

From Jim McIntosh, Senior Country Officer, jim.mcintosh@bsbi.org

BSBI Recorders' Conference 2016

The presentations that were given at the [BSBI Recorders' Conference](#) in Shrewsbury in early September are available by following the links below:

- Mark Spencer on [Recording non-natives in urban environments](#) - can it be done consistently and constructively?
- Andrew Cherrill on [Field surveying: problems, pitfalls and solutions](#)
- Colin French on [The Cornish Biodiversity Network](#)
- Martin Rand on [The Floras of western Europe](#) - where to look, what to expect.
- Rich Burkmar on [QGIS demonstration on recording your patch](#).
- Pete Stroh on [Rare Plants of Northants](#): difficulties in recording and the impacts on the Atlas.

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

Stoneworts

Those of you who attended the Recorders' Conference cannot help but have been enthused by Claudia Ferguson-Smyth's presentation and workshop about stoneworts (which will shortly appear on the [BSBI Recorders' Conference](#) page with those listed above). Stoneworts have the reputation of being a very difficult group, but we have the [Red Data Book](#) and [BSBI Handbook](#) to help, as well as a brilliant [Stonewort key](#) that deals with almost all of the species you are likely to encounter in the field. Not to mention Claudia and Nick Stewart, who are quick to assist with any trouble you might be having with identification. There are still plenty of vascular plants to be found during the autumn and winter, but why not spend a bit of time getting to know your local stonewort species too? Remember that they are evergreen! It'll add to your list and your enjoyment of the day, and with practice (I know I need it), you'll soon wonder why you ever passed them by.

[Peter Stroh](#), BSBI Scientific Officer

Stonewort Publications

The above article only includes links to Summerfield books for the BSBI Stonewort Handbook and Red Data Book, published by JNCC, not to the actual publications, which are not available online. However several useful stonewort publications *are* available on the web: the Environment Agency published a report entitled [Stoneworts: their habitats, ecological requirements and conservation](#) by Stephen Lambert in 2009 and Plantlife's [Important Stonewort Areas: An assessment of the best areas for stoneworts in the United Kingdom \(summary\)](#) by Nick Stewart in 2004. Take a look!

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

Planning recording to match the seasons

In response to the article in last month's eNews on recording arable weeds in September, Michael Braithwaite writes "Remember the importance of planning recording to match the seasons. I was taught the mantra: 'May, woodland; June, grassland; July, wetland; August, moorland'. To these I would add: 'September, arable'. However, if you follow this pattern you are likely to miss certain species, such as *Epipactis helleborine* (Broad-leaved Helleborine) and *Elymus caninus* (Bearded Couch) and other grasses in woodland, for example. The other mantra is that it takes three visits to a site in a season to record a reasonably complete species list, leaving at least six weeks between visits."

The [Atlas 2020 Guidance for VCRs](#) doesn't quite go this far (you will be pleased to hear!) but it does suggest two visits in different seasons to maximise the chances of recording species, either in spring and summer, summer and autumn or spring and autumn. Although it does acknowledge that the effort required probably outweighs the benefit in remote, montane or upland squares and does not ask for them to be surveyed twice.

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

Using Smartphones for recording

Last month I mentioned that there is a very handy app which allows you to make a record, complete with date and grid ref, called "[GB Grid Ref Compass](#)" or "[Irish Grid Ref Compass](#)". iPhone users will be interested to learn that the new operating system iOS 10 has a [Magnifier](#) which is very useful if your hand lens is indisposed! To enable it: Settings > General > Accessibility > Magnifier and to use it: triple click the home button. You can switch the flash light on to improve the image or take a photograph to capture it. There is even a free [Pocket Ruler](#) app that can be used for measurements!

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

Ordnance Survey Maps on Smartphones

You may be interested to learn that all new OS Landranger (1:50,000) and OS Explorer (1:25,000) maps come with a code that gives you free access to the digital version of that map sheet on your smartphone. All you need to do is download the [OS Maps app](#). Once set-up the app will then display the map along with your position on it – even without any phone signal. [More...](#)

If you already have Memory Map on your computer, perhaps with a 1:25,000 OS map for your VC, you can download the [Memory Map App](#) for your smartphone and, using iTunes, copy those OS maps and any VC boundaries from your PC onto your phone. [More...](#)

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

Instant MapMate to DDb synchronisation

We reported last month that MapMate synch files sent to BSBI's hub are now added to the BSBI Database within 20 minutes, and asked all recorders who use MapMate to reset their synch with the BSBI hub and send their entire MapMate dataset. If you haven't already done this, we would be grateful if you might do it **now!** It is quick and simple to do. [More...](#)

[Tom Humphrey](#), BSBI Database Officer

Workflow

Try to enter your records into MapMate as soon as possible after each field recording session. If you delay, a daunting backlog will quickly develop and it will become difficult to remember details. Then synch records to the Hub/DDb after every data entry session. If a backlog has developed over the field season, then tackle it as soon as you can, to allow enough time to take stock and see where your Atlas 2020 gaps are before the next field season begins. If you need help with any of this, please contact your Country Officer.

