



# Roadside Wildflower Survey

Woodbury Parish

Survey results 2009 v 2019

# The Process

4 x 30m roadside verge sites chosen for comparison at different heights above sea level

Soil tests carried out in 2008 and 2019

Plants in flower recorded regularly 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2019

2009 and 2019 results compared to see a decade of change

2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 surveys completed by Sally Elliott and Sylvia Wickenden  
2019 survey completed by Sally Elliott and Susie Culhane



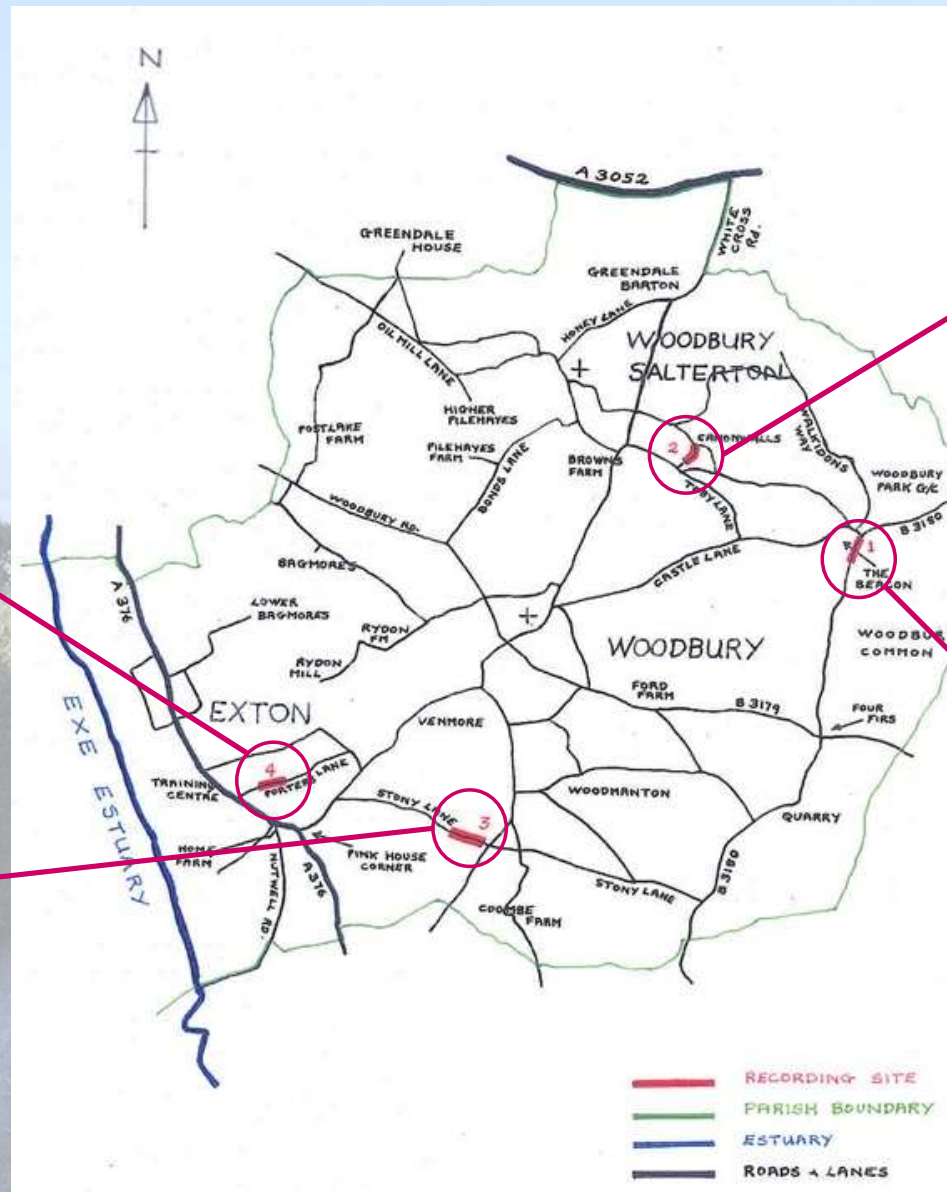
# Survey sites

4. Porters Lane  
near Toby Carvery,  
Lymington A376

3. Stony Lane  
down from  
Coniger Cross,  
Woodbury

2. 'Flower Lane'  
near Cannonwalls,  
Woodbury Salterton

1. The Beacon  
edge of Woodbury  
Common, junction  
with Castle Lane and  
B3180



Map created by Sylvia Wickenden

# Results

Changes in last decade	2009	2019	Change
Number of wildflower species recorded	228	162	<b>-29%</b>
Average annual rainfall	800mm	848mm*	<b>+6%</b>
Average daily max temperatures	Jan 7°C July 20°C	Jan 8.8°C July 21.7°C	<b>+1.7%</b> <b>+1.8%</b>

\*Met Office data (Exeter Airport)



