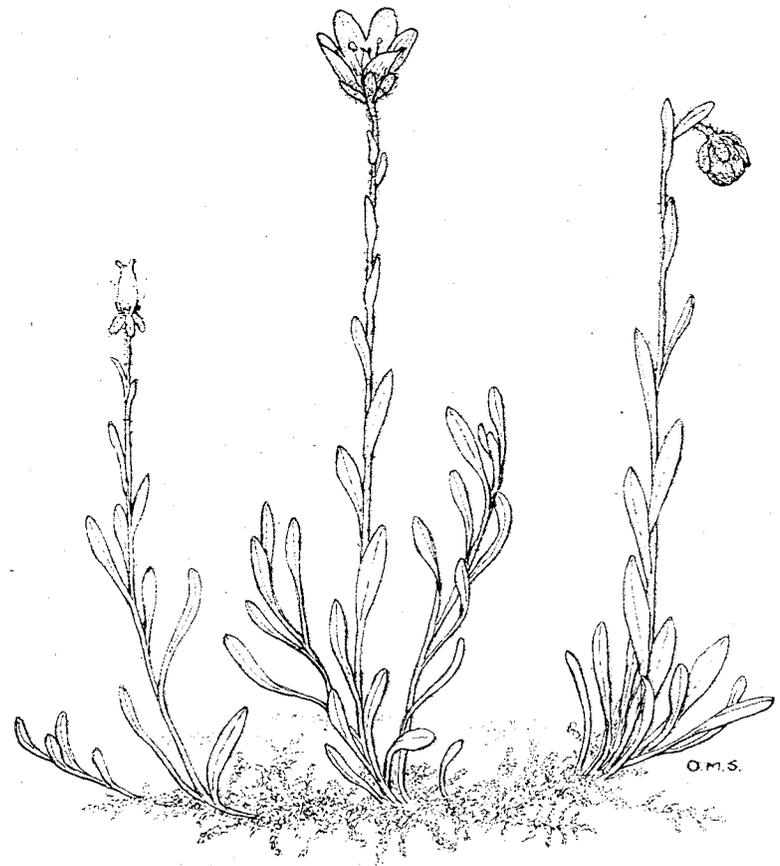


# BSBI

SCOTTISH  
NEWSLETTER

No. 12 1990

SAXIFRAGA  
HIRCULUS



BSBI SCOTTISH NEWSLETTER.

Number 12

Spring 1990

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## EDITORIAL

It is gratifying that we can record follow-up reports to material published in previous issues of the Newsletter. As a result of our item on Historic Buildings and Plant Conservation, a detailed report regarding Tolquhoun Castle was prepared by the VC Recorder and has been submitted via the Committee to the Principal Architect of the Historic Buildings Council. A shortened version has been included in this issue. In Issue No 8, members were asked if *Groenlandia densa* was extinct in Scotland and now we have a record of its recent unintentional introduction to Skye.

A current article relates to a "mysterious locality" for *Saxifraga hirculus* and this may jog a memory and lead to its re-location.

In an endeavour to improve the quality of the presentation, on this occasion the material has been prepared on a word processor. We continue to be indebted to Dr Lavery and the staff at Kindrogan Field Centre for copying and issuing the Newsletter, and to Mrs OM Stewart for the cover illustration.

P Macpherson

AMcG Stirling

### FROM THE CHAIRMAN

HENRY NOLTIE

An early and warm spring indicates that the field-season will soon be with us. As usual a full and interesting programme of field-meetings has been organised for Scotland and I would urge members to support these (numbers attending were somewhat down last year!).

Nationally, the Society is currently embarking on a number of new and exciting projects which I think Scottish members might like to know about. These include the

setting up of a major bibliographic data base on the British flora (jointly with the Natural History Museum) and a catalogue of information about the chromosomes of British plants - both of these partly funded by money from the Welch Bequest. Projects involving members directly seem to be temporarily in abeyance, with plans for a new atlas awaiting the publication and analysis of the Monitoring Scheme report. This report has been completed by Tim Rich, but is too long to publish in its entirety, but it should not be long before parts of it are available. Other schemes are likely to emerge since our new president (Professor David Webb) is keen to involve members in projects covering aspects of plant biology in addition to recording. A project to list the occurrence of self-incompatibility in British plants is one such and a feasibility study on this is currently being undertaken.

It is sad to record the death last year of one of the well-known figures of Scottish field botany in the person of Archie Kenneth. A tribute appears later in this Newsletter.

The Committee has had a busy year, one of the major events being the organising of the Recording Conference held in Stirling. This was successful and greatly enjoyed by the rather disappointingly low number of attenders. As usual much time has been spent discussing conservation issues, the major one has, of course concerned the Cairngorms. Highland Regional Council published their Structure Plan Review, with the proposal to develop ski-ing into the Northern Corries, and submitted it to the Secretary of State for Scotland in January. I wrote and objected to this on your behalf, and I hope that many members wrote individually. At the moment we await a decision and keep our fingers crossed that this unacceptable encroachment on one of our finest montane environments will not be permitted.

**IN MEMORIAM**  
**ARCHIE GRAHAM KENNETH**

DJ TENNANT

Archie Kenneth died on 17th July 1989 following a comparatively short period of illness. Although Archie and I had been pursuing a similar interest in Scottish Mountain hawkweeds for thirty years, we did not come into contact until 1979. Since that time however, we have spent, nearly every year, one or two weeks together in the Scottish mountains.

Archie dedicated a major part of his leisure time to the Scottish flora, although he much preferred field exploration to the publication of written work. However his letter-writing was prolific and unfailingly one could expect a reply to every communication by return of post however extensive the correspondence became.