Remember that, because your MapMate data is the 'top copy', you will still need to back it up periodically. To do so, copy the entire 'My MapMate' folder in Documents onto an external drive (like a pen drive). [Here](#) is a short video explaining how to do it from the [BSBI MapMate Support](#) site.

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

BSBI Field Meetings

I called for meeting suggestions in the [September BSBI eNews](#), but so far none has come in! Please do consider holding a field meeting – especially if you (County Recorders) need help with Atlas 2020 or recording for your own Flora or Rare Plant Register – or if you (Referees) would like to teach the finer points of a specific group – or just for the fun of it! Let me or your Country Field Secretary have provisional details as soon as possible.

Members enjoy reading field meetings reports in the BSBI Yearbook, so if you have led one this year please draft a short report and send it to [Trevor James](#). It is easy to put off writing these (my report from the Blencathra Summer Meeting is still in draft), but they do showcase a major strength of the BSBI and make a record of what the Society has done.

[Jonathan Shanklin](#), Hon. Field Meetings Secretary

BSBI Annual Meetings

Everyone is welcome to the BSBI Annual Exhibition Meeting and Annual General Meeting which will be held on Saturday the 26th of November at the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, Wallingford, Oxfordshire. Admission to the AEM is free. Details are available [here](#) and the flyer will be included with the latest issue of BSBI News, which should reach all members during the first week of October.

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

You are also invited to the BSBI Scottish Annual Meeting which will be held on Saturday the 5th of November at SNH Battleby Conference Centre, Perth. We have a great programme of interesting talks and exhibits as well as a variety of botanical mini-workshops. The main talk will be on *Aliens in the British Flora* by Professor Mick Crawley, who is an excellent speaker. To book, please click [here](#) or look out for the flyer with the imminent BSBI News.

Please encourage any interested non-member friends, family or colleagues to book and come to these meetings. If you have made some interesting botanical finds during the year please consider exhibiting them at one or other (or even both!) meetings. Remember that exhibiting is not the preserve of County Recorders – everyone is welcome to contribute interesting exhibits!

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

BSBI Photographic Competition

This is a final call for entries to the 2016 BSBI Photographic Competition. There are just two categories this year: 1) Rare species and 2) Common species. Photographs should be taken in Britain or Ireland, must be of vascular plants or stoneworts, but don't have to be taken during 2016 and you don't have to enter both categories. However there is a limit of two images per category per entrant. In order to encourage entries and standardise print quality and size, please send entries in electronic format only, along with titles and categories, directly to me by 21st Oct 2016.

The winners will be chosen from a selection of the very best images by a popular vote of those attending the Scottish Annual Meeting. A display will also be mounted at the Annual Exhibition Meeting at CEH Wallingford.

[Natalie Harmsworth](#), BSBI Photographic Competition Organiser

BSBI News & Views

On September's [BSBI News & Views](#) blog, you can read about [BSBI at the State of Nature launch](#), the [Plant Families Workshops in Scotland](#), reports from the BSBI Recorders' Conference, a post about [Referees](#) and pages from the [Diary of a Young Darwin Scholar](#). You can also read about the [botanical find of the year so far](#) – a new and top secret site in County Cork where both the sporophyte and the gametophyte of *Trichomanes speciosum* (Killarney Fern) were found during the [BSBI Cork Recording Event](#).

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer



Sporophyte of Killarney Fern, R. Hodd

BSBI eNews

The current and recent back issues of BSBI eNews are now available on the [Publications](#) page of the BSBI website – and there is even a piece about that in BSBI News & Views [here](#). An email with a link to BSBI eNews is circulated to BSBI Recorders, Referees, staff and committee members. Please feel free to forward it to anyone who you think would be interested. I'd welcome short contributions from anyone on topics of interest and relevance to fellow readers. It is generally published on the 1st of each month so contributions should ideally arrive around the 21st of the preceding month. Please send them to me. I'd also be pleased to have any comments or corrections to BSBI eNews.

Let me know if you'd prefer not to receive the BSBI eNews email, or would like me to use another email address.

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer