



2017 Scottish Vice-County Reports

Dumfriesshire (vc72) *Chris Miles*

Good progress was made with Atlas 2020 with 6500 records entered. More than 50 records were collected from 38 tetrads, 29 of which were monads. Smaller numbers of records were also gathered from 110 other monads including some significant refinds and new species. Progress has continued to focus on those hectads where either less than 70% of all species recorded have been recorded post-2000 (now 8 between 65% and 70%, and 3 below 65%) or where the percentage of species refound is below 70%.

Some significant finds in 2017 were displayed at the Scottish Annual Meeting. The first find for 120 years of *Radiola linoides* (Allseed) and *Frangula alnus* (Alder Buckthorn) were particularly good. Two new sites for *Gnaphalium sylvaticum* (Heath Cudweed) was also significant as was a new *Equisetum pratense* (Shady Horsetail) population in the Moffat Hills.

New to Dumfriesshire this year were *Melilotus altissimus* (Tall Melilot); one population in a natural site across the Solway from Cumbrian populations, *Crassula tillaea* (Mossy Stonecrop) on 2 lay-bys a long way from its nearest record, and *Senecio inaequidens* (Narrow-leaved Ragwort) as a casual.

I finally tackled my collection of *Hieracium* from the last 15 years and then had David McCosh look at them. He determined one new species for the VC, *Hieracium beebyanum* (Beeby's Hawkweed), and some good refinds/gaps filled.

I supported the Identifying Plant Families workshop in May and will run this in Dumfries in 2018. Also in 2018, I am planning to start a local recording group for Dumfriesshire.

Kirkcudbrightshire (vc73) *David Hawker*

Despite a decidedly cool, wet year, c.130 monads were recorded in 25 hectads, mainly in the south & central parts of the VC. c.7500 records were entered into MapMate, from many contributors – especially Nick Stewart, the Kirkcudbrightshire Botany Group (KBG), several visiting VCRs and BSBI members – grateful thanks to all! Highlights were *Datura stramonium* (Thorn-apple), *Vicia tetrasperma* (Smooth Tare), *Teesdalia nudicaulis*

(Shepherd's Cress), *Pyrola minor* (Common Wintergreen) at several new sites, *Carex magellanica* (Tall Bog-sedge), *Hymenophyllum wilsonii* (Wilson's Filmy-fern), *Seriphidium maritimum* (Sea Wormwood) (LR), *Carex punctata* (Dotted Sedge) (NS); non-natives *Galinsoga quadriradiata* (Shaggy-soldier) and *Solanum nigrum* (Black Nightshade) both at several urban sites, *Luzula luzuloides* (White Wood-rush) - 2nd VC record, and NCRs for *Phormium tenax* (New Zealand Flax), *Taxus x media* (hybrid Yew) and *Allium roseum* (Rosy Garlic).

The Kirkcudbrightshire Botany Group held 13 meetings between March-October - the 2018 programme is in preparation. Following a KBG field visit, the MOD Kirkcudbright Training Centre's RPR was updated, with new sites for *Centaurium littorale* (Seaside Centaury) (NS), *Polygonum oxyspermum raii* (Ray's Knotgrass) (NS), *Ligusticum scoticum* (Scots Lovage) (LS), and *Sherardia arvensis* (Field Madder) (LR). The group surveyed RSPB Mersehead's recent land acquisition, monitoring one of only two *Thelypteris palustris* (Marsh Fern) colonies in Scotland and recording all species. A report was submitted to support development of a site management plan. A fern training day for the local Community Woodlands Trust attracted 15 people, mainly volunteers.

Photographs of interesting refinds of plants last recorded between 50-172 years ago were exhibited at the SAM.

Ayrshire (vc75) Dave Lang

With two recording trips per month and some people outside our core group now submitting additional records, we are starting to feel that at least there might be no embarrassing Ayrshire gaps in Atlas 2020.

We created more records in 2017 than in any year other than 2015 when we held the Ayrshire Atlas Recording Week. These included 10 new records for County Rare species – including some Red List species such as *Minuartia verna* (Spring Sandwort) and *Pseudorchis albida* (Small-white Orchid).

Pseudorchis albida (Small-white Orchid). Pictured right at Feoch Meadows SSSI, South Ayrshire 2017 © Cozzolino, N.





Disappointingly our advertised BSBI field weekend in 2017 was very poorly attended compared to previous Ayrshire field-meetings. Perhaps the unavoidable focus on Atlas square-bashing over particularly interesting sites put people off - something we will have to think about if we need help to fill in final gaps. It was still a success in terms of recording though, with the first record for *Paris quadrifolia* (Herb-Paris) in over 25 years.

Paris quadrifolia (Herb-Paris) at Carnell, East Ayrshire in 2017 © Dave Lang.

In May, we were involved with the Identifying Plant Families Workshop at Eglinton Country Park - which I thought was a great success for participants and tutors alike.

As we've begun to get to grips with record validation on the Database, it has been frustrating to find many important detailed records of notable species that have been externally rejected as 'inferior duplicates' in favour of very general hectad date class records. We feel that it is important to retain grid references, dates and recorders for important records. We would therefore hope that we will be permitted to reinstate such records where appropriate.

Renfrewshire (vc 76) Keith Watson

There has been only a small amount of progress as regards species recording over the last year, with just under 2000 new records made or received. There is growing interest from local groups such as in Glasgow and the Inverclyde Pollinator group (a well-attended evening walk with the latter group took place in June), which will hopefully start to generate more active local recording in the near future.

The records from the Biobase database used for the Flora of Renfrewshire (2013) are still in the process of being transferred to the BSBI database, so that the data can be transferred to MapMate and can be used for editing, validation and the transferring in of more recent records.

Any local botanists who are interested in getting involved with Atlas recording in the coming year will be welcomed, so please get in touch!

