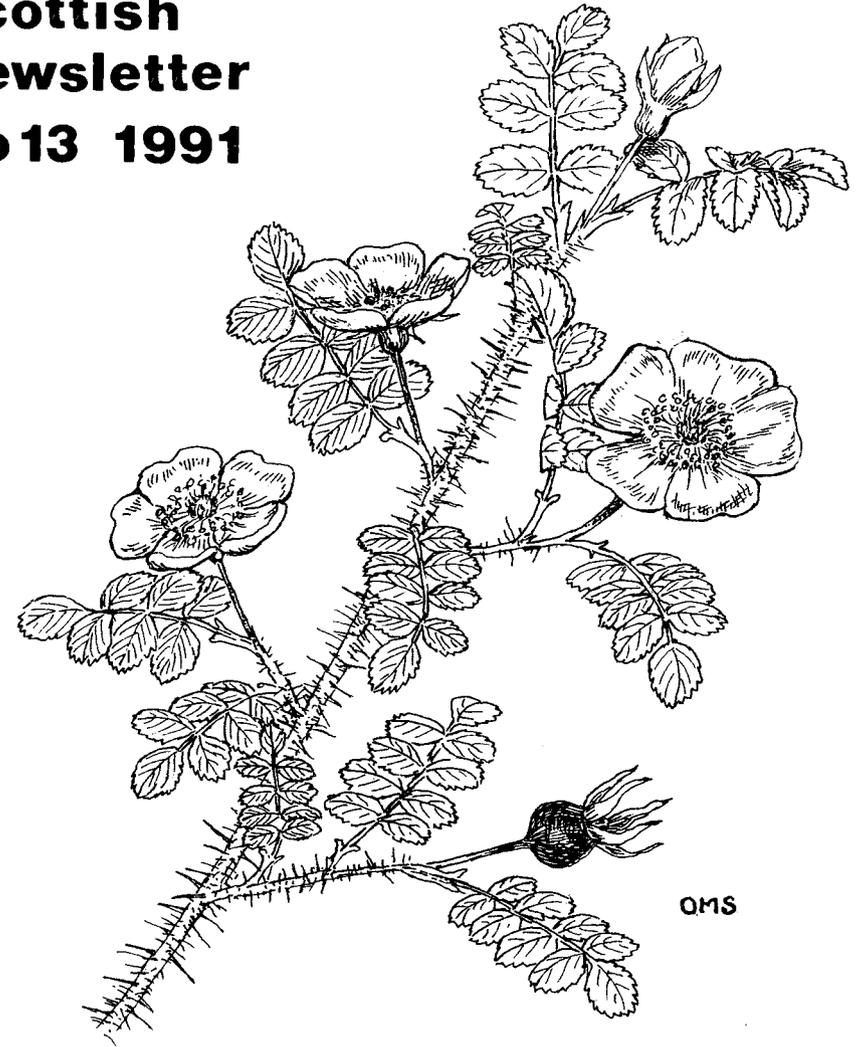


B.S.B.I.

**Scottish
Newsletter**

No 13 1991



Rosa pimpinellifolia

BSBI SCOTTISH NEWSLETTER.

Number 13

Spring 1991

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Front cover illustration by Olga Stewart.

EDITORIAL

We hope this thirteenth number of the Newsletter meets with readers' approval. This year we have made a change in the printing arrangements which, together with the preparation of photo-ready copy introduced last year, should make for a more attractively produced journal. We would again repeat our invitation for contributions from new authors. It is perhaps inevitable that some members tend to give more thought to submitting items than others, and therefore feature more regularly in the Newsletter, but to those who have not previously contributed we would say - don't be diffident about submitting anything you think would interest other members.

Michael Braithwaite echoes an observation occasionally levelled at the Exhibition Meeting, that exhibits so often consist of herbarium specimens without accompanying explanatory or other material (eg distribution maps). We urge members to give this matter some consideration in an effort to improve presentation of the exhibits.

There are encouraging signs that the production of Scottish vice-county check-lists is proceeding apace. Recent publications for Berwick and Wester Ross are featured elsewhere in this News Letter, and we have seen a draft check-list for the three Perth vice-counties. Recorders will now be involving themselves with the survey of "Scarce species" in their vice-counties, and the compiling of lists of species with less than three sites. Whatever botanical projects in which you are going to be involved during 1991 - we wish you well.

The Editors

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CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

H J NOLTIE

Although there are no specific BSBI recording projects this summer, there are two surveys in which members could assist their local vice-county recorders, providing a useful focus for summer field work. The first concerns the Scarce Species Project which aims to map species occurring in 16 - 100 ten-kilometre squares nationally; this forms the second leg in the up-dating of the Atlas (the Monitoring Scheme formed the first). Many of the 300 or so species involved occur in Scotland, (*Alopecurus alpinus*, *Arctostaphylos alpinus*, *Asplenium septentrionale* and *Betula nana* to name but a few from the beginning of the list. Although this information is mainly being compiled by VC recorders from their own recent records I'm sure that many of them would welcome additional records you may have and offers to undertake surveys of individual species you may be interested in. Do get in touch with your local recorder. You can find his/her name and address in the new, information-filled BSBI Yearbook. A second project, in which some recorders are involved this year, concerns plants on Ancient Monuments - chiefly those in State Care. This has arisen through the Ancient Monuments section of the Scottish Development Department, which seems anxious to alter its reputation for scraping walls bare of any living plant. However, it first of all has to know which plants are of interest and where they occur. Again perhaps you could help your local recorder and survey some local sites.

The Scottish Committee is very active in plant conservation in Scotland - for example we have recently complained about the use of Aquatic herbicides in the River Tweed. As a result of this we were told that other River Authorities had used similar chemicals and it was questioned as to why we had not complained about these. The simple reason is that we did not know. We do rely on people drawing such matters to our attention, so please let us know if interesting plant species or habitats are under threat in your area - perhaps there is something we could do to help.

