

VC111 –plant recording in 2015

Recording for Atlas 2000 took centre stage in 2015. I visited and made comprehensive species lists for nearly 35 1km and 2km squares and further, shorter ones from miscellaneous site visits. This included several days recording on the outer islands, to ensure that nearing the end of Atlas 2020 I am not left with only the most remote places to visit. Other local botanists and Field Club members were involved in most of these island visits. Some help with costs was received from the Wildflower Society. A short account of these island visits will appear in the Society's magazine. There will be more to do in 2016: visiting BSBI members are most welcome to join in, in these or other outings, though the island trips are done on short notice to make the best of forecast weather.

Following some analysis of the post-2000 record set I changed course slightly in my recording strategy this year. There is good geographical distribution of 2km square records for the Vice-County, but many of these lists are much shorter than they should be, so after some analysis I targeted my visits on some poorly recorded squares. Also I have been chasing up pre-2000 VC rarity records, with considerable success. Some have dated from the early 20th Century, for example *Berula erecta* (Lesser Water Parsnip), a rare species in the north of Scotland, was found in the exact spot described in 1911.

In March Eric Meek and I produced a Rare Plant Register for Orkney VC111.

There were some new vice-county records, mostly of sub-species not previously attended to. Find of the year was undoubtedly *Hieracium sowadeense* (most probably - identity has still to be confirmed), a vice-county endemic, found where it was last recorded in 1925. Fewer than 10 plants remain. Seeds were collected and seedlings are being reared.