Lanarkshire (vc77) Michael Philip

2017 has been a year of 'doing things differently' in Lanarkshire. We have developed a big network of people interested in field botany and got lots of 'boots on the ground'.

There are currently 58 people in our growing network. 28 were active within our programme of around 40 outings, while others contributed records of their own. As a result, over 15,000 records have been made and uploaded, including over 800 distinct taxa, in the year. 240 monads have had new records added.

This surge in activity means we can contemplate bringing every Lanarkshire hectad up to Atlas 2020 data thresholds by the end of 2019. We are enjoying recording in many of the unrecorded areas of the vice-county, but we are also very focussed on doing the 'hard yards' of refinding 75% of the extraordinary (huge) species lists within the City of Glasgow (hectads NS56 & NS66). Steady progress is being made on all these fronts: we are a big team of enthusiastic and motivated people!

One especially interesting phenomenon was noted in the autumn: an epidemic spread of *Lactuca serriola* (Prickly Lettuce) in urban Glasgow. Before 2017, there were just 8 records of this taxon in vc77 (and just 18 elsewhere in Scotland) - but during recent months we have recorded it 53 times, in 23 different monads from Braehead to Cambuslang.

Another busy programme of outings is being developed for 2018 whilst all digitisation is complete to date: the main data challenge now is validation.

Peeblesshire (vc78) Luke Gaskell

4138 new records were made in 2017 at monad level or better with 32 monads surveyed. I am hopeful that all hectads in the VC will be adequately sampled by 2019. All the records have been digitised and a tentative start made with verifying them in the DDB. It has been a productive year with a good number of new records along with refinding some significant old records, and a number of these were exhibited at the autumn meeting. Highlights of the native plants included *Gymnadenia borealis* (Heath Fragrant-orchid), new in the south of the VC. Additional sites were found for *Galium boreale* (Northern Bedstraw), *Rubus saxatilis* (Stone Bramble) and *Vicia sylvatica* (Wood Vetch), all uncommon in Peeblesshire, together with a new site for *Allium scorodoprasum* (Sand Leek), which had no records in this date class.

I have been recording well-established trees even though most of these will have been planted. New records included *Cornus mas* (Cornelian-cherry), *Crataegus x media* [*C.monogyna* x *C.laevigata*] and *Tilia x euchlora* (Caucasian Lime). Well-naturalised introductions included *Convallaria majalis* (Lily-of-the-valley) and *Milium effusum* (Wood Millet) in old policy woodland while aliens with unpronounceable names *Campanula portenschlagiana* (Adria Bellflower) and *Campanula poscharskyana* (Trailing Bellflower) are well established on urban walls but have not previously been recorded.

In addition to recording in Peeblesshire and elsewhere in Scotland, I have given a talk at the TWIC autumn meeting, attended Scottish Borders Council meetings on Local Biodiversity Sites, and I lead Plant Identification field work for Napier University students.

Selkirkshire (vc79) Rod Corner & Jeff Waddell

Selkirkshire, often the neglected of the two vice-counties, received a special effort this year with a two-day BSBI recording meeting attended by 14 and an increase in informal recording. This resulted in the collection of 3,370 records in 2017, the highest annual total ever for the county. The Selkirkshire meeting recorded in nine under-recorded or not previously recorded tetrads and generated just under 2,000 records, a full report is given in the BSBI yearbook.

Martin Moncreiff and Sarah Eno undertook recording in three tetrads collecting 330 records. Jeff and his informal botany group recorded in six tetrads adding about 1,000 records including *Thalictrum minus* (Lesser Meadow-rue) at its only county site. A particular effort this year was made to refind *Juniperus communis* (Common Juniper) at its native sites and this species was found in three tetrads, one healthily regenerating population on Bowerhope Law, St. Mary's Loch numbering about 24 bushes.

Roxburghshire (vc80) Rod Corner & Jeff Waddell

Fewer records were collected in Roxburghshire this year than usual, 3,458 records in total, due in part to focussing on Selkirkshire. Michael Braithwaite collected about 920 of these, mostly from villages and towns particularly Ancrum, Liliesleaf and Jedburgh. Luke Gaskell also made a significant contribution with about 500 records, mostly from St Boswells. Jeff hosted trips with his local informal botany group, covering about 11 tetrads in total during the year. Martin Moncrieff refound *Gagea lutea* (Yellow Star-of-Bethlehem) at Kelso after a gap of twelve years in the hectad and Jeff added *Scleranthus annuus* (Annual Knawel) new to the hectad at Frogden. Roger Manning found a new site for *Allium scorodoprasum* (Sand Leek) at Crookhouse, Morebattle as well as refinding it near Primside Mill. The curious introduced *Leucothoe fontanesiana* (Dog-hobble) was identified by John Poland on a remote forest trackside.

Rod has been validating all the vice-county records held by TWIC, uncovering good new records and some highly suspect ones and obvious errors, which have now been highlighted. Rod continued to attend TWIC meetings giving botanical input into the selection of Local Biodiversity Sites. He also updated some of the records of rarer species, which are

in reasonably accessible sites, and is working on his flora of the two vice counties, making good progress.

Perhaps the most significant piece of work this year was Michael Braithwaite and Jeff's work to complete the entry of Michael's records to the Roxburghshire and Selkirkshire databases. Just over 30,000 records of Michael's have been collated and entered for the two counties, the bulk of which are from Roxburghshire. These datasets include surveys of the Burgh of Hawick, the A7 road verges and the disused Waverley rail line. Finally, Jeff has begun planning for a 2018 BSBI Atlas recording meeting, based in Kelso.

