

Thank you

The Society gratefully acknowledges grants from the Countryside Council for Wales, Natural England and Scottish Natural Heritage. The Society wishes to thank all those members who have served, both nationally and regionally, as officers, on committees, as editors and indexers, in leading and arranging meetings and as assistant secretaries and as minuting secretaries; also members who have participated in surveys, prepared reports and read papers. BSBI would especially like to thank its network of Vice-county Recorders and Referees which underpins so much of its work. BSBI has Recorders for each of the 153 main units into which naturalists have traditionally divided Britain and Ireland. With subdivisions such as the Isles of Scilly and the individual Channel Islands and with joint recorders for some counties, this encompasses about 180 members. To support all members engaged in recording BSBI has a team of 115 referees covering many of the more taxing genera. Many of these volunteers have served for very many years, and, whilst these are only a selection, the Society notes the retirement of Peter Benoit (Merioneth, 1954), Quentin Kay (W. Glamorgan, 1983), Douglas McKean (Midlothian, 1980) and Morven Murray (E. Sutherland, 1996). Without the contribution of all these the work of the Society could not have been possible, for with the exception of those who work for the Society within grant-aided projects, every other duty is performed by volunteers.

BSBI is indebted for the continued support from its many partners:
Biological Records Centre, Wallingford
Birmingham and Midland Institute
Countryside Council for Wales
The Field Studies Council (in particular Preston Montford Field Centre)
Joint Nature Conservation Committee
Linnean Society of London
National Biodiversity Data Centre, Waterford
National Biodiversity Network Trust
National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin
Natural England
Natural History Museum, London
Plantlife International
Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
Royal Welsh Agricultural Society
Scottish Natural Heritage
Society of Antiquaries, London
Summerfield Books
The National Museums and Galleries of Wales
Ulster Museum, Belfast
University of Birmingham
University of Leicester

The Society is also very grateful to its staff who have continued to support its volunteer network and to promote BSBI at all times: Kevin Walker, Alex Lockton, Bob Ellis, Jim McIntosh, Quentin Groom, Tom Humphrey and Alan Hale.



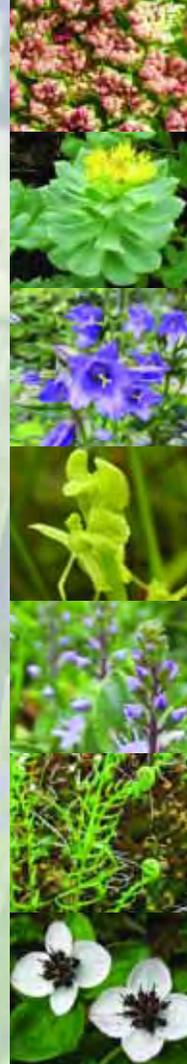
The Botanical Society of the British Isles (BSBI) is open to anyone who is interested in the flora of Britain and Ireland. From its earliest days (1836) it has welcomed both professional and amateur members. BSBI is one of the world's largest contributors of biological records, providing over ten million items of data to the Vascular Plants Database. The Society's notable recent achievements include The New Atlas of the British and Irish flora (2002). Jointly with the Biological Records Centre, it was the data provider underpinning the new Vascular Plant Red Data List for Great Britain (2005). The Society maintains several major databases, covering a total of 9,700 plant species. All this activity is coordinated by 180 'Vice-county Recorders' and a network of Referees distributed across Britain and Ireland. It has 2,972 members and five full or part-time paid staff aided by others on small contracts.

BSBI's key objectives are:

- promoting the study of, and interest in, the British and Irish vascular plant and charophyte flora
- supporting, encouraging, conducting and participating in research into the taxonomy, ecology, biogeography and conservation of the British and Irish flora
- co-operating with continental and other botanists in matters of mutual interest and concern.

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Annual Review 2010



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BSBI Recording Strategy

In May 2010 BSBI Plant Unit published a booklet *Recording the British and Irish Flora 2010-2020* setting out a plan of what the Society hopes to achieve over the next ten years.

Conferences

Two successful conference were staged: one on 'All you ever wanted to know about DNA and Plant Genetics' was held at Leicester in June, another on 'Botanical Hotspots in Britain and Ireland: who revealed them and when?' was held at Birmingham in November.

Coming in 2011

New Journal of Botany

The new journal to replace *Watsonia* is to be launched in the summer.

BSBI Welsh Officer

Funding has been agreed in principle for a first BSBI Welsh Officer.