You may remember that Archie Kenneth left his collection of herbarium specimens and botanical books and journals to the Society. The specimens are now housed in the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh and the books and journals (at his family's wish) are to go to a library where they can be consulted by the maximum number of members. The library of the Scottish Wildlife Trust has gratefully accepted these publications and they will be available for consultation at 25, Johnston Terrace, Edinburgh (tel. no. 031 226 4602) during normal office hours - whether or not you are a member of the SWT. A list of the botanical books is included as an insert with this Newsletter.

MISS ELIZABETH BEATTIE

We were saddened to hear of the death, in early March 1991, of Elizabeth (Betty) Beattie who joined the BSBI in 1955 and was prominent in Scottish Botanical circles for many years, acquiring much of her wide knowledge of the flora through her close friendship with botanists of the stature of Mary McCallum Webster, Ursula Duncan and others. In the early years of the Distribution Maps Scheme, which led to the publication of the "Atlas", Betty carried out the important function of Scottish Regional Officer, co-ordinating the work in Scotland from office accommodation provided by the Nature Conservancy at 12 Hope Terrace, Edinburgh. Betty was for many years vice-county recorder for the three Lothians, and the considerable volume of records she accumulated for these areas formed a valuable basis for the recently published checklists for VCs 82-84.

ERRATUM.

Scottish Newsletter No 12, 4:- "for 17th July 1989" substitute "27th July 1989".

VEGETATION RESTORATION PROJECTS DK MARDON AT BEN LAWERS NNR

The visitor making an ascent of Ben Lawers may well fail to see why it has the reputation as the "Botanists' Mecca". An expert botanist visiting the site for the first time in 1990 admitted it was not as he had imagined, and expressed surprise, perhaps even horror, at the extent of the *Nardus* grassland. A high proportion of the ground has indeed an undeniably ordinary look, and is relatively poor in species. This is the result of a history of extensive sheep grazing, a practice which continues today under a system of grazing rights. Significant components of the flora have been eliminated by grazing and burning in the past. Trees shrubs & tall herbs now survive mainly on the few ungrazed ledges on scattered rock outcrops.

Management of the Reserve by the National Trust for Scotland and the Nature Conservancy Council does not give control of the grazing, so that no manipulation of the overall grazing can be carried out. We have therefore begun a series of projects aimed at restoring the plant communities within limited areas protected by enclosure fences.

In September 1989 an enclosure fence was erected around an area near the Lairig Innein, enclosing c. 4.4 ha at an altitude of 700-810m. The area includes a steep-sided gorge with several rocky outcrops with ungrazed refuges for species sensitive to grazing. These include a few willow plants, remnants of the montane willow scrub which we believe was once widespread on the hills of Breadalbane. The aim of this project is to restore the scrub and associated species of herb.

Some very isolated *Salix lapponum* bushes here are the last vestiges of a population declining steadily towards extinction. As plants die by falling from their cliff refuge, (and this has been observed here), they are not replaced by new plants. With no seeds produced by the all female plants, (the nearest, single, male is 625 metres

away as the bee flies), natural recruitment to this population is unlikely. We therefore plan to boost this vestigial population by introducing plants propagated from seed and cuttings, the latter from within the NNR ensuring that plants of both sexes are present. From this beginning we hope that further regeneration by seed will be possible, utilising the areas of bare ground present for seeding establishment. Thus we hope both to restore a limited area of a community now virtually lost from the NNR, and also reverse the terminal decline of a species which we regard as crucial to the character of the reserve.

Juniper is no longer present within the fence, but its presence on ledges nearby, and remains of dead wood, indicate that it was formerly a component of the scrub in that area. Plants will be introduced in due course.

At the time of writing, work is beginning on the construction of our next enclosure fence, around the gorge of the Edramucky Burn below Coire Odhar. This fence will enclose an area of c. 25 ha at an altitude of 440-640m. The area therefore includes ground mostly below, and probably a little above, the natural tree limit. Survivors include two trees only, a Rowan and a Birch, with a few seedlings, and c. 250 willows of seven species. Most of the willow plants are of two species, *Salix arbuscula* and *Salix aurita* and it may be that only these species will be in a position to produce much fertile seed. Relatively few tall herbs survive on the site, but we can infer from their distribution on ungrazed ledges nearby that other species are indigenous to the area. However, the ability of the communities to recover from the effects of grazing will be monitored, and the need for planting trees, shrubs or herbs will be reviewed at intervals. This fence will enclose most of the Nature Trail and a significant section of the summit path used by so many walkers. With such a high public profile the project will develop into a valuable educational resource as regeneration proceeds. The interpretation of the scheme will be developed to exploit fully this exciting new opportunity.

These projects involve a considerable commitment of staff time to the maintenance, monitoring, restoration and interpretation work. For this reason we may be unable to undertake any further projects in the very near future, but experience gained from these will be invaluable in developing any future enclosure projects here and elsewhere when opportunities arise.

**CATABROSA AQUATICA (L.)
BEAUV. IN SCOTLAND.**

JOHN TRIST

I am attempting the separation of varieties in *Catabrosa aquatica* and would be interested to hear of observations from members of BSBI in Scotland.

The common taxon in Scotland is the subsp. *minor*, the procumbent form of the beach, sand and stream habitat of the north and west coasts and the outer islands. This taxon does not occur in England although there are old records from Liverpool.

