

PLANTLIFE ANNUAL REVIEW CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT ROGER CROFTS 2010

In our twentieth anniversary year, we significantly raised our profile on plant conservation and achieved good progress on restoration of plants in the wild.

Statistics show a continuing decline of wild plants with one fifth of the UK's wild flowers threatened with extinction. However, all is not lost and during the year we noted some plant comeback successes. A large increase in meadow chary was recorded in Gloucestershire, and the reappearance of march clubmoss in the Thames basin and pigmy rush in Cornwall. There and other successes are testimony to the efforts of staff and volunteers clearing sites of invasives and preparing the conditions for the return of native plants.

We published the *Ghost Orchid Declaration: Saving the UK's wild flowers today*. Our three point plan for plants was the heart of the document: greater investment in wild plants, better protection for plants through legislation, and improving the working landscape for plants through changes in the support regimes for farmers. Our launches at the Houses of Parliament and at the Scottish Parliament were well attended with support from politicians, campaigners and sister organisations.

At a time of severe turbulence in the financial markets, I am pleased to report that our financial position has strengthened. We had the good sense to put our reserves into cash before the crunch and are only now beginning to place them back on the market with the help of our new financial advisers. We have received additional resources from one of our benefactors.

We began implementation of our reserves review. A new trail was inaugurated at our Munsary reserve in Caithness. We recommenced coppicing of native woodlands at Ranscombe in Kent. We prepared plans for greater activity at Ranscombe, and for a major open event at our Deepdale reserve in Derbyshire.

On the international front, we published *Important Plant Areas in south east Europe*, handed over key responsibilities to partners for Planta Europa, and began preparations for the review of the Global Plant Conservation Strategy.

We reviewed what we do and how we describe ourselves with the help of professional advisors. We also changed our logo which most people did not associate with us to one which is incorporated in our name which quite rightly has stood the test of time. Go to the web site to see its new look and find lots of information in a more exciting and accessible form.

My thanks to my fellow trustees, Victoria Chester and all of our staff for their dedication and commitment, and to all supporters, volunteers and funders for their continuing support to enable us to enter our third decade to raise even further the profile of wild plants and secure their future.