Berwickshire (vc81) *Vacant - no report*

East Lothian (vc82) *Helen Jackson*

I was able to do more fieldwork this year, and found white-flowered *Geranium robertianum* (Herb-Robert) spreading from a neglected yard and *Rumex x pratensis* (Curled Dock x Broad-leaved Dock), while recording in new monads. However, gap-filling expeditions were less successful — *Geum* (Avens) species had not produced a hybrid and *Zannichellia palustris* (Horned Pondweed) had gone.

I'm very grateful to everyone who has sent me records, which include *Viscum album* (Mistletoe), NCR and *Orobanche minor* (Common Broomrape) — a second VC record. Particular thanks go to Marion Moir who contributed >3000 records from 34 monads. *Carex x fulva* (Tawny Sedge x Long-stalked Yellow-sedge) is new.

East Lothian is actually better recorded than it appears, although more recording is needed of course. My main problem now is getting data entered and records, received in Excel, into MapMate, as I do not use a computer myself. Help that I've received with this has been much appreciated but there is a lot more to do and I still need to extract some records from their original sources before they can be processed.

I was called upon to provide data on legally protected and notable species of conservation concern — mainly *Sinapis arvensis* (Charlock)! — within 2km of the Cockenzie Power Station site, for an ecological impact assessment. The Wildlife Information Centre's Spring Conference, the Scottish Annual Meeting, and BSBI Christmas Lunch have been good opportunities to keep in touch — and several people have offered help for 2018.

Midlothian (vc83) Barbara Sumner

In 2017, about 27 recorders have sent in 10,681 records, from roughly 175 monads in 16 hectads of Midlothian. More records are still to come. Some recorders undertook monad-recording, while others sent in casual records. Grateful thanks to all enthusiasts!

Gaps in monad-recording are mostly in hill districts, cattle districts, and at the edges of the vice-county. Bluebells need further scrutiny, and there are still rarities to refind. It is hoped to reduce the gaps with the help of volunteers.

Some botanical highlights were displayed in a poster shown at the Scottish Annual Meeting in November (see [Abstract](#)). Since then two further NCRs have been reported, *Ceratochloa carinata* (California Brome) at a field edge near Turnhouse, and *Saxifraga x polita* (False Londonpride) in a river gorge near Harburn.

Senecio inaequidens (Narrow-leaved Ragwort), was first recorded in Edinburgh in 2010, and has since spread around the city and beyond. By 2012 it had spread to Ratho, about 4 km west of the city by-pass. In 2017, dispersal has been spotted in a new direction, approximately 16 and 32 km south-east of the city by-pass, at Heriot and Bowland, on verges near the Borders Railway. Dispersal is probably helped by both road and rail traffic.

The VC recorder led botanical walks at the Duddingston Bioblitz (organised by the RSPB), contributed to surveys of Local Biodiversity Sites (LBSs) for The Wildlife Information Centre (TWIC), and continued to represent the BSBI on steering groups for LBSs, and for the Edinburgh LBAP.

Fife & Kinross (vc85) Sandy Edwards

3190 records were collected in about 40 sites, mostly monads. There are a few gaps in West Fife, but these can be dealt with this year, some with visits with one or two keen recorders.

The validation is going well and I now validate records as they are entered into MapMate. Field trips with a group of 6 people from St. Andrews took place in order to practice using the Vegetative Key as well as some recording. In addition, record sheets were received from four people whose ID skills are very good. I also tutored at the BSBI grass ID session at Holyrood as well as helping 4 students on the FSC online plant ID course, whilst I carried out work on a NPMS plot at Tentsmuir.

Liz Lavery and I tutored the University first year class for 3 afternoons on plant ID and the use of keys, and I assisted at a weekend to FSC Kindrogan with University honours students.

I also advised the owner of the Anstruther estate on wildlife habitats as he is turning a lot of it over to wild areas and organic farming. Finally, I'm on the PSNS and BSBI committees.

There were several significant finds during the year, including: *Trifolium incarnatum* (Crimson Clover) NCR (See SAM [Abstract](#)), *Gentianella amarella* (& ssp *septentrionalis*) (Autumn Gentian & white form), *Cymbalaria pallida* (Italian Toadflax) (see [Abstract](#)), *Papaver argemone* (Prickly Poppy), *Rosa multiflora* (Multi-flowered Rose), *Valeriana pyrenaica* (Pyrenean Valerian), *Tulipa sylvestris* (Wild Tulip), *Trollius europaeus* (Globe-flower). The *Linnaea borealis* (Twinflower), below, found last year flowered profusely this year!



Cymbalaria pallida (Italian Toadflax)
Sandy Edwards © 2017



Linnaea borealis (Twinflower) Sandy Edwards ©2017

Stirling (vc86) Philip Sansum

8,700 records from 2017 fieldwork were digitised and added to the Stirlingshire database, with 19 individuals and 4 groups (Glasgow Botany Group, Glasgow Natural History Society, Lanarkshire BSBI Group, TWIC) being involved - thanks to all! Stirlingshire BSBI recorders also contributed vascular plant records to a Bioblitz at RSFS Cashel on Loch Lomondside and to recording in neighbouring parts of vc77 and vc87.

15 hectads had at least some 2017 recording and this resulted in 17 more tetrads reaching an 'adequately recorded' level in the current atlas period. A similar rate of increase is needed in 2018 and 2019 in order to meet Atlas 2020 targets and any botanist able to help is encouraged to do so. It is hoped to appoint a second recorder to assist in 2018 as the current VCR is no longer resident in Stirlingshire. The provision of pre-2017 records from the Scottish Saltmarsh Survey and from Ambrose Baker's NERC Hydroscape survey of central Scottish lochs this year is also gratefully acknowledged; both datasets give valuable help with Atlas 2020 coverage of under-recorded taxa and habitats in Stirlingshire.

