

FOUND POEM : CLARE'S ORCHIS'S

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ORCHIS'S COUNTED FROM PRIVET HEDGE

1. -- Tway blade
2. -- Pyrimidial Spotted
3. -- Lily Leaved
4. -- Ditto
5. -- Red Man
6. -- Aromatic
7. -- Lily Leaved
8. -- Pyrimidial Plain
9. -- Butterflye
10. -- Tway blade
11. -- Female or Meadow
12. -- Butterflye
13. -- Male or Wood
14. -- [~~Tway blade~~] Birds Nest
15. -- Red Man
16. -- Green Man
17. -- Spider
18. -- Military
19. -- Green Man
20. -- Ditto
21. -- Bee
22. -- Green Man

This entry in a notebook of John Clare, the Northamptonshire nature poet (1793-1846) lists the wild orchids he had managed to cultivate in his garden.

From The Natural History Prose Writings of John Clare, Editor Margaret Grainger, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1983.

I came across this in August 1997 and declare it 'a found poem' (Cat No 511) because of the vivid picture it gives us of the abundance of now rare orchids in his locality in the 1820s.

A performance piece for free improvisation by voices and instruments.