**SUMMARY STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
For the year ended 31st December 2010**

	2010	2009
Incoming Resources	£	£
Voluntary Income		
Subscriptions & Donations	79,858	77,341
Core Grants	73,376	89,462
Legacies and Development Fund Donations	10,000	12,715
Investment Income	37,789	39,124
Charitable Activities Income		
Botanical Survey and Interpretation	50,490	26,510
Botanical Education	13,221	1,124
Botanical Publications and Website	29,895	78,551
	294,629	324,827
Resources Expended		
Cost of Generating Funds		
Membership Administration and Publicity	12,110	9,956
Charitable Activities		
Botanical Survey and Interpretation	193,966	163,155
Botanical Education	26,488	17,045
Botanical Publications	56,112	94,521
Governance Costs	17,294	17,731
	305,970	302,408
Net Incoming Resources		
General Funds	(11,232)	22,409
Restricted Funds	(109)	10
Total Net Surplus/(deficit)	(11,341)	22,419
Gains (loss) on Investments	97,133	161,503
	85,792	183,922

Summary Balance Sheet 31st December 2010

	2010	2009
	£	£
Fixed Assets		
Investments - at Market Value	1,162,038	1,064,904
Current Assets		
Stocks and Work in Progress	16,092	22,045
Debtors	33,447	36,377
Cash at Bank and on Deposit	150,281	152,078
Current Liabilities		
Creditors & Deferred Income	(35,969)	(35,307)
	1,325,889	1,240,097
Represented By		
Endowment Funds	335,029	308,381
Restricted Income Funds	6,618	6,727
Allan Hamerschlag Fund	675,415	618,958
Other Unrestricted Income Funds	308,827	306,031
	1,325,889	1,240,097

The summary accounts are extracted from the full Annual Accounts that were approved by Council on 23 March 2011. The full Annual Accounts have been subject to an Independent Examination and this report was unqualified. A copy of the full Annual Report and Accounts will be supplied on request to the Hon. Treasurer. The full Annual Report will be submitted to the Charity Commission and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator after the Annual General Meeting.

Comparing income with expenditure there was a modest deficit of £11,341 (2009: a surplus of £22,419). The budget for the year set by Council anticipated a larger deficit, £30,000, reflecting its desire to make more use of the substantial reserves that the Society has, particularly in the area of data collection and interpretation of that data, where the Society has unparalleled expertise. The smaller deficit is a consequence of more income achieved by the Plant Unit.

A reduction in core grant income was more than offset by higher contract income. Indeed the shift away from the former to contracts with defined outputs is likely to be seen more strongly in the current year as the budgets of funding bodies come under pressure. The direct costs of delivering these contracts and a planned increase in staffing meant that the Plant Unit showed a larger deficit compared to 2009 but less than budgeted.

The Society's investment portfolio had another strong year, and there was another significant rise in value over the year. The income yield and rise in value of the portfolio was equivalent to a 12% return on the brought forward market value. Much of the fall in value suffered in 2008 has now been recovered.

Council has set a budget for 2011 which shows a deficit of just over £27,000. Funding is less secure, but given the strength of the Society's balance sheet any action to balance income and expenditure need not be taken until next year.

Terry Swainbank
Treasurer

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT ON SUMMARISED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

I have examined the summarised financial statements of Botanical Society of the British Isles for the year ended 31 December 2010.

Respective responsibilities of the trustees and examiner

The trustees are responsible for preparing the summarised financial statements in accordance with applicable United Kingdom law and the recommendations of the Charities SORP. My responsibility is to report to you my opinion on the consistency of the summarised financial statements, within the Annual Report, with the full annual financial statements.

My report on the charity's full annual financial statements describes the basis of my report on those financial statements.

Opinion

In my opinion the summarised financial statements are consistent with the full annual financial statements of Botanical Society of the British Isles for the year ended 31 December 2010.

**E E Irvine FCA
WMT LLP**

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24 March 2011

Following wide consultation within the Society and beyond BSBI Plant Unit published a booklet *Recording the British and Irish Flora 2010-2020* in May 2010. This builds on the achievements of the last decade to set out an ambitious, but realistic, plan to ensure that our field-recording meets conservation needs and is able to monitor change in the flora. There is recognition that fine-scale recording is essential to supplement our traditional 10km-scale national Atlas projects and county tetrad Floras.