An exciting discovery by Sarah Longrigg and Bill Parkes was two colonies of *Corallorhiza trifida* (Coralroot Orchid) in wet acid woodland near Glasgow. Clear-cut specimens of *Ranunculus fluitans* (River Water-crowfoot) were found by Matt Harding in the Bannock Burn - another pleasing native NCR. Various exotics, mostly in urban habitats, were also added to the county list. Other notables included the refinding of a fifty-year-old record of a colony of *Sedum villosum* (Hairy Stonecrop) in the Campsies.

West Perthshire (vc87) Liz Lavery & Jane Jones

We made good progress recording for Atlas 2020. We led two PSNS meetings to under-recorded upland areas, Liz and Brian Ballinger led a BSS Urban Flora excursion to Alva and Tillicoultry, and, with a member of Woodland Trust staff, we recorded on Glen Finglas Estate.

Jane has entered over 4,000 records and Liz almost 8,000 with more still to enter. Thank you to everyone who has helped with recording in 2017! In particular, our thanks go to Matt Harding for a magnificent 4,055 records and to Adam Fraser for over 300 records. Also thanks to Richard Lansdown for a NCR, *Callitriche palustris* (Narrow-fruited Water-starwort) discovered while collecting for the Millennium Seed Bank. Jane has validated most of her records from 2008 onwards. Liz has yet to get going on this daunting task.

Overall tetrad coverage appears good but is not so rosy on a monad basis. Help with gaps in remote inaccessible areas - the middle of the Ochil Hills, and the far north-west of the vice-county, would be much appreciated. Surveying lowland areas can also be difficult along busy country roads with no pavements or safe parking.

Beyond the Atlas, Liz and Jane have carried out vegetation monitoring near Callander for the Callander Development Trust. Jane is trying to raise the profile of alien plants in the Strathard area and encourage action by the Forestry Commission Scotland and Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park. Liz continues to work with TWIC monitoring LNCS for

Clackmannanshire Council. Highlighting important habitats for conservation is a priority for us both. Our RPR, completed several years ago now, needs updating.

Mid-Perthshire (vc88) Alistair Godfrey & Jim McIntosh

Over 9,000 records were collected and digitised in 2017 in the county. Alistair is concentrating on tetrads that have never been recorded before – and recorded 11 previously unrecorded tetrads with good numbers of records in each. Two were covered with the Perthshire Society of Natural Science and one by Matt Harding. Jim has adopted a complementary strategy of concentrating on monads where the hectad re-recording rates are lowest, and several mountainous areas were surveyed – including Meall na Aighean, Beinn a' Chumhainn & Cam Chreag. At the latter site it was good to renew old records of *Cystopteris montana* (Mountain Bladder-fern) and *Woodsia alpina* (Alpine Woodsia) but sadly not *Bartsia alpina* (Alpine Bartsia) - despite looking very hard! We gratefully received contributions from Matt Harding, Geoffrey Hall, Liz Lavery, Dan Watson & Sarah Watts amongst others.



Beinn Challum from Cam Chreag, Mid-Perthshire 2017 © Jim McIntosh

Seven excursions took place with the PSNS; the first led by David Chamberlain of the RBGE, recording bryophytes in a joint excursion for the Botanical Society of Scotland's Urban Flora Project. An excursion to Rannoch Moor marked the 150th anniversary of the PSNS. The

PSNS includes several BSBI members and plant identification was a key aim of each excursion.

The 'Bluebell Wood' at Ballathie was recorded with the Woodland Trust prior to purchase. The Ben Lawers area was visited with Markus Ruhsam of the RBGE to collect seed of *Euphrasia scottica* (Scottish Eyebright) for the Millennium Seedbank. A few Host Survey forms were completed for the Euphrasia Study Group. Finally, Andy Thomas has been studying *Baldellia ranunculoides* (Lesser Water-plantain) *Ssp. ranunculoides* and *Ssp. repens*, and their habits and distribution. Andy was sent Vc88 records and a visit to Glen Dochart with Richard Marriott confirmed *Ssp. repens*.

East Perthshire (vc89) Martin Robinson

2,912 records were made in 2017, rather less than in 2016, owing mainly to health reasons in the latter part of summer. The records were made in 57 monads within 37 tetrads. The year lacked the high excitement of 2016, and we failed to find any more *Saxifraga hirculus* (Marsh Saxifrage) in the same area, or even any suitable habitat. Highlights were finding a second strong site of *Vicia tetrasperma* (Smooth Tare), over 30 plants of *Hammarbya paludosa* (Bog Orchid) at one of our three known sites, and two new sites for *Equisetum hyemale* (Rough Horsetail). The only three new VC species were all Dandelions: *Taraxacum lancastricense*, *T. sahalinianum* and *T. stereodes*. After years of toil our dandelions are gradually coming into clearer focus, owing mainly to the dogged persistence of Les Tucker. *Viola canina* (Heath Dog-violet) recorded previously on the Cairnwell but queried, was confirmed at this, its highest-known site – 700 m.

The next edition of the Rare Plant Register will appear later in winter 2017/18. Fifteen records were added in 2017 and 6 updated. Three quite common species fall off the bottom and the Register is now beginning to reflect the true status of the VC's more notable plants. About 14,000 records have now been validated on the DDb but there is a lot left to do.

Angus (vc90) Robin Payne, Theo Loizou & Mark Tulley

Atlas 2020 fieldwork continues to dominate the work of VCRs and much appreciated helpers – you know who you are! Areas covered included Glen Isla, Balintore, Glen Prosen and Glen Clova. Fieldwork started in April and carried on sporadically through the season with more than 3000 new records made during the year. During this fieldwork several new populations of *Meum athamanticum* (Spignel) were found, further confirmation of VC90's importance for this declining species.