The common English taxon is the subsp. *aquatica* of wet and moist conditions, c. 7-14 cm up to 20+ cm in height. This variety appears to be uncommon or comparatively rare in Scotland, where on several occasions, I have heard it described as "the giant form" (compared with coastal form). A large form which is only reported from Coll, Tiree and N. Uist, but which may be on all the islands of the Outer Hebrides, has been named var. *grandiflora*, some specimens of which are up to 80 cm in height and have larger spikelets and lemmas than var. *aquatica*. However there is a little mystery to be solved of the differences between subsp. *aquatica* and var. *grandiflora* - this latter sometimes reported in good height but with normal length lemmas is no more than a good specimen of subsp. *aquatica*.

Height and panicle/spikelet measurements would be of great interest, together with detail of habitat, which varies in all 3 varieties. (Address in BSBI Year Book)

**SCOTTISH EXHIBITION MEETING
3RD NOVEMBER 1990**

J MUSCOTT

The 1990 meeting was held in the Department of Botany, the University of Glasgow, under the auspices of the BSBI, BSE and GNHS. There was the usual wide variety of exhibits, including new and interesting county records, introductions, redeterminations of some species, and new work on others. BSBI field meetings were represented by a display from Tiree and one from the Hieracium Course at Kindrogan.

There was a summing up from the Flora of Glasgow project and the unveiling of a new county checklist - for Berwickshire. The latter is unusual in including a checklist of mosses, as well as of flowering plants and ferns. The attractive cover features flower paintings by Bill Young, whose botanical work was also on display, as were paintings by Olga Stewart.

For the first time a "Puzzle Corner" was included - to which people were able to bring their unidentified specimens in the expectation of receiving an expert opinion. So bring your botanical puzzles along next year -but please limit them to British material.

Scottish Recorders' Meeting

Scottish Recorders had their annual meeting before lunch. Chris Preston reported that the Monitoring Scheme Report was now in its final stages, and should be dispatched before Christmas. The Scarce Species Project (fewer than 100 sites nationwide) had received funding from the NCC for two 2-year posts. Alison Stewart who had just been appointed to one of these briefly discussed the project and circulated a preliminary list.

BSBI is also encouraging Recorders to produce detailed lists of county-rare plants (fewer than 3 sites) for the benefit of the NCC and County Naturalists Trusts (SWT

Scotland). The purpose of these lists is conservation and they would not be made generally available.

Finally the attention of the meeting was drawn to the Forth/Clyde Forestry Project, which will involve substantial planting in parts of Renfrewshire, Lanarkshire. Stirlingshire. West Lothian and Midlothian. Ann Clark of the NCC requested information regarding sites of conservation interest within the project area.

AGM of BSBI Membership Resident in Scotland

The AGM was held at 2.00 pm.

The Chairman reported that a number of conservation issues had figured during the year. Many members had written to the Secretary of State concerning the plan to extend skiing into Lurchers Gully in the Cairngorms. Approval for the plan had been refused, nevertheless vigilance had to be maintained as there were already rumours of applications being made for further ski tows.

On the positive side the Chairman welcomed the proposal for the first Marine Nature Reserve at Loch Sween. Worries were expressed, however, about the waters of the River Tweed where aquatic herbicides are being used. The NCC appreciate the anxiety and are monitoring the position.

Scottish field meetings had been well attended during the year. A preliminary notice of next year's field meetings was posted in the Exhibition room and it was noted that it included a week on Jura preceded by a visit to the Isle of Gigha.

The meeting ended with the election of Jo Babbs and Philip Lusby to the Committee and the re-election of Bernard Thompson.

Thanks were expressed to the retiring members, Margaret Barron and Hugh Lang.

There followed a brief meeting of the BSBI Committee for Scotland.

Lecture - On Northern Hills

The afternoon's lecture, given by John Mitchell of the Loch Lomond Nature Reserve, was a most interesting and entertaining record of "upward mobility". Mr Mitchell started life in the flatlands of south east England, and has gradually progressed northwards and upwards, by way of the Welsh mountains, the Lake District, and most importantly the North Yorkshire moors which he investigated at considerable length during his National Service. His saga was illustrated by some splendid slides of scenery, rare plants and the occasional botanist. Now he lives in what used to be called North Britain, within easy reach of the Western Highlands.

The day concluded with supper and the showing of colour transparencies at the nearby Stakis Grosvenor Hotel. Please note that slides do not have to be taken in Scotland, but should relate in some way to Scottish Botany or botanists; Hugh Lang showed some very interesting slides of "Scottish" alpinists photographed during a trip to Greenland.

List of Exhibits

J Bevan	Kindrogan <i>Hieracia</i>
ME Braithwaite	
DG Long	The Botanist in Berwickshire
K Butler	Caithness and Sutherland Plants
R Corner	Plants from Southern Scotland
JH Dickson	Noteworthy Discoveries from the
KJ Watson	Glasgow Area 1984 - 1990

G Halliday	More on <i>Crepis praemosa</i>
D McKean	New and Interesting Records from Midlothian. Redeterminations of <i>Oxalis stricta</i> and <i>Cotoneaster microphyllus</i>
N Macpherson	Wild Plants in a Glasgow Garden
P Macpherson	Recent Lanarkshire Records
J Muscott	Lothian Checklists
A Rutherford	British, but not native here. Have you found your Onion Couch?
A Silverside	<i>Euphrasia "fharaidensis"</i>
N Stewart	<i>Chara rudis</i>
O Stewart	<i>Calamagrostis purpurea</i> from Argyll Flower paintings New Kirkcudbrightshire Records
AMcG Stirling	Recent Records from VC99, Dunbarton
A Walker	
AMcG Stirling	BSBI Field Meeting on Tiree
W Young	Wildflowers of Melrose (Watercolours)
Puzzle Corner	A space where people brought unidentified specimens for naming.
F & M Perring	BSBI Publications and other Botanical Books for sale.