Five new  
species  
reported in  
2019



Rape



Field Mouse-Ear



Woodruff



Field Madder



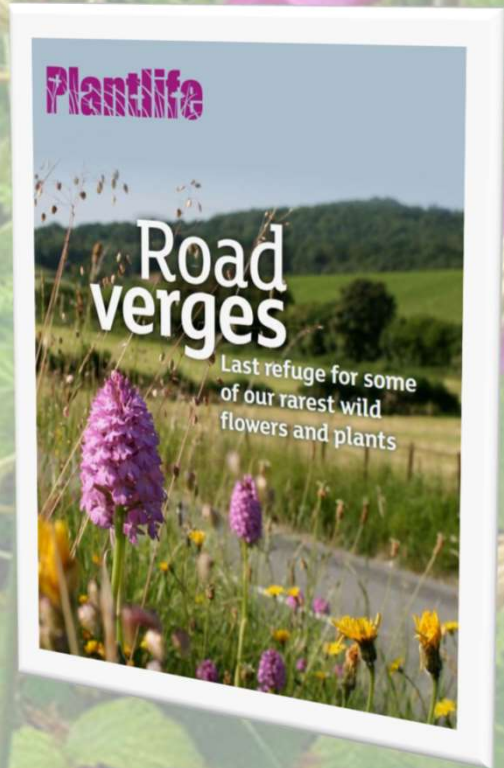
Yellow Archangel



# Why do we need wildflowers on roadsides?

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- Provide a 'wildlife corridor'
- Biodiversity (loss = species extinction)
- Rich food source for beneficial key pollination insects
- Historical and cultural value
- Last refuge for rare wildflowers and plants



*Apis mellifera* Honey bee on clematis 18th May 17 – image by Malcolm Randle





Over 10 years,  
wildflower diversity  
has decreased by 31%

B3180 on Woodbury Common [cc-by-sa/2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/) - © [Derek Harper](https://www.geograph.org.uk/p/1959533) - [geograph.org.uk/p/1959533](https://www.geograph.org.uk/p/1959533)

## Site 1: The Beacon

Roadside stretch on Woodbury Common, approx. 30m on both east and west side of B3180 near junction with Castle Lane. Within Visibility Splay.

One new species was recorded here  
in 2019: Field Mouse-Ear







Over 10 years,  
wildflower diversity  
has decreased by 21%

cc-by-sa/2.0 - Wood Anemones (Anemone... by Andrew Curtis - [geograph.org.uk/p/1821694](http://geograph.org.uk/p/1821694)

## Site 2: Flower Lane\* near Cannonwalls

Unmarked road, known as 'Flower Lane' due to multitude of wildflowers on the verges in the 70s



2 new species  
recorded here in  
2019: Yellow  
Archangel and  
Woodruff





Over 10 years,  
wildflower diversity  
has decreased by 15%

## Site 3: Stony Lane

Steeply banked lane descending from Conigar Cross  
to Exmouth Road, Woodbury



Two new species  
recorded in 2019:  
Rape and Field  
Madder





Over 10 years,  
wildflower diversity has  
decreased by 48%

## Site 4: Porters Lane, Exton

Very quiet lane from Exmouth Road to A376 Toby Carvery.  
Waterlogged in January 2019. Verges strimmed in May.

Despite not being in a flood risk area, the  
lane was waterlogged in January 2019