Since the rediscovery in 2016 of *Hymenophyllum wilsonii* (Wilson's Filmy-fern), which was thought to be extinct in Angus, a second record from Corrie Fee was reported in 2017. A further search for this species, following up an old record in nearby Corlowie, was unsuccessful, but mutterings during the day of the words "haystack" and "needle" reflect the difficulties of searching large areas of possible habitat for historic records with no grid reference.

On the 13th June 2017, a joint meeting of the Dundee Naturalists Society and the Botanical Society of Scotland met at Arbroath cliffs and discovered a patch of *Crambe maritima* (Sea-kale), which is the first and only record for Angus. The presence of this species along the Angus coast is probably indicative of climate change.



Crambe maritima (Sea-kale) at Arbroath, 2017 © Brian Ballinger.

In August a Bioblitz was held at the RSPB Loch of Kinnordy reserve. One of us (TL) attended and two monads were recorded. The locally rare grass *Catabrosa aquatica* (Whorl-grass) was re-confirmed at its only known extant site in Angus at Egno Moss. TL and Michael Morphy visited Rossie Wood in August where a moderate-sized population of *Ceratocarpus claviculata* (Climbing Corydalis) was noted. This forb is very local in Angus and Rossie Wood represents a new site for this species.



Ceratocarpus claviculata (Climbing Corydalis) at Rossie Wood, 2017 © Theo Loizou.

SNH Contractors carrying out monitoring of nationally rare and scarce plants in the Caenlochan and Clova area were assisted by the VCR (RP). Species monitored included *Saxifraga nivalis* (Alpine Saxifrage) *Woodsia ilvensis* (Oblong Woodsia) and *Woodsia alpina* (Alpine woodsia). Evidence of trampling to gain access to some well-known populations testifies to the continuing appeal of the alpine rarities of this area to visiting botanists.

Kincardine & North Aberdeenshire (vc91 & 93) David Welch

This was the first year in which tetrads took up the great bulk of my time, both recording them and dealing with the lists produced by other botanists. Notable contributors were David Elston and Judith Cox, and a very large data set was received from NE Scotland Biological Records Centre (NESBREC) including many post-2009 records of Ian Green. It is now apparent that 20% of the c. 800 tetrads in my two VCs have at least 100 species observed post-2009, with the mean number being c. 150 species in these 160 tetrads. The NESBREC recording was site-focused and often did not cover the full extent of tetrads, so these gaps need attention – filling them should raise tetrad mean number of species to close to 200. Only one tetrad so far has exceeded a count of 300.

Validation has also taken me considerable time; the NESBREC records for 2003-2009 were made by a variety of staff, including many short-term casuals, and I have been making use of

the “needs checking” comment. Another bugbear has been the naming of the recording areas, with changes needed so that users of the Ddb will not be misled into searching on the wrong side of hills. Andy Amphlett’s expertise in manipulating Ddb records has much helped.

I led my usual SWT outing, this year to the Fyvie district. A highlight was a bed of old Aberdeenshire potato varieties in the Fyvie Castle walled garden, which held a good crop of weeds including *Lamium amplexicaule* (Henbit Dead-nettle), *Veronica peregrina* (American Speedwell) and *Veronica polita* (Grey Field-speedwell). I also debated with David Elston and other SWT members the identity of docks by the Castle lake – *Rumex conglomeratus* (Clustered Dock) v *Rumex sanguineus* (Wood Dock). And we added to Andy Amphlett’s poplar investigation a sighting of *Populus balsamifera* x *trichocarpa* (Balsam Spire) planted west of Fyvie village. Another taxonomic debate with David Elston was on the identity of thistles at St Cyrus: *Carduus crispus* (Wetted Thistle) v *Carduus tenuiflorus* (Slender Thistle), and Mike Smedley (SNH) also contributed to this.

I am very happy to report that David Elston has agreed to join me as assistant recorder for both VCs; David has been botanising and recording in NE Scotland for over 25 years and has a sharp eye for rarities besides his taxonomic skills.

New finds were very few, all aliens, but I saw good colonies of *Galium album* (Hedge Bedstraw) and *Cerastium arvense* (Field Mouse-ear) along a farm track west of Clatt, this not having been subject to council verge-cutting. I also carried out my every-other-year monitoring of the *Saxifraga hirculus* (Marsh saxifrage) at Silverford and found that the water voles had gone since 2015, allowing flowering to recover to near-average level.

South Aberdeenshire (vc92) Ian Francis

It was immediately clear in February that the level of recording effort in 2017 would be substantially reduced following the sad death of Eric Meek, who annually visited many areas in VC92 and submitted many records. Nevertheless, several local botanists were active during the year, and some 3,100 records were logged. However, the main development in 2017 was the bulk import of the very impressive total of 128,000 records from the North-East Scotland Biological Records Centre (NESBReC), covering almost the entire current atlas period to date. This was the culmination of discussions about exchanging data between BSBI and NESBReC. NESBReC has been very active since its founding in 2000, and a major project has been surveys of much of eastern Aberdeenshire - often areas likely to be subject to development pressure - and using the ‘Integrated Habitat Survey’ system with target notes. These surveys were carried out by botanists including several current BSBI vice-county recorders, and the data quality is high. Surveys also extended into the adjacent vice-

counties 91, 93 and 94. These records from NESBReC have made a very significant contribution to the entire total for the atlas nationally. I am very grateful to those who facilitated this - Tom Humphrey, Andy Amphlett and Jim McIntosh, and Glenn Roberts and Konstantinos Sideros at NESBReC. The dataset now means that we have plant records from almost every tetrad in VC92 and gives a very valuable boost for the last two years of the recording period.

Banffshire (vc94) Andy Amphlett

Very little recording took place in vc94 in 2017; almost all my recording (c.10,000 records) was targeted at vc96. The most notable vc94 record was *Carum carvi* (Caraway), the first vc record since 1983. The location, the very exposed summit of the Bin of Cullen (320m AOD) seems bizarre, but a specimen was confirmed by Ian Green.

