

The re-discovery of Warty Cabbage *Bunias orientalis* L. in Worcestershire

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During the course of preparing *The Flora of Worcestershire* (Maskew, 2014) I examined the complete herbarium in the Worcester Museum. This contained a large number of specimens which had been collected almost entirely from the Malvern district by Richard Towndrow, mainly during the last twenty years of the nineteenth century. Eventually I came across a folder simply marked 'Cruciferae?'. The folder contained several species, that are now nationally much rarer than formerly, for which there appears to have been no recent records for the county.

One of these is Warty Cabbage (01), which I found this year scattered over a large area of rough grassland above Conderton on Bredon Hill, SO7638, the only previous record being Towndrow's as a probable grain-alien in railway sidings at Malvern in 1898. The other *Brassicaceae* (*Cruciferae*) species in the folder, all of which are neophytes that seem to have occurred briefly as casuals in transient habitats, were *Coringia orientalis* (Hare's-ear Mustard), rubbish heap, Malvern Link, and garden, Lower Howsell, 1896; *Rapistrum perene* (Steppe Cabbage), railway, Malvern, 1927; *Erysimum repandum* (Spreading Treacle-mustard), Malvern Common, 1886; *Brassica elongata* (Long-stalked Rape), Interfield, 1896. The last two were subsequently found by Hardaker on a tip at Broadwaters, Kidderminster pre-1952 (Hardaker, 1954). According to Stace (2019), *Rapistrum perene* possibly no longer occurs.



01. Warty Cabbage *Bunias orientalis*, Bredon Hill 2019. Roger Maskew.

Richard Towndrow was by far the most competent and advanced Worcestershire botanist at the end of the nineteenth century, for example, many of his *Rumex* and *Epilobium* hybrids have been confirmed in recent years. This was a remarkable achievement for this era, but probably because limited information was available at the time, it seems the determination of this small number of *Brassicaceae* species was a step too far for him.

References

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- Maskew, R. (2014). *The Flora of Worcestershire*. Privately published, Tenbury Wells.
- Stace, C. (2019). *New Flora of the British Isles*. ed 4. C & M Floristics, Middlewood Green.