This plan depends on the Society continuing to receive the support it needs both from volunteer recorders and from funders, so that our Plant Unit can support the individual projects in the plan. No effort is being spared in our endeavours to ensure that funders are fully aware of the great benefits which can flow from our projects for very modest outlays.

Meanwhile it has been a classic year for county Floras published by our members. Martin Sanford's *A Flora of Suffolk*, with Richard Fisk for the bryophytes, and Trevor James's *Flora of Hertfordshire* are amazing heavyweights which have done their counties proud. Arthur Chater's *Flora of Cardiganshire* is supreme. No one else has matched him for painstaking detail and attention to infra-specific taxa. But he is strong on the human side too, with memorials to past botanists and photographs of those he has worked with in their natural habitats. BSBI should take heart from the words with which he begins the book: 'This Flora would have been inconceivable without the inspiration, services, contacts and expertise provided by the Botanical Society

of the British Isles'. Thank you, Arthur.

Ian Bonner will take over from me as president at the AGM. I have had the privilege of working with him in a variety of ways over the years and know that he will lead the Society well. Please welcome him warmly.

Michael Braithwaite March 2011



BSBI Recording Strategy

The publication of this strategy in May 2010 marked a significant stage in the development of our Plant Unit, and for the first time the Society has a plan of what it hopes to achieve over the next ten years. It includes details of how the Plant Unit can support recorders in achieving these objectives. The Society's partners have also found it useful as it allows them to see how our work can contribute to their own objectives in the longer term. This is important in the era of the 'Big Society' as government agencies and other public bodies seek to engage more with charities such as ours.

Threatened Plants Project (TPP)



The TPP is very much a BSBI initiative but the information gathered is vitally important to those working on the conservation of threatened plants. To date BSBI recorders have surveyed nearly 2,000 populations of 30 threatened species with plans to cover a further 20 species in the next two years. The analysis for some of the 2008 species have already shown some startling results, such as a 42% decline in the number of sites for *Astragalus danicus* Purple Milk-vetch, mainly due to reductions in the frequency and intensity of livestock grazing. In 2010 *Juniperus communis* Juniper was surveyed as part of a larger project led by Plantlife on the ecology and conservation of this species in lowland England.

Other projects

As our Plant Unit has grown, so have the demands placed upon it, both internally and externally. One of the most challenging projects was to devise a new UK-wide plant surveillance scheme which builds on existing initiatives such as BSBI Local Change and Plantlife's Common Plants Survey. The report was published by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) in September 2010 and should lead to full field-scale testing in the near future. Our Plant Unit is also working closely with the National Biodiversity Network Trust (NBN) to develop guidelines on the submission of plant records in the production of a Data

Validation Toolkit, which will be of great use to the plant recording community as a whole.



Alien plants are high on the political agenda at present and BSBI has been contracted to produce species accounts for 100 of the most 'invasive' species and a database of traits for 2,000 alien plants that have been recorded in the wild.

Using our data

Two reports published in 2010 highlighted the contribution that our records make to the conservation of British biodiversity. In the spring Natural England published 'Lost Life', which chronicled the loss of species in Britain over the last century. In September 'Making Space for Nature' resulted from a twelve-month government review of England's wildlife sites. At its heart was an analysis of BSBI records which considered how dependent threatened plants were on nature reserves.

Managing our data

This year our Plant Unit fundamentally changed the way it manages BSBI plant records. Traditionally the Society has stored them in separate datasets, often for specific projects. In 2010 the Distribution Database (DDB) was created to act as an online central repository for all BSBI records. This is already allowing the Plant Unit to make use of this data in a more effective and efficient way.

Research Grants

Science and Research Committee awarded grants for several projects, including a survey of *Najas flexilis* Slender Naiad in Scotland, where it was confirmed at most of its sites. However, at two of the mainland loch sites, Butterstone and Lowes, it was absent due to algal blooms, a symptom of eutrophication. Another project was a trip to the Outer Hebrides to collect specimens of *Populus tremula* Aspen which survives on cliffs where it is protected from grazing. It has only once been found to flower on the islands, so an analysis will be undertaken to see if there is much genetic variation within the population. Other work included a study on the effects of rabbits on dune slack vegetation, labelling *Sorbus* Whitebeams in the Avon Gorge so their reproduction can be studied, and fieldwork for the forthcoming mini-handbook on *Viola* Pansies and Violets.

