

The Burren

Naturetrek Tour Report

26 - 29 May 2009

Report compiled by Maureen Ponting



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Day 1

Tuesday 26th May

Five of us were picked up early by our bus driver for the trip, Brian Farrell who took us to Loch Bunny for our first sight of Burren plants, and then on to lunch at Linnane's Lobster Bar. After a drive round the Flaggy Shore we met the rest of our party at Sheedy's Hotel, Lisdoonvarna.

We were welcomed by Martina Sheedy (she and her husband John have been looking after Naturetrek clients for the past fourteen years). That evening, our first walk was on Cappanawalla, a limestone hill from where we got a marvellous view of the coast and Ballyvagan harbour. This was our first chance to see many of the typical Burren plants: *Rosa pimpinellifolia*, the Burren Rose; *Antenaria dioica*, Catspaw, *Geranium sanguineum*, Bloody Cranesbill, and Heath Spotted Orchids. The highlight was a mass of *Pinguicula grandiflora*, the Large Butterwort, thought to be a pre-glacial relic and Northern Europe's only site. It is otherwise native of the mountains of southwest Europe.

Day 2

Wednesday 27th May

Next morning we woke to rain which cleared during the day. We started with a walk at Poll Salach where the Burren's limestone pavement runs into the sea. We looked into the scailps – deep crevices - for the many plants nestling in their own micro-climates – Golden Rod, *Solidago virgaurea*, Wood Sanicle, *Sanicula europaea*; Vernal Sandwort, *Minuartia verna* and Honeysuckle. In the short turf, masses of Common Spotted Orchids; as well as *Gentiana verna*, *Pedicularis sylvatica*, Lousewort and *Helianthemum canina*– the Burren Rockrose.

Our next stop was Black Head, a 1000 ft hill which runs down to the sea. We botanised round the base and found *Dryas octopetala*, Mountain Avens, the Burren Saxafrage, *S. rosaceae* and Maidenhair Fern. We then moved to The Rine, a low spit of land jutting out into the sea. The special plant here is *Limonium humile*, not quite in flower, growing among bright patches of thrift. We also saw a large-flowered Cerastium, *C. arvense*, growing along a sandy bank.

We had lunch at Monk's Bar in Ballyvaughan, famous for its excellent sea food.

In the afternoon we drove to Fanore and walked a little way along the Caher River, the only one in the Burren, looking at the flowery hillsides which included the Dense-flowered Orchid *Orchis intacta*, another pre-glacial relic from southern Europe; masses of Twayblades and the Common Butterbur, *Pinguicula vulgaris*. We then drove on to the Green Lane at Formoyle, an old stock road which runs the length of the Burren. The original walls are built with stones laid vertically. Here we saw patches of *Primula polyantha* and their parents *Primula vulgaris* and *P. Veris* at various stages of hybridisation.

Day 3

Thursday 28th May

A lovely day...we visited Kilfenora Cathedral, and the Burren Centre - for maps and guide books etc. Then on to Mullachmor, an area of limestone pavement with a rich flora and several turloughs – winter lakes - which almost disappear in the summer. We walked round one side of the biggest turlough, L. Gealain. This is a good place for orchids and we saw several, all within a few metres: *Dactylorhiza traunsteineri*, Narrow-Leaved Marsh Orchid; *D. incarnata* and *D. cruenta*, Early Marsh Orchids and *Ophrys insectivera*, Fly Orchid. There were many *Viola canina*, Dog Violets and the hybrid between them and *V. persicifolia*. The Turlough Violet, *V. persicifolia* grows very close to the lake edge and this year was submerged by the high water.

We left for a late lunch at Carran, climbing up a steep winding road above Mulloch Mor. And then on to the Cliffs of Moher, where we saw Razorbills, Kittiwakes, Puffins and Fulmars flying round the cliffs. On the way back we stopped at a marshy meadow above Doolin, colourful with Ragged Robin and some spectacular spikes of *Dactylorhiza majalis* subsp. *occidentalis*.

