

GRAVEYARD FLORA OF EASTER ROSS (VC106)

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Cemeteries or graveyards are often little oases of green space in urban areas and some English surveys have produced long lists of vascular plants (Ferns 2012, Robson et al 2013).

The present survey included 20 graveyards in Easter Ross (excluding that part of VC106 in the Black Isle). 11 were in towns or villages. 4 were associated with church buildings still used for services and so might also be described as churchyards.

All sites were visited on two occasions between April and August in 2012 and all identifiable vascular plants noted. Obviously planted species were excluded and some plants defied identification partly because of close grass cutting. In all 175 species were recorded with a range of 21 to 50 at the various locations. Some additional species were also recorded outwith the survey period but are not included in this list.

The most commonly seen in order were *Bellis perennis*, *Poa annua*, *Rumex acetosa*, *Urtica dioica*, *Taraxacum*, *Trifolium repens*, *Cerastium fontanum*, *Sambucus nigra*, *Veronica chaemedrys*, and *Galium aparine*.

Others seen in at least 10 graveyards were *Agrostis capillaries*, *Cirsium vulgare*, *Dactylis glomerata*, *Festuca*

rubra, *Hedera helix*, *Holcus lanatus*, *Hypochaeris radicata*, *Luzula campestre*, *Montia Fontana*, *Prunella vulgaris*, *Plantago lanceolata*, *Ranunculus repens*, *Senecio jacobaea*, *Senecio vulgaris* and *Sagina procumbens*. A full list is given below.

The list of species is relatively short compared with surveys from the south, although these were mainly conducted over a longer period and more frequent visits would have added to the score. The very frequent grass cutting, use of weedkiller and lack of many neglected corners no doubt contributed to this picture.

No national rarities were found although some places showed evidence of having been derived from coastal grassland by the presence of species such as *Saxifraga granulata* and *Ranunculus bulbosus*. In other locations species such as *Conopodium majus*, *Stellaria holostea* and *Moehringia trinerva* were present in remnants of woodland. A few rubbish tip areas yielded extra species.

The graveyard flora would benefit greatly from less frequent grass cutting, a reduced use of weedkiller and the creation of some wilder corners although this may not suit all sections of the public taste.

Graveyards visited: Alness, Balintore, Chapel Hill, Croick, Dingwall Mitchell Hill, Dingwall St Clements, Edderton, Fearn Abbey, Fodderty, Kilmuir, Kiltearn, Kincardine, Logie Easter, Nigg, Nonikiln, Portmahomack, Roskeen, Strathpeffer, Tain St Duthus, Tain new.

Ferns, P. (2012) "The Flora of the City of London Cemetery". Wanstead Wildlife

Robson, C., Paston, S., Senior, I. and Bartlett, J. (2013) "Plants of Earlham Cemetery, Norwich". Friends of Earlham Cemetery.