BSBI Website www.bsbi.org.uk

In 2010 almost all of *Watsonia*, *Proceedings of the BSBI*, *BSBI News*, *BSBI Welsh Bulletin* and many of the *Botanical Exchange Club Reports* were scanned for the BSBI website. Indices to *Watsonia* and *BSBI News* are also available on the website. Some newer publications, such as Rare Plant Registers and county reports, and even one County Flora, are only available electronically. These too are available on the website.



A Facebook page was launched in December and has brought new members each day.

Over 70,000 specimens have now been digitised for the website Herbaria at Home and nearly 300 users are now registered. The South London Botanical Institute and Gloucester Museum have undertaken the photography of their own collections, which is much appreciated. A new website, Meiosis, has been created by BSBI member Chris Liffen to complement the project with detailed biographies of plant collectors.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Botanical Society of the British Isles. At the top left is the logo, and to its right is a map of the British Isles. The main navigation menu includes links for Home, Members, News, Recording, Training, Field Skills, Identification, Herbaria, Publications, Photo arch, Conferences, Resources, and About BSBI. The main content area features several sections: 'Book for the AGM' with booking details for June 18th-21st; 'Job vacancy - Welsh Officer' advertising a full-time position; 'What's new?' with news items about James Alfred Wheldon and a botanical tour; 'Daffodil season' with a call to action for staff; 'Go straight there' with a list of links like 'Identify a plant' and 'Species accounts'; and 'Projects' with links for 'Altitudes', 'Azophytes', 'Hybridization', etc. There are also images of people in the field and a close-up of a yellow flower.

Journals

While the autumn issue of *Watsonia* marked the end of a journal that has served the Society well, the first issue of the *New Journal of Botany (NJB)* is now being prepared. Publications Committee hopes *NJB* will help broaden the scope of scientific publishing and re-vitalise an interest in European botany. The new journal will have an international editorial board, and will be peer-reviewed. Meanwhile the whole of *Watsonia* from 1949 to 2010 will soon be available on the BSBI website. The Society wishes to thank all the authors, editors and reviewers who have contributed to *Watsonia* over the years.

Owing to a change in editorial policy in moving from *Watsonia* to *NJB*, some content has migrated to *BSBI News* leading to further changes. In consequence, obituaries and reports of field meetings now appear in the revamped *BSBI Yearbook*, and the biennial list of members will be published separately. Plant records and book reviews will appear in the *New Journal of Botany*.

Books

BSBI Handbook 14 was published: this is *Whitebeams, Rowans and Service Trees of Britain and Ireland* by Tim Rich, Libby Houston, Ashley Robertson and Michael Proctor. It is the result of over ten years collaborative work between the National Museum of Wales, the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew and the Universities of Bristol, Exeter and Oxford. An illustrated hardback, it contains accounts of 52 native or naturalised *Sorbus* taxa, of which 37 are endemic to Britain and Ireland.



Directly and indirectly, the Society assists many other publications, most notably local Floras, for which loans may be awarded to the authors. Recent loans approved were for the forthcoming *Flora of Renfrewshire* by Keith Watson and *Ferns, Clubmosses, Quillworts and Horsetails of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly* by Ian Bennallick.

Summerfield Books

Summerfield Books, the Society's publication agents, have been a regular exhibitor at BSBI events throughout the year making the latest botanical publications available to members and visitors. Paul O'Hara continued to expand its range of natural history titles and to offer innovative field equipment such as illuminated hand lenses.



Through the Training and Education Committee, BSBI has continued to support botanical training and learning in Britain and Ireland, encouraging more people to attend botany courses and to start identifying and recording plants. The committee awarded 40 grants and bursaries towards short identification courses and five conference grants at a total cost of over £7,000.

“I have had no formal botanical or ecological training...and I am hugely grateful to BSBI for the grant and the opportunity to take this course”.

“As a beginner to plant identification I was feeling a little overwhelmed by the vast array of species, but the course has provided a systematic way of identifying and ordering flowers using the top twenty flower families. I would like to thank BSBI for providing the opportunity to attend the course by way of the training grant.”

The committee held its third Training the Botanical Trainers workshop where 25 botany tutors from around the country came to share their expertise and to learn about new advances and receive updates.

The Field Identification Skills Certificates (FISCs) ran twice in July. Over 120 botanists have now been awarded a FISC.

The final stage in a three-part project to define field skills, testing those skills and then advising how to progress through the levels, was completed. 'So you want to know your plants?' has been sent to the printers and will be available in 2011 for university and further education tutors to hand out to students.

