caryophylla*). Wood Sedge (*Carex sylvatica*). Marsh Sedge (*Carex paludosa*).

Grasses of course are well represented, some of the less common ones are the following Wood Millet Grass (*Milium effusum*), Reed Grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), Early Hair Grass (*Aira praecox*), Slender False Brome (*Brachypodium sylvaticum*), Hairy Brome (*Bromus ramosus*), Rat's-tail Fescue (*Vulpia myuros*), Reed Meadow-



RUE-LEAVED SAXIFRAGE

SAXIFRAGA TRIDACTYLITES

Grass (*Glyceria maxima*), Hard Meadow Grass (*Scleropoa rigida*) and Crested Hair Grass (*Holcus cristata*).

This is not a good fern district, the Bracken (*Pteris aquilina*), Male Fern (*Dryopteris filix-mas*), Common Polypody (*Polypodium vulgare*), Lady Fern (*Athyrium filix-foemina*), Spleenwort (*Asplenium trichomanes*), are to be found, and Hart's Tongue Fern.

THE YELLOW IRIS. (*IRIS PSEUDACORUS*)



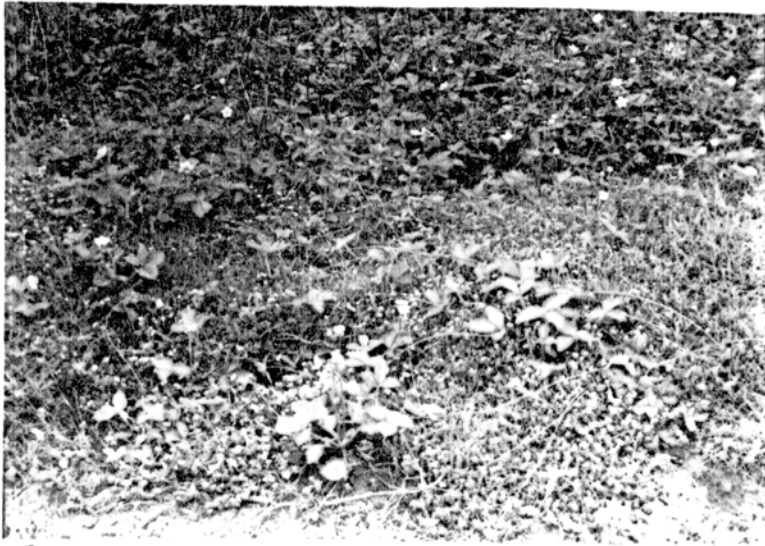
The Mosses are very evident during the autumn and winter, in fact in some of the chalk pits and in places on Sutton Common and Foxpen Field mosses seem to be the dominant kind of ground vegetation at that period of the year.

Unfortunately for the ordinary reader none of the mosses seem to have common names, except the *Sphagnum*s which are

FOXPEN FIELD.



usually collectively called Bog Moss, but none of these grow in the parish, there are plenty of others which do and the following are some of the interesting - *Hylacomium*



FOX-PEN FIELD. DETAIL OF VEGETATION.
WILD STRAWBERRY AND FIELD MADDER.

triquetrum, *Hypnum*
mulluscum, and other
Hypnums, *Brachythecium*
purum, *Thuidium*
tamariscinum, *Funaria*
hygrometrica, *Polytrichum*
juniperinum, *Prototrichum*
alopocurum, *Fissidens*

adiantoides, *Tortula muralis*, *Mnium hornum*, *Mnium undulatum*, *Neckera complanata*, *Brachythecium rivulare*, and very many more.

In this short account an effort has been made to outline the plant-life of Froyle, it is very incomplete and there is plenty of scope for any one with the time to spare to make a more complete account of the vegetation, bearing in mind that everything in nature is continually changing, plant life included.



NETTLE-LEAVED BELLFLOWER.