In total, just under 45,000 vc94 records were added to the DDb in 2017, 95% of them from a very large dataset provided by NESBReC, the Local Record Centre for NE Scotland. These were mainly from localities in the NE part of the vc, furthest from my home, so they were very welcome. I worked with VCRs to check and validate the whole dataset (>300,000 records, from vcs 91 - 94). I also worked on validation of vc108 records, in conjunction with its VCR.

Moray (vc95) Ian Green

Recording in 2017 over vc95 has been very good with 23,362 records put into MapMate and sent to the DDb so far (should get to at least 25,000). Most of the recording was done at monad level or better. The plan is to get all tetrads visited, which is looking very hopeful. Also, if possible, all monads will be visited as well, although there are still rather a lot to be visited. I also have been doing the validation as often as possible, but there is still lots to do. Coverage for the Atlas 2020 is very good in vc95, with lots of species updated in 2017 for each hectad plus new species added to most hectads as well.

35 new species were added to vc95 in 2017, but only two are native species to Scotland, namely *Euphrasia heslop-harrisonii* (Heslop-Harrison's Eyebright) and *Salicornia fragilis* (Yellow Glasswort). I have also been surveying the vice-county for an atlas flora and this is going very well. I managed to get a few more recorders to go out in 2017 and do some recording, which was really good. I also did one field meeting for the Inverness Botany Group in vc95 plus three walks for the local botany group.

Easternness (vc96) Adam Fraser

It's been a busy year in VC96, with over 20k records collected from 41 hectads (233 tetrads), with the focus very much being on improving coverage for Atlas 2020 and obtaining a good spread of records from across the vice-county. Significant contributions have been made by neighbouring VCRs, as well as several new volunteers in Strathspey (thanks all!). Some interesting NCRs include *Juncus ranarius* (Frog Rush) cropping up along the A9 and a population of *Solidago sempervirens* (Seaside Goldenrod) at Culbin Sands. Thanks to a small expedition to Glen Affric in late June, five botanists contributed 3000 records across six hectads in the glen, with dozens of new hectad records, including a first record of *Dryas octopetala* (Mountain Avens) for the Affric hills and some important 'refinds' including *Phleum alpinum* (Alpine Cat's-tail). Validation is now largely a job of keeping on top of new records, with the back-log much reduced thanks to assistance from Andy Amphlett. Plans for 2018 include a revisit to Glen Affric, some forays into remoter areas of the Monadhliath and continued efforts to improve coverage in under-recorded squares for Atlas 2020... and hopefully another 20k records...

Westernness (vc97) Ian Strachan & Ian Bonner

About 6,000 records for VC97 were made by the VCRs along with various other resident and visiting botanists, to whom we are very grateful - notably Faith Anstey, Jenny Rees, Liz MacDonald, Richard Marriott, Luke Gaskell and Jim McIntosh. These records come from more than 120 tetrads across the VC, of which 44 had at least 50 records made. In addition, a remarkable 5,000 records were collected by Adam Fraser alongside monitoring work on Lochail Estate. Some major gaps were filled in 2017 for the next Atlas, including a productive week spent by the VCRs (with helpers) in Ardgour and west Ardnamurchan. Other surveys focused on under-recorded areas such as south Morar, Beinn Teallach and Glenfinnan.

Highlights for 2017 include a NCR for *Ranunculus peltatus* (Pond Water-crowfoot), growing abundantly in a stream near Gairloch (Jon Mercer); and 2nd VC sites for *Lycopodium lagopus* (Hare's-foot Clubmoss), on Beinn Teallach (IS), and *Baldellia ranunculoides* (Lesser Water-plantain) in west Ardnamurchan (Richard Marriott).

Most of the 2017 records have been digitised and submitted to the DDb, and c. 2000 have been validated. IS also digitised c. 5,000 records from 2010-16, including many important records for Ben Nevis SSSI from Site Condition Monitoring (2013) and the North Face survey (2014-16). The final report for the latter survey includes a remarkable 558 records for six Nationally Rare and ten Nationally Scarce species. Three talks were given locally on mountain plants, and further progress has been made on an RPR. Future plans for Atlas

2020 work include a week-long field meeting based at Kingie Lodge in July 2018, and extraction of records for upland sites from SNH and SWT reports.

Main Argyll (vc 98) Carl Farmer

During 2017, the number of records made in 2017 and added to the database was 12,468. A substantial number of pre-2017 records were also added at the same time. A week-long BSBI meeting in Cowal, organised by Angus Hannah, was very timely as this is the most under-recorded part of the vice-county. The meeting produced over 4000 tetrad records new to the 2010-9 date class. Angus has organised a week in another neglected part of Cowal for next year, based near Carrick Castle on Loch Goil, on June 9th -16th. I will try to prioritise other under-recorded hectads in the vice-county during 2018-9.

A few of the year's most interesting finds included: *Radiola linoides* (Allseed) was seen on the Cowal BSBI week, a long way from its only other known locality in the vice-county; a new site for *Cephalanthera longifolia* (Narrow-leaved Helleborine) was found by Teenie Wilson near Duror; Jim McIntosh found *Cornus suecica* (Dwarf Cornel) at a new Scottish altitudinal record of 940m on Beinn a' Bheithir; Dan Watson found *Scrophularia auriculata* (Water Figwort) in Glen Coe, not previously seen north of Oban in VC98; Pat Batty paid the VC's only *Carex buxbaumii* (Club Sedge) site its first visit since 1996 and sadly found the population to be in severe decline; Tony Church added many records for *Dryopteris affinis* agg. (Golden-scaled Male-fern) species and subspecies, including some rarely recorded kinds. Many thanks to all who contributed records!