List of Slides

R Corner	Plants from the Borders
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H Lang	Rare Scottish Alpines seen in Greenland
P Macpherson	Recent Lanarkshire records
J Muscott	West Lothian Plants West of Scotland Plants
A Silverside	Plants of Wigtownshire
AMcG Stirling	BSBI Field Meetings at Tiree and Galloway

A VIEW FROM OUTSIDE

ME Braithwaite

I had the pleasure of introducing guests to the Exhibition meeting in November but my heart nearly failed me when I was called to explain the excitement of the long rows of brownish specimens on their herbarium sheets with the driest of labels. Instead, I turned to friends who were plentifully present and in no time my guests were happily into the swing of things and came away full of kind memories of BSBI.

But it is meant to be an exhibition meeting and not just a conversazione and there was nothing wrong with the herbarium sheets really - just the way in which they were presented. Could it not become the norm to mount the herbarium sheet on a card with photographs (or paintings) both of the plant and its habitat, a distribution map and brief notes of points of interest, not forgetting a story to amuse us ?

Perhaps we should have a competition ?

(By the way, I do realise that I have deliberately ignored all sorts of splendid exhibits in the best tradition of the Society).

VULPIA MYUROS IN THE GLASGOW AREA

P MACPHERSON
A McG STIRLING

Casual records of *Vulpia* (then *Festuca*) *myuros* were reported from Ibrox and Gartsherrie for 1921 by Grierson (1931). We know of no other records until that for Milngavie in 1976 (Silverside 1978). In 1985 the plant was seen at five sites in the Glasgow area (Macpherson and Lindsay (1985)). In June a carpet 5-6" high of Rat's-tail Fescue was seen in an old unused parking bay at the King George V Dock, and in July a small colony on a road-side bank at the "tip of Lanarkshire's nose". At the latter site, the plants grew to a height of one metre. In the same year Dr JH Dickson found a colony on an old railway bridge in Partick and subsequently at Summerston Coup and on an abandoned railway line east of Yoker.

In 1989 further plants were found on waste ground at the site of an old steel works at Hallside and on old industrial ground at Rutherglen in 1990.

With the exception of the Yoker (VC 76) and Milngavie (VC 86) sites, all the other records are for VC77.

One author, (PM), and family, first saw this plant outside the gates of the late Recorder for Norfolk, Dr CP Petch, in 1979. Some years later Dr Petch related that since the visit, when the roadmen came to spray the verges, he rushed out saying "Miss this stretch, people come down from Scotland to see that grass".

As the plants have persisted in at least two of our local sites no pilgrimages to Norfolk are required meanwhile !

References

- Grierson, R (1931). *Glasg. Nat.* **9**, 49.
 Macpherson, P & Lindsay, ELS (1985). *Glasg. Nat.* **21**, 103.
 Silverside, AJ (1978). *Glasg. Nat.* **19**, 430.

SCOTTISH FIELD MEETINGS IN 1991

June	15 - 16	Roxburghshire
	21	Isle of Gigha
	22 - 29	Isle of Jura
July	6 - 7	Gargunnoch Hills, Stirling
	7	Glen Lyon
August	10 - 17	Kindrogan Field Centre
	17 - 24	Kindrogan Field Centre

SCOTTISH EXHIBITION MEETING

November 2 Edinburgh

"PUZZLE CORNER"

Inspired by a similar regular feature at the annual London Exhibition Meetings, we hope this will become equally popular at the Scottish November meetings. For those unfamiliar with the concept, the idea is that members who have items of a puzzling nature (usually botanical specimens, but other sorts of queries may occur) may exhibit them under the above title for others to comment on, or at least point the way to a solution. Since there was no prior warning, last year's offerings were merely an example of what might be expected, but please have it in mind for this year when, hopefully, a strong entry may be forthcoming. Items should be accompanied by as much supporting information as possible, and also bear the exhibitor's name. Each should have a separate sheet of paper on which comments may be made.

CALAMAGROSTIS PURPUREA IN ARGYLL, JULY 1990

OLGA STEWART

The phone rang at fifteen minutes past midnight, and I was asked by my son Nick, "How can one tell *Calamagrostis purpurea*?" On a field meeting in Argyll, by Loch Tromlee, near Taynult, they had just found a *Calamagrostis* which they thought interesting.

When I received the specimen I, as usual, measured the plant. the number of nodes, the ligule length, and all the parts of five florets, and agreed that it was *Calamagrostis purpurea* subsp. *phragmitoides*. The measurements came well within the range of that variable species and were very close to those of specimens from Braemar.

The Argyll discovery has now extended the known distribution of this *Calamagrostis*, previously known from Cumbria, Perthshire, Angus and Aberdeenshire, and there is no reason why it should not be found elsewhere in similar damp habitats.

BIOGRAPHY OF THE REV JOHN LIGHTFOOT

Those interested in early Scottish botanists and plant recording will welcome the recently published work by Jean K. Bowden, *John Lightfoot, his Work and Travels*. Of greatest interest to Scottish botanists will be the accounts of Lightfoot's journey through Scotland with Thomas Pennant in 1772 and the production of his *Flora Scotica* five years later. A catalogue of the Lightfoot herbarium is included, together with much biographical material.

The book is published by the Bentham-Noxon Trust, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, Carnegie Mellon University, Kew and Pittsburgh. 1989. ISBN 0-913196-51-7.

**EQUISETUM X ROTHMALERI
IN KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE**

OLGA STEWART

While botanising in Southernness, VC73 in June 1990, I was crossing a rough wet grassy area between the golf course and the sea, and found the cones of an odd horse-tail which I collected. Later Chris Page identified my find as *Equisetum x rothmaleri*. Nearby was a ditch filled with one parent, *E. fluviatile*, but I did not notice any of the other parent *E. palustre*. However, I expect it was there as the habitat was very suitable. The best known site for this hybrid is Trotternish in Skye, but I understand mine is the first Scottish mainland discovery.