Day 4

Friday 29th May

We spent the morning walking in the dunes at Fanore and along the beach. High winds lashed the sea into spectacular waves. On the short turf we found Irish Eyebright and Wild Thyme; along the beach we found, *Cakile maritima*, Sea Rocket, and many clumps of Thrift. After the walk we boarded our bus for early flights from Shannon.

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Species List

Abbreviations and asterisks

PS = Poll Salach **MM** =Mullach Moor **Cap** = Cappanawalla

** = plants seen in previous years

Plants

Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
Aquifoliaceae		
<i>Ilex aquifolia</i>	Holly	scailps, common
Araliaceae		
<i>Hedera helix</i>	Ivy	common
Asteraceae		
<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow	The Rine
<i>Antennaria dioica</i>	Cat's -foot	Cap, etc
<i>Carlina vulgaris</i>	Carlina Thistle	The Rine
<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Common Knapweed	meadows
<i>Cirsium dissectum</i>	Bog Thistle	MM and Doolin meadow
<i>C. palustre</i>	Marsh Thistle	Doolin meadow
<i>C. vulgare</i>	Spear Thistle	The Rine
<i>Crepis vesicaria</i>	Beaked Hawk's Beard	roadsides
<i>Eupatorium cannabinum</i>	Hemp- agrimony	PS
<i>Heracium anglicum</i>	Irish Hawkweed	Cap.
<i>Hypochoeris radicata</i>	Common Cat's Ear	Cap.
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Ox-eye Daisy	Newtown, common
<i>Mycelis muralis</i>	Wall Lettuce	common
<i>Pilosella officinarum</i>	Mouse-ear Hawkweed	PS
<i>Solidago virgaurea</i>	Goldenrod	PS
<i>Sonchus asper</i>	Rough Sow-Thistle	Cliffs of Moher
<i>S. oleraceus</i>	Smooth Sow-thistle	roadsides
<i>Taraxacum palustre**</i>	Marsh Dandelion	MM
Betulaceae		
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>	Alder	common
<i>Betula pubescens</i>	Brown Birch	M.M etc
Boraginaceae		
<i>Symphytum officinale</i>	Comfrey	Formoyle
Brassicaceae		
<i>Arabis hirsuta</i>	Hairy Rock Cress	green lane
<i>Cakile maritima</i>	Sea Rocket	Rine and Fanore
<i>Cardamine pratensis</i>	Cuckoo Flower	common
<i>Cochlearia officinalis</i>	Scurvy Grass	PS
<i>Coronopus didymus</i>	Swine Cress	Kilfenora Cathedral
<i>Erophila verna</i>	Whitlow Grass	Lisdoonvarna
<i>Hesperis matronalis</i>	Dames' Violet	roadsides
<i>Raphanus raphanistrum</i> subsp. <i>maritimus</i>	Sea Radish	Fanore
<i>Sisymbrium officinale</i>	Hedge Mustard	roadsides
<i>Rorippa nasturtium-aquaticum</i>	Watercress	Cap.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
Campanulaceae <i>Jasione Montana**</i>	Bellflower Family Sheep's Bit	Cliffs of Moher
Caprifoliaceae <i>Lonicera periclymenum</i> <i>Symphoricarpos albus</i> <i>Viburnum opulus</i>	Honeysuckle Family Honeysuckle Snowberry Guelder Rose	PS Cap. Cap.
Cariophyllaceae <i>Antenaria serpyllifolia</i> <i>Cerastium arvense</i> <i>C. diffusum</i> <i>C. fontanum</i> <i>Honkenia peploides</i> <i>Lychnis flos-cuculi</i> <i>Minuartia verna</i> <i>M. hybrida</i> <i>Silene vulgaris subsp. maritima</i> <i>Spergularia marina</i> <i>S. media</i> <i>Stellaria holostea</i> <i>S. media</i>	Pink Family Thyme-leaved Sandwort Field Mouse-ear Dark Green Chickweed Common Mouse-ear Sea Sandwort Ragged Robin Vernal Sandwort Fine-leaved Sandwort Sea Campion Lesser Sea Spurrey Greater Sea Spurrey Greater Stitchwort Common Chickweed	PS The Rine The Rine common Fanore and The Rine common PS MM PS The Rine The Rine roadsides roadsides
Celastraceae <i>Euonymus europaeus</i>	Spindle Family Spindle	Cap.
Chenopodiaceae <i>Atriplex portulacoides</i> <i>A. prostrata</i> <i>A. glabriuscula</i> <i>Beta vulgaris subsp maritima</i> <i>Suaeda maritima</i>	Fat Hen Family Sea-purslane Spear-leaved Oranche Babington's Oranche Sea Beet Annual Sea Blight	The Rine The Rine The Rine PS & Fanore The Rine
Cistaceae <i>Helianthemum canum</i>	Rockrose Family Burren Rockrose	scailps, common
Convolvulaceae <i>Calystegia soldanella</i>	Bindweed Family Sea Bindweed	dunes, Fanore
Cornaceae <i>Cornus sanguinea</i>	Dogwood Family Dogwood	Cap.
Corylaceae <i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel Family Hazel	very common, invasive
Crassulaceae <i>Sedum acre</i> <i>S. album</i> <i>Umbilicus rupestris</i>	Stonecrop Family Biting Stonecrop White Stonecrop Pennywort	PS MM Kilfenora Cathedral
Empetraceae <i>Empetrium nigrum**</i>	Crowberry Family Crowberry	Black Head

Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
Ericaceae	Heath Family	
<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i> **	Bearberry	Black Head
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	Heather	common
<i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i>	Bilberry	Black Head
Euphorbiaceae	Spurge Family	
<i>Euphorbia helioscopia</i>	Sun Spurge	green lane
<i>E. paralias</i>	Sea Spurge	dunes, Famore
<i>E. portlandica</i> **	Portland Spurge	dunes, Fanore
Gentianaceae	Gentian Family	
<i>Blackstonia perfoliata</i>	Yellow Wort	Cap.
<i>Gentiana verna</i>	Spring Gentian	common
Geraniaceae	Geranium Family	
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	Storksbill	The Rine
<i>Geranium columbinum</i>	Long-stalked Cranesbill	The Rine
<i>G. molle</i>	Soft Cranesbill	common
<i>G. lucidum</i>	Shining Cranesbill	Cap.
<i>G. robertianum</i>	Herb Robert	common
<i>G. sanguineum</i>	Bloody Cranesbill	scailps, common
Hypericaceae	St John's Wort Family	
<i>Hypericum androsaemum</i>	Tutsan	scailps
<i>H. pulchrum</i>	Beautiful St John's Wort	Cap
<i>H. tetrapterum</i>	Square-stalked St John's Wort	green lane
Lamiaceae	Mint Family	
<i>Ajuga pyramidalis</i> **	Pyramidal Bugle	
<i>A. reptans</i> **	Bugle	
<i>Mentha aquatica</i>	Water Mint	Caher River
<i>Oreganum vulgare</i>	Marjoram	MM
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	Self Heal	common
<i>Teucrium scorodonia</i>	Wood Sage	common
<i>Thymus polytrichus</i>	Wild Thyme	common
Fabaceae	Pea Family	
<i>Anthyllis vulneria</i>	Kidney Vetch	PS
<i>Lathyrus linifolius</i>	Bitter Vetch	Cap.
<i>L. pratensis</i>	Yellow Vetchling	Cap.
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Birds Foot Trefoil	common
<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	Black Medick	Fanore
<i>Trifolium dubium</i>	Shamrock	common
<i>Vicia sativa</i>	Common Vetch	roadsides
<i>V. sepium</i>	Bush Vetch	roadsides
Lentibulariaceae	Butterwort Family	
<i>Pinguicula grandiflora</i>	Greater Butterwort	Cap.
<i>P. vulgaris</i>	Common Butterwort	Khyber Pass
Linaceae	Flax Family	
<i>Linum catharticum</i>	Purging Flax	Cap.

Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
Orobanchaceae <i>Orobanche alba</i> **	Broomrape Family Thyme Broomrape	PS
Plantaganaceae <i>Plantago coronopus</i> <i>P. maritima</i> <i>P. lanceolata</i>	Plantain Family Buck's Horn Plantain Sea Plantain Ribwort Plantain	PS common common
Plumbaginaceae <i>Armeria maritima</i> <i>Limonium humile</i> <i>L. recurvum</i> <i>subsp. pseudotranswallianum</i>	Sea Lavender Family Thrift Lax-flowered Sea Lavender Rock Sea Lavender	common The Rine rocks, PS
Polygalaceae <i>Polygala vulgaris</i>	Milkwort Family Common Milkwort	common
Polygonaceae <i>Polygonum hydropiper</i> <i>Rumex acetosa</i>	Knotweed Family Water Pepper Common Sorrel	ponds common
Primulaceae <i>Glaux maritima</i> <i>Lysimachia nemorum</i> <i>Primula veris</i> <i>P. vulgaris</i> <i>P. polyantha (P. vulgaris x P veris)</i> <i>Samolus valerandi</i>	Primrose Family Sea Milkwort Yellow Pimpernel Cowslip Primrose Brookweed	The Rine green lane common common green lane PS
Ranunculaceae <i>Aquilegia vulgaris</i> <i>Caltha palustre</i> <i>Ranunculus flammula</i> <i>R. bulbosa</i> <i>R. acris</i> <i>Thalictrum minus</i>	Buttercup Family Columbine King Cup Lesser Spearwort Bulbous Buttercup common Buttercup Lesser Meadow-rue	Cap Caher River MM dunes, Famore common Blackhead
Rhamnaceae <i>Frangula alnus</i> <i>Rhamnus catharticus</i>	Buckthorn Family Alder Buckthorn Buckthorn	MM MM
Rosaceae <i>Alchemilla xanthochlora</i> <i>Aphanes australis</i> <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> <i>Dryas octopetala</i> <i>Filipendula ulmaria</i> <i>Geum rivale</i> <i>G. urbanum</i> <i>Potentilla anserina</i> <i>P. erecta</i> <i>P. fruticosa</i> <i>P. reptans</i>	Rose Family Pale Lady's Mantle Slender Parsley Piert Hawthorn Mountain Avens Meadowsweet Water Avens Wood Avens Silverweed Tomentil Shrubby Cinquefoil Creeping Cinquefoil	Green Lane The Rine scailps and roadsides Blackhead etc Caher River green lane hedgerows common common MM Cap

Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
<i>Prunus spinosa</i>	Blackthorn	scailps and roadsides
<i>Rosa pimpinellifolia</i>	Scotch Rose	scailps, common
<i>Rubus caesius</i>	Dewberry	roadsides
<i>R. saxatilis</i>	Stone Bramble	MM
<i>Sanguisorba minor</i>	Salad Burnet	Cap
<i>Sorbus aria</i>	Whitebeam	Cap
<i>S. aucuparia</i>	Mountain Ash	Cap
Rubiaceae	Bedstraw Family	
<i>Asperula cynanchica</i>	Squinancywort	PS
<i>Galium boreale</i>	Northern Bedstraw	MM
<i>G. odoratum</i>	Sweet Woodruffe	Cap.
<i>G. palustre</i>	Marsh Bedstraw	MM
<i>G. sternerii</i>	Limestone Bedstraw	common
<i>G. verum</i>	Lady's Bedstraw	green lane
<i>Rubia peregrina</i>	Wild Madder	Cap etc
Salicaceae	Willow Family	
<i>Salix aurita</i>	Eared Willow	MM etc
<i>S. caprea</i>	Goat Willow	roadsides
<i>S. pentandra</i>	Bay Willow	roadsides
<i>S. repens</i>	Creeping Willow	MM
<i>Populus tremula</i>	Aspen	Green Lane
Saxifragaceae	Saxifrage Family	
<i>Chrysosplenium oppositifolium</i>	Golden Saxifrage **	Black Head
<i>Saxifraga hypnoides</i>	Mossy saxifrage **	Black Head
<i>S. tridactylites</i>	Rue-leaved Saxifrage	The Rine
<i>S. rosaceae</i>	The Burren Saxifrage	Black Head
Scrophulariaceae	Figwort Family	
<i>Cymbalaria muralis</i>	Ivy-leaved Toadflax	Kilfenora
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	Foxglove	roadsides
<i>Erinus alpinus</i>	Fairy Foxglove	walls, Pinnacle Well
<i>Euphrasia salisburgensis</i> var . <i>hibernica</i>	Irish Narrow-leaved Eyebright	Fanore
<i>Pedicularis sylvatica</i>	Lousewort	PS
<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>	Hayrattle	PS
<i>Veronica arvensis</i>	Wall Speedwell	Fanore
<i>V. beccabunga</i>	Brooklime	Caher River
<i>V. chamaedrys</i>	Germander Speedwell	common
<i>V. officinalis</i>	Common Speedwell	Green Lane
<i>V. serpyllifolia</i>	Thyme-leaved Speedwell	Green Lane
Umbelliferae	Hedge Parsley Family	
<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	Hedge Parsley	common
<i>Apium nodiflora</i>	Fool's Watercress	Caher River
<i>Conium maculata</i>	Hemlock	roadsides
<i>Conopodium majus</i>	Pignut	Cap.
<i>Crithmum maritimum</i>	Samphire	PS
<i>Eryngium maritimum</i>	Sea Holly	Fanore
<i>Hydrocotyle vulgaris**</i>	Marsh Pennywort	
<i>Sanicula europaea</i>	Sanicle	scailps

Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
<i>Smyrniolum olusatrum</i>	Alexanders	roadsides
Urticaceae	Nettle Family	
<i>Parietaria judaica</i>	Pellitory of the Wall	Newtown Castle
Valerianaceae	Valerian Family	
<i>Valeriana officinalis</i>	Valerian	roadsides
<i>Valeriana locusta</i>	Lamb's Lettuce	Fanore
Violaceae	Violet Family	
<i>Viola canina</i>	Heath Dog Violet	MM
<i>V. canina x persicifolia</i> = <i>V. ritschliana</i>		MM
<i>V. persicifolia</i>	Turloch Violet	MM
<i>V. riviniana</i>	Common Dog Violet	common
<i>V. tricolor</i> subsp. <i>curtisii</i> **	Sandhill Pansy	dunes, Fanore
MONOCOTYLEDONS		
Alliaceae	Onion Family	
<i>Allium triquetrum</i> **	Three-cornered Garlic	Black Head
Cyperaceae	Sedge Family	
<i>Eriophorum angustifolium</i>	Common Cotton Grass	peat bogs
<i>E. vaginatum</i> **	Hare's Tail Cotton Grass	peat bogs
<i>Carex arenaria</i>	Sand Sedge	dunes, Fanore
<i>C. binervis</i>	Green-ribbed Sedge	Cap. & MM
<i>C. elata</i>	Tufted Sedge	MM
<i>C. flacca</i>	Glaucous Sedge	common
<i>C. hostiana</i>	Tawny Sedge	Cap
<i>C. panicea</i>	Carnation Sedge	Cap.
<i>C. pendula</i>	Pendulous Sedge	Lisdoonvarna wood
<i>C. remota</i>	Remote Sedge	Lisdoonvarna wood
<i>C. sylvatica</i>	Wood Sedge	Lisdoonvarna wood
<i>C. viridula</i> subsp. <i>brachyrhyncha</i>	Long-stalked Yellow Sedge	Cap.
<i>C. veridula</i> subsp. <i>oedocarpa</i>	Common Yellow Sedge	Cap.
<i>Cladium mariscus</i>	Great Fan Sedge	MM
<i>Schoenus nigricans</i>	Black Bog Rush	common
Iridaceae	Iris Family	
<i>Iris pseudachorus</i>	Yellow Iris	common, ponds & rivers
Juncaceae	Rush Family	
<i>Juncus conglomeratus</i>	Common Rush	common
<i>J. effusus</i>	Soft Rush	meadows
<i>Luzula campestris</i>	Field Woodrush	meadow
<i>L. sylvatica</i>	Great Wood Rush	Lisdoonvarna wood
Juncaginaceae	Arrowgrass Family	
<i>Triglochin maritimum</i>	Sea Arrowgrass	The Rine
Orchidaceae	Orchid Family	
<i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i> **	Pyramid Orchid	dunes, Fanore

Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
<i>Dactylorhiza cruenta</i>	spots on both leaf surfaces	
<i>D. fuchsii</i>	Common Spotted Orchid	MM
<i>D. fuchsia subsp. okellii**</i>	O'Kelly's Orchid	MM
<i>D. incarnata</i>	Early Marsh Orchid	MM
<i>D. maculata subsp. ericetorum</i>	Heath Spotted Orchid	common
<i>D. majalis subsp. occidentalis</i>	Broad-leaved Marsh Orchid	Cap and Doolin Meadow
<i>D. traunsteineri</i>	Narrow-leaved Marsh Orchid	MM
<i>Epipactis atrorubens **</i>	Dark-flowered Helleborine	
<i>E. helleborine</i>	Broad-leaved Helleborine	MM
<i>Gymnandenia conopsea</i>	Fragrant Orchid	dunes, Fanore
<i>Listera ovata</i>	Twayblade	common
<i>Orchis intacta</i>	Dense-flowered Orchid	green lane & Khyber Pass
<i>Ophrys apifera</i>	Bee Orchid	dunes, Fanore
<i>O. insectivora</i>	Fly Orchid	MM
<i>Orchis mascula</i>	Early Purple Orchid	common
<i>Platanthera biflora</i>	Lesser Butterfly Orchid	MM
Poaceae	Grass Family	
<i>Alopecurus geniculatus</i>	Marsh Foxtail	damp meadows
<i>Ammophila arenaria</i>	Marram Grass	Fanore
<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	Sweet Vernal Grass	roadsides
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	False Oat-grass	roadsides
<i>Briza media</i>	Quaking Grass	limestone
<i>Catapodium rigidum</i>	Fern Grass	PS
<i>C. maritimum</i>	Sea Fern Grass	PS
<i>Cynosurus crestatus</i>	Crested Dog's Tail	common
<i>Dactylus glomerata</i>	Cocksfoot	common
<i>Elytrigia juncea</i>	Sand Couch	Fanore
<i>Helictotrichon pubescens</i>	Downy Oat Grass	Green Lane
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial Ryegrass	common: meadows
<i>Melica uniflora</i>	Wood Medick	scailps
<i>Molinia caerulea</i>	Purple Moor Grass	MM
<i>Poa pratensis</i>	Smooth Meadow-grass	meadows
<i>Puccinellia maritima</i>	Common Saltmarsh Grass	Fanore
<i>Sesleria caerulea</i>	Blue Moor Grass	.most common grass
GYMNOSPERMS		
<i>Juniperis communis</i>	Juniper	Green Lane
<i>Taxus baccata</i>	Yew	common
FERNS		
<i>Adiantum capillus-veneris</i>	Maidenhair Fern	PS
<i>Anthyrium felix-femina</i>	Lady Fern	roadsides
<i>Asplenium marinum</i>	Sea Spleenwort	PS
<i>A. ruta-muraria</i>	Wall Rue	common
<i>A. trichomanes</i>	Maidenhair Spleenwort	common
<i>Blechnum spicant</i>	Hard Fern	roadsides
<i>Ceterach officinarum</i>	Rusty-back Fern	common
<i>Cystopteris fragilis</i>	Brittle Bladder Fern	Lisdoonvarna Spa
<i>Dryopteris affinis</i>	Scaly Male Fern	Doolin meadow
<i>D. dilatata</i>	Broad Buckler Fern	Lisdoonvarna wood
<i>D.felix-mas</i>	Male Fern	Green Lane
<i>Phyllitis scolopendrium</i>	Heart's Tongue Fern	common

Scientific Name	Common Name	Location
<i>Polypodium australe</i>	Southern Polypody	Black Head
<i>Polystichum aculeatum</i>	Hard Shield Fern	common
<i>P. lonchitis</i> **	Holly Fern	Blackhead

Original List made from *Flora of Connemara and The Burren* (D.A Webb and M.J.P Scannell (1983))

Floras used: *New Flora of the British Isles* (Clive Stace)

Wild Flowers of Britain and Northern Europe (Collins Pocket Guide)

Orchids: Pierre Delforge