Dumbartonshire (vc99) Pam Murdoch

2017 was not the best of years for recording in vc 99. A bad back led to a late start to the season and unhelpful weather to an early end! Nevertheless, over 5000 records were sent in. Recording focused again on monads with no existing post-2000 records, and 38 new monads were visited; return visits to a further 12 brought them up to an acceptable level as well. The tetrad map in the southern part of the vice-county is promising, with only 8 tetrads showing no records at all, and I hope to remedy this in the coming year. The more mountainous northern area has much improved coverage with only the far and inaccessible NW likely to remain totally unrecorded. The Luss Hills in the central area would benefit from the help of keen hill walkers willing to do a long circuit of the tops. Progress is steady but slow!

Interesting finds were few as many sites were not especially promising to start with. The presence of *Carex elongata* (Elongated Sedge) was confirmed in the two remaining sites I

had still to visit. New for post-2000 records and rare in the vc were *Equisetum telmateia* (Great Horsetail) and *Aethusa cynapium* (Fool's Parsley). The most interesting records were those sent in by kind folk who got up into the mountains. I do thank them! Their help is invaluable. One or two folk each recording just one or two sites makes an appreciable difference to the overall situation.

Clyde Isles (vc100) Angus Hannah

Other Atlas work being well forward, the year was mainly devoted to critical taxa. In May, John Richard's annual Dandelion Workshop came to Bute, even making Radio Scotland as an 'international dandyfest', thanks to a chance encounter with Les Tucker. With eight experts present, over 50 species were found, mostly NCRs, and a good time was had by all. In early September I organised a bramble and rose weekend, to introduce beginners in these groups to their joys and frustrations. We now have a small core of enthusiasts to take forward bramble studies in Scotland.

Latterly, I have been recording the segregates of the Golden-scaled Male-ferns in Bute monads, using a new ID character discovered by Tony Church (see exhibit [Abstract](#)). Tony also made significant finds including a second Arran site for *Dryopteris pseudodisjuncta* (Golden-scaled Male-fern agg.). Recorders should look out for this taxon which may be less rare than supposed.

I taught two courses at FSC Millport: grasses, sedges and rushes and a general one on the Cumbrae flora. My general recording was mainly in Ayrshire and Lanarkshire. A recording week I ran in West Cowal made 4500 records for an under-recorded area of vc98. 3120 records were also added to DDb for vc100, with over 98% of vc100 DDb records having now been validated. In addition, the *Isle of Bute Flora* is approaching completion: anticipated publication 2019.

Kintyre (vc101) Pat & Dave Batty

Recording started early in March and enabled a few missing tree and other species to be ticked off. We made use during the year of the lists of 'missing' species from the DDb to target certain areas and habitats. Despite the wet summer we continued to make progress with systematic coverage of the VC. All hectads have been visited and tetrads completed. We continue to be helped by the Kintyre Botany Group (KBG). Records for 2017 were digitised by the end of the year and a start was made in validating records. We also got to grips with the *Dryopteris affinis* (Golden-scaled Male-fern) group thanks to Tony Church,

added many *Euphrasia* (Eyebrights) records thanks to Chris Metherell, and added some *Rosa* (Roses) records thanks to R Maskew.

Several species of interest were recorded. The KBG refound *Spiranthes romanzoffiana* (Irish Lady's-tresses), after an absence of several years. We also found *Apium graveolens* (Wild Celery), on the coast, a first record for many years. We were lucky to see it in flower as most of the plants had been closely cropped by sheep. We had several records of *Ruppia maritima* (Beaked Tasselweed), including a large area at the Kennacraig ferry terminal. There are few current records for *Ophioglossum vulgatum* (Adder's-tongue), for the VC so a chance sighting by an acquaintance was welcome.

South Ebudas (vc102) Malcolm Ogilvie

There were further excellent efforts by visiting botanists on all three main islands.

Oli Pescott spent two weeks in July on Islay, based at the head of Loch Gruinart, making around 1000 records, including some rare or new aliens, such as *Sidalcea candida* (Prairie Mallow), *Malva moschata* (Musk-mallow) and *Sedum spurium* (Caucasian-stonecrop).

Simon Smart paid two visits to Jura. In June, five Norfolk botanists joined Oli and Simon for 5 days, mainly along the east coast. Their 3000 records included *Trientalis europaea* (Chickweed-wintergreen), new to the vice-county, and *Carex disticha* (Brown Sedge), new to Jura. Simon visited the north of Jura in September, covering 10 monads over 5 days, and making 620 records.

Kevin Walker, Pete Stroh, David Pearman, Owen Mountford and Simon Leach visited Colonsay and Oronsay in June, their fourth annual trip. Some 4,000 records (461 species) were collected from 53 monads. Highlights included *Carex paniculata* (Greater Tussock-sedge) on Oronsay, and a flourishing population of *Hammarbya paludosa* (Bog Orchid). In August, the RSPB staff on Oronsay found 101 spikes of *Spiranthes romanzoffiana* (Irish Lady's-tresses) at the major site; two new colonies (12 and 1 spikes, respectively) were discovered.

Orchid monitoring on Islay was mixed, some species flowering well, especially several hundred *Orchis mascula* (Early-purple Orchid) in one small area, and an excellent year for *Coeloglossum viride* (Frog Orchid), but *Cephalanthera longifolia* (Narrow-leaved Helleborine) was not found, the first blank since its discovery in 1998. Digitisation of records is almost up-to-date with validation about to be embarked upon.

Mid-Ebudes (vc103) Lynne Farrell

In 2017, I concentrated on tetrads for which there were only pre-2000 records, mainly the islands off the west coast of Mull - Iona, Inch Kenneth and the Dutchman's Cap. I contacted local Iona botanist, Joyce Watson, and invited her to join us. We found *Hymenophyllum wilsonii* (Wilson's Filmy-fern), which is new to Iona, with Joyce subsequently finding a second site. Also, on Iona, I advised Emily Watkins, Mull & Iona NTS ranger, on possible windfarm developments on the island.