In recent times Archie was perhaps best known for his involvement with hawkweeds and marsh orchids, but his expert knowledge had a much wider range. He was fortunate in living in one of the most beautiful parts of Scotland, on Loch Fyne, and his researches and exploration of the local area, together with MH Cunningham, led to the publication of the *Flora of Kintyre* in 1979. He was especially fond of the hills of Ross-shire and Sutherland and few if any other botanists can have covered many of these mountains so well. This is the area where the majority of his hawkweed records and other discoveries were made. Our joint excursions were in Perthshire, Argyll, Kintyre, Westernness, Ross-shire, Sutherland and the Outer Hebrides, but I never persuaded Archie to visit the Cairngorms, which is surprising as the latter is the main area of distribution for many hawkweeds in which Archie had such a strong interest. His main contribution to our knowledge of hawkweeds was therefore from the north-western Highlands. This critical group is currently under revision and the distribution of most of the north-western species was either pioneered or greatly extended by Archie. The descriptions of several new species, which are still to be published, are based largely on specimens

collected by him and in at least two cases the designated holotypes were gathered by Archie. In 1984 whilst we were based at Garve, Archie gathered a hawkweed which we recognised instantly as an undescribed species of the Series *Alpina*; this was confirmed later at Cambridge, and it was subsequently proposed that this plant be given the epithet "*kennethii*", although this is still to be published. I have recently completed a list of the Scottish records of *Hieracia* series *Alpina* which includes the records made by Archie, and a copy has been sent to Chris Preston at the Biological Records Centre.

On the subject of Marsh Orchids, five of the ten currently known sites for *Dactylorhiza lapponica* in Scotland were discovered through Archie's extensive exploration of Knapdale (VC101), and it was primarily these discoveries and the subsequent work that eventually led us to recognise that species in Britain (Kenneth et al, 1988). The extended search for additional sites for this taxon in north-western Scotland led not only to its confirmation in nearly all of the remaining sites, but also to the first correct records for *D. traunsteineri* in Scotland (Kenneth et al, 1988) including Mr Lowe's site in West-Ross which additionally solved the old mystery of the identity of *Orchis francis-drucei* (Lowe et al, 1986). In 1982 I was with Archie when we found *Dactylorhiza incarnata* subsp. *cruenta* in West Ross, still I believe the only known locality in the British Isles outside Ireland for this taxon (Kenneth & Tennant, 1984, 1987).

Archie was also very interested in ferns and their allies; in 1985 he discovered the club-moss now known as *Diphasiastrum complanatum* subsp. *issleri* and in 1987 we surveyed this site together and sent notes, photographs and a specimen to BM which are incorporated into a paper by AC Jermy in *Fern Gazette* 13, 257-265. Archie's find was the third confirmed British record since 1909 for this taxon; ironically a field record from the Cairngorms by me in 1981 was the second post 1909 record. Perhaps less surprisingly both of these sites were discovered on "hawkweeding" expeditions!

On a more personal note, Archie was a splendid companion in the hills, and conversation never flagged. He once said to me whilst examining an odd-looking plant "it is not long before you meet a plant in the hills that has not read its own description!" Although I cannot vouch for the originality of the comment it did seem to be very apt and typical of Archie's humour. Archie would usually stop and talk to anyone he met and many were clearly taken aback in such circumstances by his genial old world charm and politeness, and he was always helpful and encouraging to less experienced botanists. Archie would tackle even the highest mountains in a sports jacket, open-necked shirt and woolly hat, whatever the weather, wearing either brogues or wellington boots, He carried nothing more than a stick, a hand-lens, a polythene bag for plants and his lunch which frequently consisted of nothing more than a banana! I have known him to crawl through a sphagnum bog during bad weather to get under a deer fence when he took the view that he could not possibly get any wetter! His pace on the mountains would daunt all but a professional athlete and if you bent down to examine or photograph some plant, you very soon discovered that Archie had seemingly vanished only to reappear some quarter of a mile away and several hundred feet higher up the mountain. However Archie had no strong head for heights and would usually leave me to explore the cliffs and gullies.

There were many amusing incidents on these excursions, too numerous to describe in detail. We once botanised the corries and steep cliffs above Loch Maree from a helicopter, at an alarmingly close proximity. This arose when Tom Weir was filming in the area for Scottish Television and seemed so impressed with our quest for rare plants that he commandeered the film crew's pilot and put him at our disposal! It was often too easy to become separated from Archie during outings, as once his mind was made up he would immediately rush off either on foot or by car. On one such occasion we lost Archie on the Isle of Skye, and only after several hours did we finally relocate him following several complex precoded messages

flashed by car headlights between Skye and the mainland by myself and a third member of the party. He was eventually found several miles inland at an hotel drinking, as we perhaps should have known, his much loved cup of coffee, and we were greeted as if nothing unusual had occurred with a mischievous grin and "where on earth have you two been?" as if the whole thing had been prearranged.

Whilst staying at the Tarbert Hotel on the Island of Harris, the manager recognised Archie from his earlier days as official judge at piping competitions, and thereafter we were both given the royal treatment and regaled with hilarious stories about Maybud Campbell's antics on the Island many years ago. Our last excursion together was to Sutherland, which included the exploration of Ben Loyal and Canisp in the most glorious weather and where our mission was entirely successful, so I have happy memories of that trip.

Archie will be remembered with great affection by the many friends who were fortunate enough to have met him, and his passing must be regarded as a sad loss not only to Scottish botany, but as Dick (RH) Roberts pointed out, to British botany. I was gratified that he was told, shortly before he died, that a hawkweed was to be named after him, so his name will always be associated with those plants which he loved so much.