We have another hybrid horse-tail which grows not too far away from the *E. x rothmaleri* site; in fact it covers an extensive area behind the dunes. This is *E. x litorale*, first found extending for over half a mile in a ditch north of Dundrennan, and since then in several coastal areas in abundance. In none of the sites have any cones of fertile plants ever been found.

CHECKLIST FOR WESTER ROSS

Professor D M Henderson, BSBI Recorder for VC105, has produced a checklist of the flora of Wester Ross, incorporating the work of earlier recorders, particularly Druce (1882), as well as the results of later investigations up to the present time. The author modestly describes the list as tentative and intended as a stimulus to further work.

Copies (£2.00 + p & p) may be had from the author at :-
Inverewe House, POOLEWE, Wester Ross IV22 2LQ.

**150 YEARS AGO
C C BABINGTON IN SCOTLAND.**

A McG STIRLING

It is perhaps not generally appreciated that Charles Cardale Babington, the distinguished 19th century botanist, was a frequent visitor to Scotland. In 1841, as a member of a small party which included Professor John Hutton Balfour, he undertook an extensive tour commencing in Glasgow on the 3rd of August and finishing in Edinburgh on the 28th of the same month.

The party sailed from the Clyde by way of the Crinan Canal, Oban and Mull, to Skye where they stayed from the 4th to the 9th, seeing several common montane plants on the Cuillin. At Sligachan they gathered *Eriocaulon* "in great quantity", also *Carex pauciflora*; and at Dunvegan they saw *Vicia orobus* and *Orobanche rubra*. The 10th was spent in North Uist where *Papaver argemone*, *Hippuris* and *Lycopsis arvensis* were noted on the sandy west coast. On the 11th they reached Obbe in Harris and remained there until the morning of the 16th. Some of the time was spent in an unsuccessful search for *Ajuga pyramidalis* near Rodel. Clisham was climbed, and the paucity of its mountain flora was remarked on, though they claim to have recorded *Poa alpina*.

Perhaps the party's most interesting venture was on the 16th when, during the sea trip from Tarbert, Harris, to Stornoway, they landed on the Shiant Isles to spend two or three hours hunting for the Menzies Heath which was reputed to have been found there. Babington says "we found nothing like it, except *Empetrum nigrum*, after a careful search, and are convinced that it is not to be found in these islands". They remained in Lewis until the 20th, noting little of botanical interest except "the largest specimens of *Sagina maritima* I have ever seen" at Sto Harbour, and *Lamium intermedium (molucellifolium)* and *Juncus balticus* near Barvas.

Taking ship for the mainland again, Babington's party landed at Poolewe in Wester Ross after almost a 24 hour passage, having been becalmed in the Minch - surely a rather rare occurrence! From Poolewe they sailed up Loch Maree which Babington considered "the finest lake that I have ever seen". He also remarked on the *Pinus sylvestris* on the cliffs above the loch.

Dingwall and Strathpeffer were reached on the 22nd by way of Auchanault and Garve, and yet another rarity, *Moneses uniflora*, was looked for in vain near Coul. On the 23rd Babington and Balfour walked across the Black Isle via Avoch to Fortrose, then by ferry to Fort George on the Inverness side. Plenty of *Mertensia* was seen near Fortrose, *Dianthus deltoides* at Campbelltown (Ardersier) and *Hypochoeris glabra* near Flemington "in profusion". The 24th of August was spent with Mr G Stables at Cawdor Castle, near to which Balfour found *Monotropa*, and *Festuca calamaria (altissima)* was seen in a ravine. The following day they continued to Inverness by way of Culloden Moor. It was now possible to complete the return to Edinburgh in relative comfort by coach, this journey being effected in two days, the 26th and 27th, with an intermediate stop overnight at Perth. Babington remained in Edinburgh until the 5th of October, apparently staying with the Balfours and assisting the Professor with preparation of the Reports and Transactions of the (Edinburgh) Botanical Society.

This account gives us an interesting insight into the way botanists travelled in the Highlands and Islands in the mid-19th century. When local horse-drawn transport was not available they had perforce to cover considerable distances on foot, and accommodation was not always guaranteed at widely scattered inns. When returning south from Edinburgh, Babington had to travel by coach as far as Darlington before taking a train for London.

FURTHER BRITISH RARITIES N & P MACPHERSON IN A GLASGOW GARDEN

Our article in the BSBI *Scottish Newsletter* No 12, 27, on British Rarities in a Glasgow Garden was in a sense a space-filler to prevent having a blank page. It has however produced an unexpected result in that the details are now on the Rare British Isles' vascular plants: Botanic Gardens data base 1974-90.

Lynn Farrell receives the *Scottish Newsletter* and knowing that Duncan Donald was compiling a new edition of the Rare Native Plants in Cultivation list, sent him a copy of our note. By way of explanation to the background, Mr Donald sent, among other items, a copy of the details of all the plants listed. This contained the names of a further four species, that we have growing, and of which we were able to supply details.

Hairy Rupturewort (*Herniaria ciliolata*). Seeds taken in 1969, from the Lizard Peninsula, where the plant is locally abundant, were sown on to the scree of our rockery. It persists but has to be kept free from competition. This plant is of special interest to us as it was the first that we ever photographed in close-up.

Early Sand-grass (*Mibora minima*). Seeds from St Ouen's Bay, Jersey in 1976, were brought back and sown into a pot containing sandy soil. After flowering the pot is placed high on a porch shelf and allowed to dry out. Each autumn it is brought down and watered. Flowering usually takes place in March-April but one year it flowered very early and so profusely that it was exhibited at the January meeting of the Glasgow Natural History Society.