# Floral Diversity by Survey Site 2019 vs. 2009

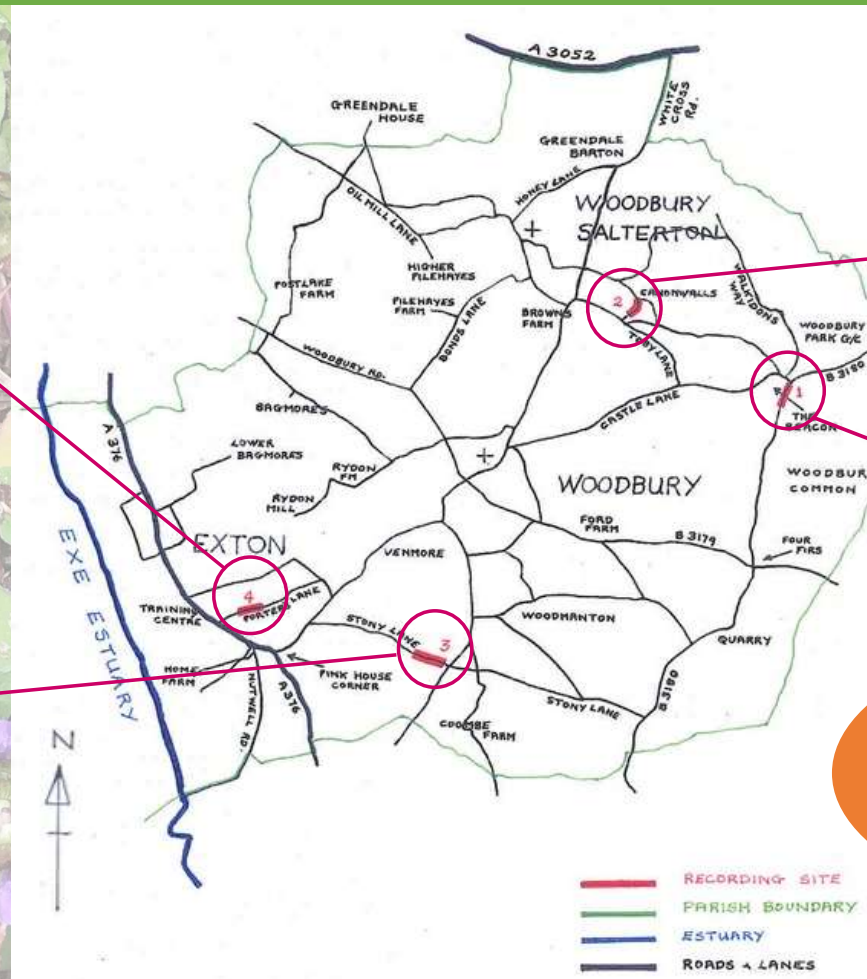
**4. Porters Lane**  
48% decrease

**3. Stony Lane**  
15% decrease

**2. Flower Lane**  
21% decrease

**1. The Beacon**  
31% decrease

Over all 4 sites,  
floral diversity  
decreased by 29%



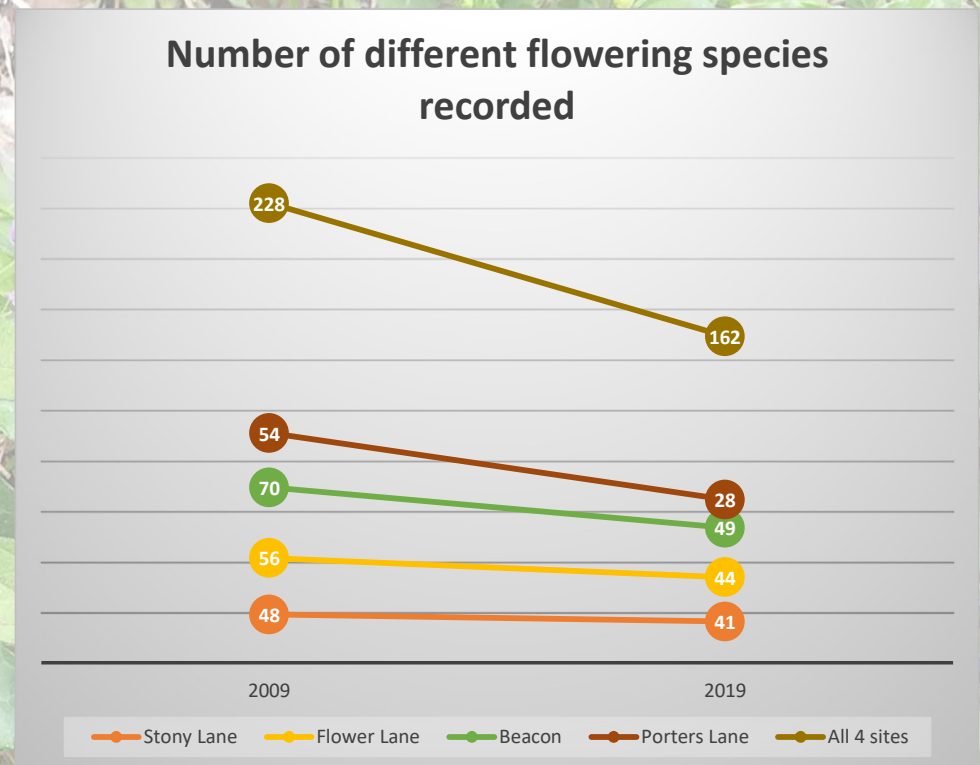
Map created by Sylvia Wickenden



# Why has floral diversity decreased?

We suggest the following reasons:

- Climate change – rising temperatures, increased rainfall leading to flooding
- Verge cutting regimes practised by Highways Agency and individuals
- Traffic and footfall rise (6% rise in population + vehicles)
- Agricultural machinery increasing in size, leading to verge erosion
- Changes in agricultural methods
- Pollution





# What can we do?

Thank you!

## Our Recommendations:

- Plant native wildflowers in our gardens
- Take part in local wildflower surveys
- Support charities which conserve wildflowers
- Encourage those in power to protect nature
- Avoid driving over or parking on verges
- Do not strim verges between April and July so flowers can set seed
- Collect clippings once strimmed to avoid increasing nutrients on the verges

2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011 wildflower surveys conducted by Sylvia Wickenden and Sally Elliott

2019 wildflower survey conducted by Sally Elliott and Susie Culhane

In conjunction with [Woodbury-Wide-Awake.co.uk](http://Woodbury-Wide-Awake.co.uk)

Data comparison compiled by  
Susie Culhane November 2019

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