Cunningham, MH & Kenneth, AG (1979) *The Flora of Kintyre*. Wakefield.

Kenneth, AG & Tennant, DJ (1984) *Dactylorhiza incarnata* (L.) Soó subsp. *cruenta* (OF Mueller) PD Sell in Scotland. *Watsonia*, 15: 11-14.

Kenneth, AG & Tennant, DJ (1987). Further notes on *Dactylorhiza incarnata* subsp. *cruenta* in Scotland. *Watsonia* 16: 332-334.

Kenneth, AG, Lowe, MR & Tennant DJ (1988). *Dactylorhiza lapponica* (Laest. ex Hartman) Soó in Scotland. *Watsonia*, 17: 37-41.

Lowe, MR, Tennant, DJ & Kenneth, AG (1986). The status of *Orchis francis-drucei*. Wilmott. *Watsonia*, 16: 178-180.

**CALAMAGROSTIS EPIGEJOS  
IN THE FIRTH OF CLYDE.**

HA M<sup>c</sup>ALLISTER

While walking along the top of the cliffs near Ardlamont Point near Tighnabruaich in the Kyles of Bute around Easter 1967 I came across some slightly fluffy old grass seedheads looking a bit like a dwarf pampas grass. They were clearly not of the dominant *Molinia* though the surrounding dead leaves were rather *Molinia* -like. A *Calamagrostis* seemed likely and it proved to be *C. epigejos*. Failure to refind the colony in subsequent summers made me begin to doubt my memory, but Allan Stirling mentioned that he too knew *C. epigejos* at Ardlamont. Sometime in the mid 1980s he again made some comment about the plant on the cliffs above the *Sorbus rupicola*. This site is about 2.5 km from Ardlamont Point and near the sandy bay named Bagh Osde, or Kilbride Bay on maps but locally known as Ostal Bay. Clearly there were two sites for *C. epigejos* on the Ardlamont Peninsula.

In the summer of 1988 I finally managed to refind the site nearer Ardlamont Point where a large colony occurs with *Molinia* in willow scrub along approximately 50 meters of cliff line growing in flushed wet heavy clay just above the edge of the cliff. In 1989 I visited briefly Allan Stirling's locality, finding a small patch in a very similar situation but in deeper shade in willow-hazel scrub where a small burn plunges over the edge of the cliff.

Apart from similar recent findings in the Hebrides and Kintyre, there are very few records of *C. epigejos* in Western Scotland (Perring and Walters 1976), though there is an old record of *Arundo calamagrostis* for Bute (Dickson 1986).

Thanks to Mr A Copping I obtained a plant of *C. epigejos* from East Suffolk. This grew larger and more vigorously in cultivation than did the Ardlamont plant and had much larger spikelets - though both had the same chromosome number  $2n=28$ . It will be interesting to see if all the

Western Scottish plants can be distinguished from those from Eastern England (and Scotland) on spikelet size, the plants in cultivation having shown the difference to be genetic in origin rather than environmental.

Like the Common Reed, *Phragmites australis*, *C. epigejos* is probably one of those vigorously rhizomatous species whose colonies may be very old and in which seedling establishment is very rare. It is possible that the two Ardlamont localities may be parts of a single colony which became separated. This suggestion is testable. Grass colonies, like human beings can often be recognised as individuals so, if plants from two colonies look identical in every respect there is quite a good chance that they belong to the same clone. Less subjective is the interbreeding test. Many grasses are self-incompatible, and this will be tested by self-pollinating plants from each colony. If they are self-incompatible, or almost so, no or little seed will be produced. Plants from the two colonies will also be crossed. If seed production is similar to that resulting from selfing, it will be reasonable to conclude that both colonies belong to the same clone. If however, much more seed is produced than following selfing, this will suggest that the colonies are different clones.

Investigations such as those suggested above, when combined with measurements of the annual rate of rhizome growth have been used to calculate the age of clones of red fescues (Harberd 1961) and must be quite accurate assuming no rafting of turves down rivers or by sea. It would be interesting to investigate other colonies of *C. epigejos* in this way and, given the old record for Bute and these recent west coast records, there may be more localities to be found through searching likely habitats.

Dickson, JH (1986). James Robertson and the botany of Bute 1768. *Watsonia*, **16** : 65-74.

Harberd, DS (1961). Observations on popular structure and longevity of *Festuca rubra* 1. *New Phytol.* **60** 184-206.

Perring, FH & Walters, SM (1962) *Atlas of the British Flora*. Nelson.

**SCOTTISH RECORDING CONFERENCE P MACPHERSON  
1989**

A conference was held at Stirling University from 30th June to 2nd July.

Despite making it open to all members interested in recording and not limiting it to VC Recorders: having advertised it in BSBI News, Scottish Newsletter: being commended in BSE News and making direct contact with over 20 likely participants who had not booked, the attendance was poor. There were only 14 residential and 5 day participants.

On Friday evening two talks were given, "Conservation Habitats in the Central Region" by Caroline Crawford of NCC and "Botanising in Perthshire" by Richard Thomas.

Saturday morning started with "Bog-Hay Meadows of Stirlingshire and Dunbartonshire" by John Mitchell, Chief Warden of the Loch Lomond National Nature Reserve, followed by Hawkweed and Fern Workshops by David McCosh and Clive Jermy respectively. In the afternoon the party went to Gartmorn Dam where Nick Stewart demonstrated Pondweeds and in particular the difference between *Potamogeton filiformis* and *P. pusillus*. Then to the foothills of the Ochils where there was *Rosa rubiginosa*, *Carex muricata* ssp *lamprocarpa* and the morning contributors had an "in field" follow-up of their Workshops. In the evening the meeting of the BSBI Committee for Scotland was kept short so that a visit could be made to a site of *Lychnis viscaria*.

On Sunday morning, Chris Sydes of NCC spoke on "Conservation Evolution and Issues in the Scottish Hills", followed by Nick Stewart's Pondweed Workshop and a Crucifer Workshop by Tim Rich. Those remaining for the afternoon were split up into groups which recorded in areas where the results would be of particular value to either the VC Recorder or the NCC.

The participants much appreciated the preparation that had gone into the talks and workshops and the quality of the presentations. It was unanimously voted an instructive and worthwhile weekend.

**BSBI COMMITTEE FOR SCOTLAND.**

The following is the composition of the Committee from November 1989 to November 1990 :-

Chairman - HJ Noltie; Vice-Chairman - AMcG Stirling  
Secretary/Treasurer - Dr P Macpherson; Field Meetings  
Secretary - BH Thompson; Minutes Secretary;  
Mrs M Barron; Meetings Secretary; Miss J Muscott;  
Members of Committee; Dr Corner; Dr Hughes; Dr HA  
Lang; N Stewart; J Winham.

Representing the NCC - Dr RAH Smith; representing the  
Botanical Society of Edinburgh - MM Scott.

At the AGM on 3rd November 1990 three members will be elected to the Committee. The retiring members will be Mrs Barron, Dr Lang and Mr Thompson, the last being eligible for re-election.

Nominations, signed by two members of the Society normally resident in Scotland, or who are Recorders for a vice-county in Scotland although not resident there, and with the written consent of the candidate, who must also qualify as above, should reach the undersigned at 15 Lubnaig Road, Glasgow G43 2RY by 30th September 1990.

Peter Macpherson, Hon. Secretary, Committee for Scotland.

## A FIFE TETRAD

GH BALLANTYNE

When considering what I was going to do in VC85 in 1989, I decided to "extend" the Monitoring Scheme to a tetrad of my choice. NO30W had proved quite productive during 1987-88, so I selected the adjacent tetrad, NO40B, as it had a good mix of habitats, including golf links and dunes, a couple of dens, varied arable country, an old railway line and a built-up area (Lundin Links/Lower Largo). It was also only twelve miles distant.

A few years previously, I'd explored the old walled garden of Largo House, which has stood as a ruin for many years. The enticement had been a record of 1872 which stated that *Tulipa sylvestris* was naturalised there - sure enough, on 13th April 1980 I eventually found a few in flower. I was therefore amazed, on 29th April 1989, to be able to count fully 300 delicate, pale yellow heads. So my new season was off to a good start, the more so as there were several other introductions which could fairly lay claim to being naturalised. These included *Arabis caucasica* and *Aubretia deltoides*, both obviously long established on the east facing wall of the former garden.

During May I paid two visits to Kiel's Den above Largo, a favourite haunt of Charles Howie, about whom I wrote in an earlier issue. This yielded several woodland species including *Saxifraga granulata* in three different sites. Wild Hyacinths in quantity made a lovely sight, as did patches of Bugle, Ramsoms, Tuberosus Comfrey, Wood Anemone, Greater Woodrush and Greater Stitchwort (which I'd failed to find in any of my three squares in 1987-88. A dipper flitting up and down the burn enlivened one visit, while on the other, I spent some time trying to decide if I was listening to a blackcap or a garden warbler until the latter finally chose to reveal itself.

The third of June was links time, especially the other half of the golf course I'd searched in 30W and once again grasses proved profitable. There was a lot of *Avenula pratensis*, a little *A. pubescence* and three species of

*Bromus*, one of which I did not recognise. This turned out to be *B. erectus*, my first record of the species and confirmation for Fife - I'd been rather doubtful of the handful of previous records (co-incidentally, it was found during NCC surveys in no fewer than three other coastal sites in VC85 - 1989 must have been a good year for it). Sheets of white highlighted *Cerastium arvense*, rather more conspicuous than *Thalictrum minus* and *Anthriscus caucalis*, while here and there were blobs of *Astragalus danicus*. Burnet Rose was also present, as was *Carduus tenuiflorus* later.

The old East Fife Railway was dismantled twenty years ago and has mostly disappeared except for the remains of an embankment. This featured a mixture of native and introduced species, including *Echium vulgare*, *Daucus carota*, *Centurea scabiosa*, both *Reseda lutea* and *R. luteola* (an unusual combination) and an evening primrose which I took to be *Oenothera fallax*. Both *Lupinus arboreus* and *Papaver orientale* were prominent and in considerably more quantity than fifteen years ago. Not far off, next to the golf clubhouse, waste ground supported a crop of *Cardaria draba*, *Geranium lucidum*, *Dipsacus fullonum*, *Sinapis alba*, *Solidago gigantea* and some young *Humulus lupulus*. *Malva neglecta* was also detected in the area.

In August I returned to Largo House and found my way through the tangle of Rosebay and undergrowth. Mixed in were several bushes of very robust *Rubus procerus*, contrasting with the comparatively dainty *R. laciniatus*; another *Rubus* puzzled me until I realised it was *loganobaccus*, apparently slowly spreading. As *R. elegantispinosus* occurred nearby, four of the most frequently encountered introduced brambles were present (while *R. spectabilis* abounds in the neighbouring tetrad). The most unusual waterside plant seen was *Carex acutiformis*, still flourishing in its 1900 site, with both *Glyceria plicata* and *G. declinata* nearby. In the vicinity *Geranium pratense* gladdened the eye where it could outgrow the large stands of *Petasites hybridus* leaves.