Four-leaved Allseed (*Polycarpon tetraphyllum*). As recently described (*Glas. Nat.* 22, 90; 1991) seeds came in soil round a plant we were given from Guernsey in 1970. Without aid it has persisted, spreading on to the pots in the plunge bed.

May Lily (*Maianthemum bifolium*). In 1980 the Recorder for Norfolk told us that the plant grew in a wood at Swanton Novers, but that he did not have the exact location. Being an area of over one square mile he did not think it worth our while searching, but we tried and were fortunate to come across a patch 40 yards in diameter and were able to report back the precise site. A cutting taken home rampaged through the peat bed. Despite careful removal of all visible evidence, the plant still appears at sites distant to its original location. However part was placed in a large metal container and sunk into the bed where it continues to flower well each year.

A ROSE BY 49 OTHER NAMES ? G H BALLANTYNE

In 1978 I attended a joint brambles/roses course at Kindrogan during which I had my first introduction to the mysteries of *Rosa* reproduction. However, I was lured to *Rubus* and apart from having a look at some roses during the autumns of 1978 and 1979, I did not pay much attention to the genus until the Monitoring Scheme in 1987-88, and again in 1989.

I knew of course that VC 85 had a good representation of the seven common Scottish roses - *canina*, *afzeliana*, *caesia*, *sherardii*, *mollis*, *rubiginosa* and *pimpinellifolia*. What became apparent in the late '80s was the fact that wherever a few bushes occurred, there were some which did not fit a species description. I did not bother too much about this until I learned that a handbook on Roses was actively being prepared and that 10 km records were being sought by BRC, at least for the species and possibly for some other taxa.

Thus I resolved, that for autumn 1990 I would have a look at all the Fife and Kinross 10 km squares. I'd heard all about Wolley-Dod, of course, and the very numerous varieties he described; but I'd always been

sceptical about these. I re-read the roses section in Stace's *Hybridization and the Flora of the British Isles* and got a copy of Gordon Graham's account of roses in Durham. It soon became evident that [a] because of their complicated genetics all the native British roses could interbreed; [b] there were a few varieties which were constant and recognisable; and [c] most of Wolley-Dod's varieties were in fact hybrids.

It became clear during my field forays in 1990 that wherever there were two or more species present in most cases recognisable intermediates occurred. Some were, to my eye anyway, obvious hybrids while others contained perhaps just the odd character of another species - and some were not identifiable at all (as with *Rubus*). All five of the *canina/villosa* groups proved to be widespread and common although *caesia* was absent from two or three squares. Intermediates between the three *canina* taxa were difficult to be certain about, and *sherardii* x *mollis* was very difficult. Hybrids between the two groups were reasonably easy to detect but again between which species was a problem. The fact that *canina* sheds its sepals early was a help and I was reasonably happy about, eg *canina* x *mollis/sherardii*. *Rubiginosa* occurred normally only as a bush or two but in some areas was frequent. Because of its distinct characters, it was usually possible to find hybrids in the vicinity with most of the *caninae/villosae*. *Pimpinellifolia* was seen only occasionally and never in quantity except at the odd coastal station. It seemed to prefer its own company & I came across only one cross with *rubiginosa* between two bushes growing side by side.

So where does the "49" of the title come in ? As mentioned, each species can hybridise with the others - and depending on which is the maternal parent, there are reciprocal crosses. Thus each of the common Scottish species can cross with the six others, which works out at 42 combinations, plus the seven species themselves (write them down if you don't believe me!). The theoretical number is actually more as *arvensis* grows

here and there and also hybridises; while *rugosa* has crossed with *canina*. Then there are almost certainly triple hybrids; Gordon Graham considers that many of the "non-determinable" roses are probably, eg *Rosa A* introgressed with *Rosa B* x *Rosa C*. These are not worth recording at this stage of our knowledge of their genetics.

In practice the number of taxa is lower, as some reciprocal hybrids are virtually impossible to tell apart, and it is difficult to be definite about others. Gordon Graham favours the use of a binomial which includes both reciprocals, and this of course reduces the number of taxa considerably. Positive identification too is a problem as roses do not press well and expert determination in the field is really a must - and there are very few experts. All of which leaves the VC Recorder who is anxious to have an accurate list of his/her critical taxa in a quandary. The new handbook should help, but what we really need is someone in Scotland to take on the mantle of Rose Recorder for Scotland.

(NB Recent nomenclature changes mean that *R. afzeliana* is now *R. caesia*, ssp *glauca* and *R. caesia* (formerly *coriifolia*) is now *R. caesia*, ssp *caesia*. *R. dumetorum* has been banished, for which I'm glad as I could never make much of it.)

SOME SURPRISES !

ALISON RUTHERFORD

Those who have already gone down the publishing path will know all about it, but for novices like myself life can be full of surprises.

The Helensburgh Community Council surveyed the district and decided that local guide leaflets were needed, and I offered to describe some of the walks and trails, noting the plants, native and introduced, found by the wayside.

One was entirely on mural vegetation and another was a very local Flora, just what occurred within the Burgh boundary. This covers five complete 1km squares and five portions of squares, some of which are very small "chips".

As there has been a 1km recording scheme in the area since 1975, and as I lived first at the western edge, moving more recently to the eastern side, the whole town consisted of "home" squares. I had recorded the locations of species with, I had thought, enough detail to be able to return to the spots easily. Alas! In the early days before the need for such precision was apparent, details were inadequately recorded. I had thought that with well-filled field cards and reasonable knowledge of the ground, it would be simple to write up the walks with only a little checking, but, often I was astonished at the way things turned out. For instance, I would have no recollection about finding a particular plant, and in other instances wondered at the total absence of certain species in some squares. After a spell of brain-racking the blanks did not always fill in.