Encouraging an Interest in Plants

England and Overseas

Eleven field meetings took place in England plus three overseas meetings. The two in April, to Almeria in Spain and to Majorca, were adversely affected by the volcanic ash cloud, but the July trip to Estonia proceeded successfully.

The Spring Conference was held at Leicester University with the theme 'All you ever wanted to know about DNA and Plant Genetics', which stimulated much discussion and thoughts on how plants might be identified in the future.

In November, a one-day conference entitled 'Botanical Hotspots in Britain and Ireland: who revealed them and when?' was organised by our long-serving member David Allen and held the day preceding the Annual Exhibition Meeting. Both were held at the Birmingham and Midland Institute and the AEM included workshops on surveying, databases and preservation of plant material.

Wales

Despite the financial cuts to the government agencies, the funding of a BSBI Welsh Officer is to be supported by the Countryside Council for Wales and a private donation, and the first such officer should be in post in 2011.

Co-operation also continues with Diana Reynolds, Head of Biodiversity at the Welsh Assembly Government, with consultation on the document 'A Living Wales'.

Improved liaison between Welsh Local Records Centres and BSBI recorders is seen as one of the priorities for the new BSBI Welsh Officer.

Ten field meetings were held, including the annual, week-long Carmarthenshire recording and monitoring meeting at Glynhir mansion, Llandybie.

The AGM, based on Anglesey, was attended by over 70 participants, from Wales and from further afield. Associated field visits to the magnificent nearby coastal sites at South Stack, Penrhosfeilw Common, Aberffraw Dunes and Newborough Warren were informative and blessed with excellent weather.

Scotland

Scottish Natural Heritage has agreed to continue the Scottish Officer's funding for a further three years. The new focus will be for Jim McIntosh to help BSBI to deliver its plans for Scotland as set out in *Recording the British and Irish flora 2010-2020*.

One of the reasons for this success has undoubtedly been the valuable work BSBI volunteers and the Scottish Officer have undertaken on Site Condition Monitoring. In 2010 the BSBI's considerable wealth of experience was brought to bear on surveys of Beinn a'Chuallaich, Easthaven, Kentra Bay, Kyle of Sutherland, Raasay, Strathy Coast & Sunart SSSIs.

The SNH grant-aided Computerisation Project is now drawing to a close. As well as vice-county recorders' own data holdings, several major datasets were uploaded to the NBN during the year. They include the data underlying *Plant Life of Edinburgh and the Lothians (2002)*, *The Flora of Rum (2008)* and *The Changing Flora of Glasgow (2000)*. It also proved possible to fund one-to-one MapMate support for Recorders by Martin Harvey, the leading MapMate expert. Some 27 recorders were visited at home.

A very enjoyable week-long field meeting was organised by Jim McIntosh to survey National Trust for Scotland's Mar Lodge Estate in exchange for free accommodation. Some 5,500 records were collected and, together with a report, these will help inform conservation management.



The Scottish Annual Meeting in November at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh was again very well attended and a varied programme finished with a splendid keynote lecture by Fred Rumsey on 'Hybridisation and the British Fern Flora'.

Scottish publications in 2010, available online on the BSBI website, include the *Flora of East Sutherland (2010)*, an excellent pre-emptive flora by Mick Crawley. It is largely based on existing records together with the results of fieldwork in the first year of his tenure as Recorder. Others were a *Checklist for Easter Ross* by Barbara and Brian Ballinger and a *County Rare Plant Register for Banffshire* by Andy Amphlett.

Ireland

The highlight of the botanical year was the well-attended AGM in August held in Castlebar, Co. Mayo. The theme of the talks was Habitat Management and Conservation, and the Committee for Ireland thanks the main organiser Gerry Sharkey for arranging an excellent programme. The presentations covered the use of rare breeds in the grazing management of nature reserves, farming as a management tool for biodiversity in turloughs, conservation and management of lake-shore habitats and response of montane heath vegetation to climate change. There were also associated field excursions to see some of the Mayo specialities.

Irish Botanical News, Number 20, edited by Paul Green and John Wallace was published in March and it had, for the first time, a splendid full-colour front page featuring *Crambe maritima* Sea Kale at Ferry Point, Co. Waterford. Publications by BSBI members in 2010 included a fine new county Flora, The Flora of *County Tyrone* by Ian McNeill.

There were eight field meetings ranging from Co. Antrim in the north to Co. Wexford in the south, and the Committee for Ireland thanks John Faulkner for organising these. Two committee members attended a FISC test in England to assess how this might help the committee take training and education forward in Ireland.