Including microspecies, 375 taxa were recorded including 87 new to the quadrant. But the most significant figure was the 42 new records for Square NO40, as I considered I'd covered it reasonably well previously. The drawback, of course, about concentrating on a small area is that other parts of one's VC are neglected - is it better to carry out such intensive coverage or spread one's recording about more?

#### GRAIN ALIENS IN KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE OM STEWART

In BSBI News December 1989, Mrs Sylvia Reynolds wrote an interesting note on animal feed aliens that she had found by roadsides in Ireland. The sources she thought were the ports of Foynes, Co. Limerick and New Ross, Co. Wexford, where lorries pick up their cargoes, and the same aliens were found round the dock areas.

In 1986 and 1989 I found in two places, alien plants growing by the roadside, as if the seed had been shaken off a lorry as it swung round a corner on its way to a grain and animal feed mill in Dalbeattie. The habitat where the plants grew was the crevice between the pavement and the tarmac. In 1986 the finds were *Descurania sophia*, *Thlaspi arvense*, *Erucastrum gallicum*, *Lepidium densiflorum*, and in 1989 *Amaranthus retroflexus* and *Setaria viridis* were the most abundant, besides *Chenopodium albus* and *Thlaspi arvensis* again. These are all the same aliens that were found in Ireland and seem to come from the same source - animal feed. On enquiring at the mill, I was told that none of their lorries come from Ireland or Stranraer, their imports come from Liverpool or Glasgow. Even from Glasgow it would be a strange route to come via Castle Douglas, where *Amaranthus retroflexus* was again found. A mystery. Has anyone else found similar alien plants on their roadsides?

#### SCOTTISH EXHIBITION MEETING 4TH NOVEMBER 1989.

J MUSCOTT

**The Scottish Exhibition Meeting** was held in Edinburgh, under the auspices of the Botanical Society of the British Isles and the Botanical Society of Edinburgh. As usual in Edinburgh the venue was the Royal Botanic Garden (courtesy of the Regius Keeper).

There was an interesting mixture of exhibits; new records from various parts of Scotland, including the fruits of a Hawkweed expedition to Skye; work on local floras; the final volume of the Lothian Checklists; information about NCC rare plant surveys; and research into grazing on Lawers, which may well suggest that different regimes are necessary for preserving gentians and willows. Olga Stewart had flower paintings of introduced plants, and Peter Macpherson, the afternoon's speaker and his wife, had an exhibit complementing his talk.

The Flora of Glasgow Survey had produced some interesting speculation about helleborines on bings - was the hybrid really *Epipactis x youngiana*, or could it be a cross between *E. helleborine* and *E. dunensis*, two specimens of which had been found? Not content with dividing *Dryopteris affinis* into four, the experts are now splitting *Pteridium aquilinum* into three (admittedly only subspecies). The Perrings had a particularly mouth-watering collection of botanical books for sale.

#### Scottish Recorders

A meeting of the Scottish Recorders was held in the morning. It was reported that work on the BSBI Monitoring Scheme was running to schedule. The data had all been entered, Tim Rich was about to run off maps, and a formal report to the NCC was under way. Interpretation of some of the findings would take a little longer.

Plans for a new Atlas were going ahead, with records to be divided three ways: pre 1970, 1970-86, and post 1986

(which coincided with the start of the Monitoring Scheme). Ideally, new recording should be on a 10x10 km basis throughout the British Isles, but this may not be possible in the more remote parts of Scotland. The main drive had not started yet but the general message was "Carry on Recording".

A vice county census catalogue was now under way with David McCosh and Alan Silverside handling the Scottish side of things. Recorders were asked to make sure they publish new records - and if they could manage it, a checklist, or better still an enhanced checklist. This can be a great stimulus to local botanists as there is nothing quite so satisfying as proving it wrong.

#### AGM of BSBI Membership Resident in Scotland.

The AGM was held after lunch. Conservation issues had figured largely in the course of the year, with plans for a car park and chairlift at the Devil's Elbow, Glenshee, and the extension of ski-ing into Lurcher's Gully, Cairngorms, both figuring largely. Despite considerable opposition, the Highland Region's Plan for the Cairngorms remained unaltered, and would now go to the Secretary of State.

On the more positive side, the draft Forestry Strategy issued by Grampian Region was generally welcomed - apart from the lack of distinction between native and non-native tree species. But at the national level the proposed break-up of the Nature Conservancy Council, and the Government's failure to sign the EEC directive on conservation both called into question its genuine commitment to "green" issues.

Field Meetings had not been particularly well attended this year - perhaps everyone was having a rest after the Monitoring Scheme. The Scottish Recorders Conference at Stirling had also suffered and would not be held again for at least three years, by which time it would be out of step with the national conference again. It had

nevertheless been much enjoyed by those who did attend. Advance notice of next year's Field Meetings was made available for those wishing to plan their summer holidays.

The meeting concluded with elections to Council and was followed by a short committee meeting.

#### Lecture.

The afternoon lecture was given by Peter Macpherson, who is currently both Secretary of the BSBI Committee for Scotland and immediate past President of the Glasgow Natural History Society. He had been on a trip to Lapland "In the footsteps of Linnaeus" (actually by coach) and had some splendid slides of alpine plants, places and people, enlivened by a dry sense of humour.

