

Bracknell Forest Borough's Wild Orchids 2015

Overall, 2015 has been a mixed year for Bracknell Forest's wild orchids. Below is a summary of sightings of which I am aware.

BMW grass bank (SU 857 684). This bank outside the ex-BMW site on the Southern Industrial Estate once again produced over 100 **Twayblade**, many of them fine specimens. On the same bank, several hundred flowering spikes of **Common Spotted Orchid** were as spectacular as ever.

Running Horse Roundabout (SU 883 691) and Lily Hill Park (SU 888 693). At the beginning of June there were 19 flowering spikes of **Early Marsh Orchid** on the grass banks at the Running Horse roundabout, the best year ever. In the hay meadow at Lily Hill Park orchid numbers were similar to last year, with about 10 **Early Marsh Orchid** present, plus some 300 **Common Spotted Orchid**. About 60 hybrids between the two species were also counted.

Grass Bank behind Old Manor and Roman's (SU 873 694). About 80 flowers of **Pyramidal Orchid** were present on the bank behind the Old Manor, (two **Common Spotted Orchid** were also present). The next bank towards Easthampstead House, where four **Pyramidal Orchid** appeared in 2014, was unfortunately mown during the 2015 flowering season.

Twin Bridges Roundabout complex (SU 863 689). No **Pyramidal Orchid** flowered at Twin Bridges Roundabout, as all the central banks were once again mown this year. There were no **Bee Orchid** present this year. The grass bank next to Subway 32, where 7 spikes of **Bee Orchid** were present in 2014, was mown in 2015.

Harvest Ride (SU 862 706). Ten **Pyramidal Orchid** were found along the north and south sides of Harvest Ride, near Garth Meadows.

Long Hill Meadow (SU892 693) Six **Southern Marsh Orchids** were found by Robert Solomon, to my knowledge a new site record.

Larges Lane Cemetery. Five flowering **Common Spotted Orchids** were present.

Swinley Road (SU 900 685). Several robust spikes of **Broad-leaved Helleborine** were counted on the western side of Swinley Road, opposite to and north of the entrance to Englemere Pond car park. Inside the car park entrance one robust and several rather weedy spikes of **Green-flowered Helleborine** (*Epipactis phyllanthes*) were present.

Long Hill Road (SU 893 692) Several spikes of **Green-flowered Helleborine** (*Epipactis phyllanthes*) were present alongside the footpath near the entrance to Long Hill Meadow.

Early Purple Orchid. The count of 81 **Early Purple Orchid** at their main Bracknell site was the lowest for ten years, but no cause for concern.

Gormoor Valley, a known site for **Southern Marsh Orchid**, was not checked this year.

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PS. If anyone knows of other records which are not reported here, I would be pleased to be informed.