Species List: *Acer pseudoplatanus*, *Achillea millefolium*, *Aegopodium podagraria*, *Arrhenatherum elatius*, *Agrostis capillaries*, *Agrostis canina*, *Agrostis stolonifera*, *Aira praecox*, *Alchemilla mollis*, *Allium ursinum*, *Alopecurus pratensis*, *Anthoxanthum odoratum*, *Anthriscus sylvestris*, *Arabidopsis thaliana*, *Aphanes arvensis*, *Aphanes australis*, *Asplenium adiatum-nigrum*, *Asplenium ruta-muraria*, *Asplenium trichomanes*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Bellis perennis*, *Betula pubescens*, *Bromus hordeaceus*, *Campanula rotundifolia*, *Cardamine flexuosa*, *Cardamine hirsuta*, *Cardamine pratensis*, *Cerastium fontanum*, *Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*, *Chamerium angustifolium*, *Chenopodium album*, *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, *Cirsium arvense*, *Cirsium palustre*, *Cirsium vulgare*, *Claytonia perfoliata*, *Claytonia sibirica*, *Conopodium majus*, *Corylus avellana*, *Cotoneaster horizontalis*, *Cotoneaster simonsii*, *Crataegus monogyna*, *Crepis capillaries*, *Cytisus scoparius*, *Dactylis glomerata*, *Descampsia cespitosa*, *Digitalis purpurea*, *Dryopteris dilatata*, *Dryopteris filix-mas*, *Epilobium ciliatum*, *Epilobium montanum*, *Epilobium obscurum*, *Erica cinerea*, *Erophila verna*, *Euphrasia sp*, *Festuca ovina*, *Festuca rubra*, *Ficaria verna*, *Fragaria vesca*, *Fumaria officinalis*, *Galium aparine*, *Galium saxatile*, *Galium verum*, *Geranium endressii*, *Geranium molle*, *Geranium robertianum*, *Glechoma hederacea*, *Gnaphalium uliginosum*, *Geum urbanum*, *Hedera helix*, *Hedera hibernica*, *Heracleum sphondylium*, *Hesperis matronalis*, *Hieraceum sp*, *Holcus mollis*, *Hypochaeris radicata*, *Hypericum androsaemum*, *Hyacinthoides x massartiana*, *Ilex aquifolium*, *Juncus articulatus*, *Juncus effusus*, *Lapsana communis*, *Leontodon autumnalis*, *Leucanthemum vulgare*, *Linaria purpurea*, *Lolium perenne*, *Lonicera periclymenum*, *Lotus corniculatus*, *Luzula campestris*, *Mecanopsis cambrica*, *Moeringia trinerva*, *Montia Fontana*, *Mycelis muralis*, *Myosotis arvensis*, *Myosotis discolor*, *Myrrhis odorata*, *Narcissus sp*, *Papaver dubium*, *Pentaglottis sempervirens*, *Persicaria maculosa*, *Pilosella officinalis*, *Plantago lanceolata*, *Plantago major*, *Poa annua*, *Poa pratensis*, *Poa trivialis*, *Polygala vulgare*, *Polygonum aviculare*, *Polypodium vulgare*, *Potentilla sterilis*, *Primula vulgaris*, *Prunella vulgaris*, *Prunus avium*, *Pteridium aquilinum*, *Ranunculus bulbosus*, *Ranunculus repens*, *Ribes nigra*, *Ribes sanguineum*, *Ribes uva-crispa*, *Rosa caesia vosagiana*, *Rosa canina*, *Rosa pimpinellifolia*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Rubus idaeus*, *Rumex acetosa*, *Rumex acetosella*, *Rumex longifolia*, *Rumex obtusifolius*, *Sagina filicaulis*, *Sagina procumbens*, *Sambucus nigra*, *Saxifraga granulata*, *Schrophularia nodosa*, *Sedum acre*, *Sedum album*, *Senecio jacobaea*, *Senecio sylvatica*, *Senecio vulgaris*, *Silene dioica*, *Silene x hampeana*, *Solanum dulcamara*, *Sonchus asper*, *Sonchus oleraceus*, *Sorbus aucuparia*, *Spergula arvensis*, *Stachys sylvatica*, *Stellaria graminea*, *Stellaria holostea*, *Stellaria media*, *Stellaria pallida*, *Symphoricarpos albus*, *Taraxacum ag*, *Thymus polytrichus*, *Tilia x europaea*, *Trifolium campestre*, *Trifolium dubium*, *Trifolium pratense*, *Trifolium repens*, *Tripleurospermum inodorum*, *Ulex europaeus*, *Ulmus glabra*, *Urtica dioica*, *Veronica arvensis*, *Veronica chaemedrys*, *Veronica filiformis*, *Veronica hederifolia*, *Veronica serpyllifolia*, *Vicia cracca*, *Vicia sepium*, *Vicia sativa*, *Viola riviniana*, *Viola x wittcockiana*.