Supper was at the nearby Marina Hotel, after which the party repaired back to the Botanic for slides. These included some interesting exclosure experiments in the Lawers NNR, where David Marden is trying to save the alpine willows, and records from various field meetings. Trips to the Ochils and the Moffat Hills had produced some "lowest level", "farthest south" records for plants such as *Alopecurus alpinus* and photographs taken on the BSE's Alpine Meet to the Cairngorms recorded not only the rare alpine of the Northern Corries and Lurcher's Gully, but views of a wild landscape likely to disappear if the ski tows and access roads extend further.

#### EXHIBITS

GH Ballantyne  
J Bevan & C Murray

ME Braithwaite

K. Butler  
RWM Corner

Some plants of NE Fife.  
*Hieracium alpinum* in Skye  
(VC104)

*Veronica peregrina* - another  
weed to wrestle with!

Plants of Northern Scotland  
Plant records from Roxburgh and  
Selkirkshire (VC79&80)

JH Dickson Recent discoveries from the Flora of Glasgow area  
 G Halliday Toward a Flora of Cumbria  
 D McKean Midlothian (VC83) records  
 AC & P Macpherson Mementos of Lapland  
 G Miller Does grazing affect Alpine Gentians?  
 J Muscott Botany of the Lothians: Vice county Checklists for sale  
 C Page The three subspecies of Bracken in Britain  
 F & M Perring BSBI Publications and other botanical books for sale  
 T Rich The BSBI Monitoring Scheme  
 A Rutherford The Flora of Dunbartonshire-in 8 volumes and a bit  
 M Stewart Kirkudbrightshire (VC73) records. *Crocasmia pottsii*. Flower paintings  
 AMcG Stirling *Filipendula vulgaris* in Ayrshire  
 I Taylor & R Fitzgerald NCC rare plant surveys  
 A Walker Catalogue of the Hennedy/Scouler herbarium

## SLIDES

RWM Corner *Alopecurus alpinus* and other interesting species in the Ochils  
 H Lang A hot day in the Moffat Hills-with some interesting alpiners.  
 K Mackay An assortment of Scottish alpiners and some yellow composites  
 D Mardon The enclosure projects at Ben Lawers: effects on vegetation, particularly willows  
 C Murray Hawkweeds on Skye  
 J Muscott Meadow vegetation in the Swiss Alps near Wengen  
 MM Scott Plants of Lurcher's Gully and the Northern Coires of the Cairngorms

## TWO NEWLY FOUND EDINBURGH HERBARIUM CN PAGE SHEETS OF THE RARE FERN X ASPLENOPHYLLITIS MICRODON

Two previously unknown Victorian herbarium sheets of the rare Guernsey Fern (x *Asplenophyllitis microdon*) (T Moore) Alston) have recently (March 1990) come to light in the herbarium of the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. In excellent condition, the two sheets (both originally ex herb. Neill Fraser, from whom they were purchased in 1905) include at least 5 separate gatherings made between the years 1860 & 1865, and contain a total of 10 beautifully preserved fronds, varying from 15 to 26 cm in length.

This unusual and rare fern of limited wild occurrence is the intergeneric hybrid between Lanceolate Spleenwort (*Asplenium billotii* FW Schultz) and Hart's Tongue Fern (*Phyllitis scolopendrium* (L.) Newm.). It was known from 1855 to occur sporadically in Cornwall, Devon and possibly Wales (Alston, 1940), with more positive records of it made through the latter half of the 19th century from Guernsey (McClintock, 1968). It still survives in Guernsey, and is illustrated as silhouettes in Page 1982:129, and as field photographs in Page 1988: 131 & 132. The two newly found Edinburgh sheets appear to include specimens of both Guernsey and Cornwall origin.

As might be expected of a hybrid between two such morphologically differing parents, the frond form of the hybrid is variable between specimens. Previously-known herbarium specimens of the original Victorian finds of this unusual fern (at BM and K) are few, and amount to less than that of these new sheets in total. The discovery of these further well-preserved sheets thus not only more than doubles the amount of surviving Victorian material known, but also helps add substantially to our knowledge of the variation in form of this unusual, native, natural bigeneric hybrid.

Alston, AHG (1940). (Notes on the supposed hybridisation in the genus *Asplenium* found in Britain). *Proc. Linn. Soc. Lond.* **152**: 132-144.

McClintock, D. (1968). (Plant notes: *Asplenium billotii* x *Phyllitis scolopendrium* = x *Asplenophyllitis microdon* (T. Moore) Alston.) *Proc. Bot. Soc. Br. Is.* 7: 387-389.  
Page, CN (1982). *The Ferns of Britain and Ireland*. Cambridge University Press.  
Page, CN (1988). *Ferns. Their Habitats in the British and Irish Landscape*. Collins New Naturalist Library, London.

### LOOK OUT FOR ATLANTIC BRACKEN

ALISON RUTHERFORD

*Pteridium aquilinum* subsp. *atlanticum* (see BSBI News 52, 17-18) should be looked out for this season, especially on basic soils. Ignore any unrolling croziers with cinnamon coloured stripes up the back of the midrib. These brownish hairs will indicate either the common subsp. *aquilinum* or an intermediate with leanings toward the atlantic

Common Bracken, unlike *atlanticum* or the northern subsp. *latiusculum*, is very variable and may incline towards either of the putative parents. Like the atlantic subspecies it may occur in base-rich soils and superficially resemble the latter, but the cinnamon stripes will give it away.

### DUNLOP HERBARIUM

DR McKEAN

A small herbarium, comprising about 300 sheets of nicely mounted specimens collected by a Miss Dunlop of Shieldhill, Biggar, has been deposited in the herbarium of the Royal Botanic Gardens by David McCosh. They were all collected in the 1890s, 95% being accurately named. Most are from Lanarkshire but a few are from various localities such as Loch Eck Argyll, Angus, County Down and the Channel Islands.