Some of the problems must be similar to those encountered in producing a Flora or checklist. All sorts of things have cropped up - what for instance are the most recent names for the knotweeds; and if you discover these, has their sequence to be altered? But the most troublesome thing is "Where was it found?" and can it be relocated for checking? It could sometimes be very difficult if meaningful comment was called for on a plant which appeared to be temporarily or even permanently lost!

On the plus side of the exercise, a species new to Dunbartonshire was discovered, and the grand total of 625 species was good for even a very built-up area. Some, included in Robert Mill's *Flora of Helensburgh* (1967) were gone, but pleasingly some he declared "extinct" have either returned or have been found in new sites.

INFORMATION ON ONION COUCH

The request for information on the distribution of the subspecies of *Arrhenatherum elatius* (Tall Oat-grass) in BSBI News No 54 has received a very poor response from Scotland as will be evident from the distribution map in BSBI News No 55. A limited investigation in Dunbartonshire last autumn showed that it was not difficult to find material with some development of bulbous lower internodes, though not always to the degree indicated by the authors for subsp. *bulbosum*. Study of herbarium specimens in RBG Edinburgh suggests a wide distribution of the bulbous subsp. in Scotland north to Orkney, though the size of the swollen internodes shows considerable variation. This may be due to the stage of growth at the time of collection, the bulbs only reaching full size late in the season. This variation is the subject of continued study (Cussans & Morton, pers. comm.)

Scottish members are again urged to investigate their local Tall Oat-grass and communicate their findings to the undermentioned. In addition to a note of location, information on soil type and habitat would be extremely useful. A good response will help to ensure that Scotland is better represented in this investigation in the future.

John Cussans or Alan Morton
Department of Biology
Imperial College at Silwood Park
Ascot
Berks.
SL5 7PY

(The illustration of Onion Couch, on page 32, is by Alison Rutherford, taken from a Dunbartonshire specimen.)

NATURE CONSERVANCY COUNCIL FOR SCOTLAND UPDATED LIST OF ARO'S

ARO	Area of Responsibility	Office Base
NORTH WEST		
Mr AG Payne	Inverness	9 Culduthel Rd Inverness 0463 239431
Mr P Wortham	East Ross & Cromarty	"
Mr I MacGowan	West Ross & Cromarty	"
Mr B Smith	Caithness	Main St Golspie 040 83 633602
Mr F Symonds	S E Sutherland	"
Mr V Wilson	N E Sutherland	"
Dr I Strachan	North Lochaber	The Parade Fort William 0397 4716
Mr AK Bachell	South Lochaber	"
Mr LV Cranna	Skye & Lochalsh	Bridge Road Portree 0478 3329
Mr IS Angus	Lewis & Harris	17 Francis St Stornoway 0851 5258
Dr MM Elliott	Uists & Benbecula	Stilligarry S Uist
NORTH EAST		
Dr D Bale	Kincardine & Deeside	17 Rubislaw Terr Aberdeen 0224 642863
Mr M Ferguson	Banff, Buchan & Gordon	"

Dr N Buxton	Badenoch &	Achantoul
Mr A Dorin	Strathspey	Aviemore
		0479 810477
Dr R Briggs	Shetland & Orkney	The Esplanade
Dr A Douse	Shetland	Lerwick
Miss E Stuart	"	0595 3345
Ms K Scott	Orkney	Junction Road
Ms L McTeague	"	"
Mr Steve North	"	"
Ms Jill Matthews	"	"

SOUTH WEST

Miss CRJ Eccles	North Mid	Balloch Castle
	Strathclyde	0389 58511
Mr PB Cashman	North Argyll &	Glensalloch Rd
	Isles	Barcaldine
		063 172 363
Mr NN Russell	Mid Argyll &	Cairnbaan
	Kintyre	0546 3611
Dr RA Macdonald	Islay & Jura	Main St Bowmore
		049 681 711
Mr N Smith	Ayrshire & Arran	2 Beresford Terr
		Ayr
		0292 261 392
Miss EM Buckle	Clydesdale	"
Miss AG Carstairs	Dumfries &	106 High St
	Galloway	Dalbeattie
		0556 610086
Dr LV Fleming	Niths-, Annan- &	"
	Eskdale	"
Mrs DA Reed	Wigtown	"

SOUTH EAST

NLR Gubbins	Lothians	Riccarton Edin.
G Dalbey	"	031 449 4933
Dr RAH Smith	Tayside, Perth &	56 Oakbank Rd
	Kinross	Perth
		0738 39746
Mr NW Taylor	"	"

Mr RB Nannes	Tayside, Angus &	9 Castle St
	Dundee	Forfar
		0307 68715
Miss A Brown	"	"
Mr CO Badenoch	Borders	38 Gala Park
Mr RD Payne	"	Galashields
		0896 56652
Mr DM Bayne	Central	Innovation Park
		University of
		Stirling
		0786 50362
Ms CM Crawford	"	"
Mr JD Gallacher	"	"
Ms J Babbs	"	"
Mrs CR Charles	Fife	46 Crossgate
		Couper
		0334 54038
Mr S Pritchard	"	"

THE BOTANIST IN BERWICKSHIRE

MICHAEL BRAITHWAITE

This new book of 111 pages is a local flora. After wide-ranging introductory sections it gives a comprehensive and much annotated checklist of the flowering plants, ferns and bryophytes of Berwickshire by myself and David Long, building on the work of his father, Dr Albert Long. It is published by the Berwickshire Naturalists Club whose founder Dr George Johnston wrote an excellent *Flora of Berwick-upon-Tweed* in 1829 to establish the modern study of botany in the county. It is printed to a high standard, with a cover beautifully illustrated in colour by Bill Young of Melrose.

Berwickshire's botany remains rewarding. The coast with its cliffs and sea braes provides a largely unbroken strip of natural grassland and maritime heath with such species as *Vicia sylvatica*, *Minuartia verna* and *Astragalus danicus*.

in reasonable plenty and *Glaucium flavum* surviving on the shore. Ancient woodland is scarce but the valley elmwoods are characteristic with *Allium ursinum*, *Mercurialis*, *Saxifraga granulata* and *Adoxa*, while in the remaining oakwoods *Corydalis* is something of a specialty. The Tweed as the principal river has impressive aliens but the *Heracleum mantegazzianum* only locally replaces local specialities like *Scrophularia umbrosa* and *Scirpus sylvaticus* which may be enjoyed also on its tributaries. The aquatic flora is rich in *Ranunculus* and *Potamogeton* spp. Very locally on the inland grasslands *Dianthus deltoides* and *Viola lutea* occur while the range of wetlands includes several mosses featuring *Corallorhiza*. Moorland remains extensive in the Lammermuirs where characteristic features are the bryophyte-rich flushes where *Sedum villosum* occurs. The arable weeds can be colourful with *Galeopsis speciosa* and *Fumaria muralis* but more local species include *Fumaria densiflora*. I will not attempt to summarise David Long's over-view of the bryophytes.

As much information as possible on the county's flora is packed into this small volume. Many localities are given and also the dates of first or last records from a locality where appropriate, so although the book is not meant to be exhaustive it does give enough detail for a botanist who makes a field record to be able to place it in perspective in a local context with some confidence. The book is not meant to be a botanist guided tour of the county but the many localities cited together with the comprehensive gazetteer encourage exploration.

The book is available from me at Clarilaw, Hawick, TD9 8PT, at £5.30 including postage, cheques payable to "The Berwickshire Naturalists Club".

THE COASTAL HEATH AT ROSEHEARTY DAVID WELCH ABERDEENSHIRE

On the north coast of Aberdeenshire an interesting tract of semi-rural vegetation roughly 30 ha in extent lies immediately west of Rosehearty village (38/916665-924672). A wide variety of vegetation types occur: areas of marsh and rock outcrops are interspersed amongst dry heathland and grassland, and there are gradations to maritime communities.

The total species list is quite long. Scarce species include *Anagallis tenella*, *Apium inundatum*, *Asplenium marinum*, *Sagina subulata* and *Scilla verna*. This last grows in short grassy turf near several of the rock outcrops.

The marshes and flushes have the richest plant communities, the vegetation being kept short by grazing. *Caltha palustris*, *Carex demissa*, *C. nigra*, *C. panicea*, *Empetrum nigrum*, *Erica tetralix*, *Eriophorum angustifolium*, *Hydrocotyle vulgaris*, *Nardus stricta*, *Pedicularis sylvatica*, *Potentilla palustris*, *Ranunculus flammula*, and *Salix repens* are the main species, and *Carex curta*, *C. pulicaris*, *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*, *Danthonia decumbens*, *Eleocharis palustris*, *Galium palustre*, *Juncus bulbosus*, *Narthecium ossifragum*, *Polygala serpyllifolia* and *Triglochin palustris* are frequent. In rills and trampled pools *Littorella uniflora* and *Potamogeton polygonifolius* grow as well as *Apium inundatum*.

Heathland with *Calluna*, *Empetrum* and *Erica tetralix* remains the most extensive community despite the cattle grazing. But there are clear signs that conversion to grassland is in progress, so over-grazing is a threat. Gorse is present on the landward side of the heath and the cattle at least help keep it in check. A noteworthy feature of the vegetation is the luxuriance of *Salix repens*; stands occur widely on damp ground away from the shore.

Unfortunately this stretch of coast lost its SSSI status in the NCC's recent review. The designation had been made on geological grounds, and though NCC staff were aware of some botanical interest, this seems not to have been considered in the review.

THE "BRITISH SCARCE SPECIES" ELAINE R BULLARD IN ORKNEY

The new monitoring list shows about 22 species which either do occur in VC 111, or have been previously recorded, or have doubtful identification. Orkney Field Club has been aware of those which are only known in one or two sites and some of these were checked in 1990.

Several on our list are comparatively frequent - eg *Gallium sternerii*, *Carex maritima*, *Callitriche hermaphroditica*, *Arctostaphylos alpinus*, *Potamogeton filiformis* and *P. friesii*. The problem will be to cover all possible sites in two years. In Orkney, *Ophioglossum azoricum* can be locally abundant but in its case, "local" means small, uninhabited islands which are very difficult to visit. *Primula scotica* sites are still declining and *Mertensia maritima* tends to fluctuate from year to year with the effects of winter storms. Both will require updating.

Our list also includes a few species which have not been seen for many years and others which have always posed difficulties with identification, eg *Euphrasia*, *Fumaria* and *Zostera*.

On top of all this we do have logistic problems, - a large number of islands to cover and VERY few local botanists. Although organised field meetings are not very practical in an island group, any visiting botanist would be welcomed, advice and help given with accommodation and transport and of course, copies of existing records.

BSBI COMMITTEE FOR SCOTLAND

The following is the composition of the Committee from November 1990 to November 1991.

Chairman - HJ Noltie; Vice-Chairman - AMcG Stirling
Secretary/Treasurer - Dr P Macpherson; Field Meetings
Secretary - BH Thompson; Minutes Secretary - Dr MGB
Hughes; Meetings Secretary - Miss J Muscott;
Members of Committee; Ms JD Babbs; Dr RWM Corner;
PS Lusby; N Stewart; J Winham.

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

At the AGM on 2nd November 1991 three members will
be elected to the Committee. The retiring members will
be, Miss Muscott and Messrs Noltie and Stirling, none of
whom are 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
1991.

Peter Macpherson, Hon Secretary, Committee for
Scotland.