### ALOPECURUS MYOSUROIDES IN THE GLASGOW AREA

P MACPHERSON &  
AMcG STIRLING

Our only previous local record of *Alopecurus myosuroides* is from a Field Card for the Shiels-Renfrew square 26/5.6. which straddles the boundary between VCs76 & 77. In 1979 we saw the plant at the Meadowside Dock and at the King George V Dock in 1985. In 1989 it was abundant as a nursery weed at Bellahouston. These recent records are also from the 10 km square 26/5.6. Also in 1989, three plants were noted by Dr JH Dickson in a pavement at Cadder, just to the north of the city in 26/6.7. All these records are Lanarkshire VC77.

*A. myosuroides* is mainly a weed of cultivated ground, frequent in the south, but occurring also in waste places. These Glasgow records are in accordance with the accepted distribution, the plants being casual at three sites and having been introduced to the nursery with plants brought in from outwith the area.

The plant has been known as Slender Foxtail or Black Twitch but more recently as Black-grass (Dony et al 1974). A straight "Greek" translation from the scientific "Latin" name produces the rather strange combination of Mouse-like Foxtail. (alopex-fox; oura-tail; mys-mouse; eides-form)!

Dony JG, Rob CM and Perring FH, 1974. *English Names of Wild Flowers*.

### CULBIN SANDS

GLASGOW HERALD MARCH 1990

A proposed commercial shellfish operation at Culbin Sands, in Morayshire, has been refused by Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, the Scottish Office Environment Minister, after a public hearing. Lord James said yesterday that he was satisfied the scientific value of Culbin Sands has been established beyond doubt and the proposed development would have caused both damage and deterioration to an important part of our natural heritage.

## MORE "ENGLISH INCOMERS" IN THE ISLE OF SKYE.

CW MURRAY

At Skeabost House Hotel (at the head of Loch Snizort), where recent improvements in the gardens have included the construction of two ornamental pools. In April 1989 we noticed the sole presence in one pool of a "pondweedy" plant that turned out to be *Groenlandia densa*, not previously recorded in Skye.

When Chris Preston and Nick Stewart were pondweed hunting on the island in July, a visit to Skeabost confirmed the *Groenlandia*, but now the two pools were full of other things as well, including *Crassula helmsii* virtually taking over, and several plants of *Alisma* sp. (probably *A. lanceolata* - the only other Skye record for this is at Lyndale, about seven miles away, on another private estate).

When Ian Stewart of the hotel was asked where all these "new" plants had come from, all he remembered transferring from the wild were several roots of *Menyanthes trifoliata* (Bog Bean), and suggested birds-which was hardly likely. No, he had not sent to an "ornamental pool plants" supplier (our theory!). However a chance meeting with him again in December reversed his statement - he **had** been given water plants by a friend, and the source was therefore Aston, Derbyshire! We'll now have to monitor how long these "incomers" survive.

*Crassula* was first written up (*Watsonia* 1961, 5, 2) after it had been identified from a pond in South Essex in 1956. By 1978 (*BSBI News* No 19) it was spreading, and had reached Dunoon in Argyll. Originally from Australia (and South Island, New Zealand), the plant has been sold by a Midlothian nursery as one of a group of oxygenating aquatics for outdoor pools, since 1927.

*Groenlandia* is a native British species, much commoner in the south and east, so the four Scottish "dots" (*Atlas of the British Flora*, 1962) are probably all introductions.

## TOLQUHOON CASTLE

D WELCH

This ancient Aberdeenshire castle is unroofed but with sufficient walls standing for it to remain an interesting building. Until recently the masonry was managed in a sympathetic unobtrusive manner, the walls harbouring various tiny ferns and *Parietaria*, a rarity in the north east of Scotland.

In 1988 I visited the castle and was shocked to find that the masonry had been tidied of virtually all plant life. Using binoculars to scan the high walls I could see only two plants of *Parietaria*.

The almost total loss of *Parietaria* is particularly disappointing because of its association with the fourth Earl of Aberdeen, a Prime Minister who was also a botanist. He collected plants at Tolquhoon, including Pellitory-of-the-wall in 1817.

## RUMEX x DUMULOSUS Hausskn. (*R. aquaticus* x *R. sanguineus*) A NEW SCOTTISH HYBRID.

JOHN MITCHELL

A specimen of this hybrid was collected from a mixed colony of *Rumex aquaticus* L. and *R. sanguineus* L. var. *viridis* (Sibth.) Koch on 21st August 1989 in Currughlas Wood (NS 442891) on the Stirlingshire (VC 86) side of the lower River Endrick, Loch Lomondside. The site is a typical habitat for both species, being a damp clearing in an oak dominated woodland which is subject to periodic flooding in winter.

Intermediate in height between the two suspected parent plants, the putative hybrid combined the triangular lower leaves of *R. aquaticus* with the sparse panicle and narrowly oblong-shaped fruits of *R. sanguineus*. Despite the late date most of the fruits had failed to mature, although a few of the better developed did show a single, very small, rounded tubercle.

I am grateful to JR Akeroyd and DH Kent for confirming my tentative identification.

The specimen has been deposited in the herbarium of the British Museum.

Additional note by AMcG Stirling : In the late 1970s a suspected hybrid between *R. aquaticus* and *R. sanguineus* was noted in a loch-side oakwood bordering Rosdhu Park, Dunbartonshire, but unfortunately the plant was too immature to confirm the identification.

#### BSBI FIELD MEETINGS - 1989

May 19th Lanarkshire	Jy 13-15	Wigtonshire
June 9-11 Fife (Hawkweeds)	Jy 21	Tayside
" 22-29 Isle of Tiree	Jy 22	Insh Marshes
"30-Jy 1 N Argyll Lochs	Ag 11-18	Kindrogan

#### A MYSTERIOUS LOCALITY FOR SAXIFRAGA HIRCULUS IN NORTH-EAST SCOTLAND

DAVID WELCH

The elusive Yellow Marsh Saxifrage was not reported from Aberdeenshire or Banffshire until 1919. In that year it was noted in the records section of the Botanical Exchange Club journal that John Yeats had found the plant at Cabrach and that specimens were placed in the herbarium of the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh.

The single sheet in the RBG herbarium is annotated simply: Cabrach, collected John Yeats, sent by WG Craib IX 19. But on another sheet in the Glasgow University herbarium the locality is given as Glogg Burn, Cabrach (see illustration). No stream in the area now has this name.

Since *Saxifraga hirculus* is nationally rare and vulnerable to

afforestation, it is important to know all its localities. I have therefore been trying to decide whether a mistake in the labelling has occurred, and whether Yeats' locality could be one of the four reported in this general area in the 1960s (Welch, D., Bot. Soc. Edinburgh in 1970).

John Yeats was president of the Banffshire Field Club in 1919 and farmed Redford in upper Cabrach (GR 38/403270). In 1985 I spoke with an old lady, Nellie Bruce, then resident in Lumsden, who had lived in Redford for many years; she said her father had taken over the tenancy in 1926 from Mr Alec Yeats who was probably the nephew of John Yeats. Mrs Bruce had never heard of a Glogg Burn.

Further evidence that a mistake has been made comes from Mr Jimmy Oswald, now head keeper at Glen Tanar. Jimmy was born and brought up on Cabrach estate, son of the head keeper, and is definite that there is no Glogg Burn.

One clue as to where Yeats found the saxifrage was passed on to me by the late Alan Souter. He had met in the early 1960's a Mr Alex Rattray living in lower Cabrach who had known Yeats, being a member of the Banffshire Field Club. Yeats had told Rattray that he had been looking for *Saxifraga aizoides* and had found *S. hirculus* instead "going from my farm (ie Redford) to the source of a burn". Unfortunately Yeats does not seem to have left other information about the station or shown it to any other botanist.

Another clue on what might have occurred comes from the label. Lawrence Watt (born 1849) built up a large herbarium (c.2500 sheets) and probably did not visit the site. He worked in John Brown's Clydebank shipyard and the annotation 30-11-1920 would seem to be the date when he received the plant or mounted it; the saxifrage would certainly not then be in flower. I believe Watt either misread Yeats' writing or misheard Yeats' speech.

I therefore suggest that to find the saxifrage we seek a stream whose name is broadly similar to Glogg within a moderate walking distance of Redford. My hunch is that

the stream flowing eastwards from Three Burnshead How (417294) to Boganclough Lodge (435295) is the one, possibly having been abbreviated to Clogh by Yeats. There are suitable mesotrophic flushes near its source associated with serpentine outcrops, and *Galium uliginosum* and *Avenula pubescens* occur. But in two visits I have so far failed to find *Saxifraga hirculus*.

We will perhaps never solve this mystery but I consider that the saxifrage has grown in at least five places in Aberdeenshire/Banffshire during the twentieth century.

EX. HERB. L. WATT.

10<sup>th</sup> Edit. L. C. No. 631  
Order *Saxifragaceae*  
Species *Saxifraga hirculus*, Linn.  
Locality Glogh Burn, Cabraich  
County Banff  
Date 30/11/1920 Collector John Yeats

WATSONIA BOOK REVIEWS

Although only 8% of the space in *Watsonia* is devoted to book reviews, many members of the BSBI would like to see more local publications mentioned. This can only happen if copies of newly published books are sent for review. It is also possible to refer to books and booklets in the "Book Notes" Section of BSBI News even if they do not receive a full review in *Watsonia*.

I would like to appeal to authors and their publishers to send copies of publications for review. Please contact the book review editor of *Watsonia*:

John Edmondson, Liverpool Museum, William Brown St,  
Liverpool L3 8EN 051 207 0001 ext 209

BRITISH RARITIES IN A N & P MACPHERSON  
GLASGOW GARDEN

Over the years we have been given by botanical friends presents of plants which they had growing in their own gardens. Some are national rarities and we consider the following to be the most interesting:

Cheddar Pink (*Dianthus gratianopolitanus*). Growing in our rockery for the past 13 years, having come from Cheddar via a Yorkshire garden. Regular attention is however required to prevent it being smothered by other plants.

Purple Coltsfoot (*Homogyne alpina*). This came from the late Robert Mackechnie a few years before his death in 1978 - to ensure that it would have a good home! He had nurtured it in his own garden for over 20 years. It thrives so well with us both in a trough and in the peat bed that regular culling is required. He also gave us his plant of *Potentilla fruticosa* from Upper Teesdale, with the same idea in mind, but, unfortunately it did not survive the transplantation.

Irish Saxifrage (*Saxifraga rosacea*) came from a botanist in Wales, who told us that the original had come, many years before from Cwm Idwal, but that the species was now extinct in Wales. It is spreading well in the Saxifrage/Stonecrop rockery.

Wild Cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster integerrimus*). A botanist in North Wales has authority to grow this species from seed, with a view to increasing its population on the Great Orme. At the time of our visit to him in 1984 one plant had been earmarked for a University Botanic Gardens, but as it had not been collected over a three year period, we were given the seedling. It flowers well on the north side of our general rockery.