On Mull, I re-recorded 2 NPMS squares on Mull, whilst I visited Tobermory path with Jan Dunlop, NTS ranger, and marked out *Epipactis helleborine* (Broad-leaved Helleborine) plants as the path was due to be resurfaced and made safer. I was also in contact with Steve Mithen, senior archaeologist at Reading University, who has been working on Mesolithic aspects and vegetational studies on the western islands of Scotland, and arranged to work with him on Mull in June 2018.

Many records from 2016 and 2017 were entered into MapMate but there are still a few to do, whilst only a little validation was done, however, I am waiting until I have entered all data from previous years. I also checked the records sent through from the National Trust for Scotland (this data being entered into Mapmate by NTS directly).

As the RPR was updated in 2016, there is no new version. Specimens were also sent to referees, with replies received from most now, including Nick Stewart. However, there are still some specimens to send off to referees.

About 12 new vice-county records were obtained, including some from the critical groups *Euphrasia* (Eyebrights) and *Hieracia* (Hawkweeds). Several other records are 'garden escapes' which are spreading into the wild. *Dactylorhiza x carnea* (*D. maculata* (Heath Spotted-orchid) x *D. incarnata* (Early Marsh-orchid)) was found and photographed by John Bowler, Tiree RSPB officer, and confirmed by Ian Denholm. This is the first record since 1941 when Heslop-Harrison recorded it at one site on Tiree and one on Coll.

North Ebudes (vc104) Stephen Bungard

Over 13,000 records were made in VC104 in 2017, including 226 new hectad records. There are only a handful of tetrads with >50% land now having zero post-1999 records, though there are quite a few with <50 such records. Skye Botany Group met five times and most meetings were aimed at poorly recorded tetrads. A new Skye Nature Group has been formed as a spin-off to look at non-plant things, but meetings inevitably provide plant records too.

All recent records are digitised with validation at a very early stage. Records from a 1987 survey of woodlands on Skye and Raasay were digitised giving a few new hectad and many new tetrad records. Talks were given to the Sleat Environment Group (*From Orchids to Invasives*) and SWT Skye Region Group (*Recent Botanical Finds in VC104*). Monthly articles on matters of local botanical interest continued to be written for *Am Bratach*, the Raasay Community Newsletter. Articles also appeared in BSBI News (*Extracting records from the Scottish Saltmarsh Survey* and *The Bishop's-cap fits on Skye*) and the BSS Newsletter (*On Being BSBI Recorder for VC104: Skye, Raasay & The Small Isles*).

In terms of records, *Mitella ovalis* (Bishop's-Cap or Oval-leaved Mitrewort) at Uig was thought to be new to the British Isles, but it subsequently transpired that a 2012 English record had not been entered into the DDb. Sixteen garden escapes were new VCRs, whilst records for *Lythrum portula* (Water-purslane) and *Juncus foliosus* (Leafy Rush) were new to Skye.

West Ross (vc105) Duncan Donald

My sincere gratitude to the many people who visited West Ross during 2017, with more than 10,600 records submitted! Three field meetings were held – a 'long weekend' based in Poolewe in June; a week-long Recorders' Meeting based in Torridon in July; and a 'day trip' by Inverness Botany Group in August, tackling a corner of Inverpolly – with >7,000 records collected, many from hitherto poorly-recorded areas. These will be reported in more detail elsewhere, but the following illustrate the many highlights: Creagan Ruadh enclosure remains remarkable, with *Polystichum lonchitis* (Holly-fern), *Pyrola media* (Intermediate Wintergreen) and sheets of *Orthilia secunda* (Serrated Wintergreen); *Dactylorhiza traunsteinerioides* var. *francis-drucei* (Narrow-leaved Marsh-orchid) was re-found on Slioch for the first time since its original British discovery there in 1935, and *Draba norvegica* (Rock Whitlowgrass) since 1981; *Festuca rubra* subsp. *juncea* (Red Fescue) was reported for the first time since Druce's 1929 *Flora*; *Gnaphalium sylvaticum* (Heath Cudweed) and *Isoetes echinospora* (Spring Quillwort), both now very local, were each found in two new sites; *Lycopodiella inundata* (Marsh Clubmoss) was re-recorded from most of its previous sites; and locally-rare *Salix phylicifolia* (Tea-leaved Willow) rediscovered on Applecross Peninsula for the first time since 1866!

Individual recorders have also played a significant part, so many thanks to Judith Bullivant (new VC record for *Carex acutiformis* [Lesser Pond-sedge]), Stephen Bungard, Diana Gilbert, David Hawker – pictured above, Jim McIntosh - first records from Baosbheinn since 1950s, Ian & Marion Moir, David Morris, Sandy Payne - updating *Melampyrum sylvaticum* (Small Cow-wheat) records, Julie Rose, Dan Watson and Peter Wortham.



Recording with David Hawker at Loch an Loin, West Ross, 2017 © Duncan Donald

East Ross (vc106) *Brian Ballinger*

I am very grateful for all the contributions made by Peter Wortham, Mary Dean and other recorders. I also really welcome receiving records, however ordinary-seeming, from visitors. I am up to date with data entry and over 17,000 records have been made in 2017. Approximately 14% of records on the DDb await validation and I have also verified many irecord records for VC106. The Easter Ross Rare Plants Register and Checklist are available on the VC106 page of the BSBI website and also in pocket-size printed versions. We now have some records for most VC106 tetrads, but some have only very short lists and 3 tetrads wholly in the vice-county have yet to be visited. We hope to continue to deal with this in 2018. I am not attempting full monad coverage but aim to get some records from most lowland monads.

In 2017, we held a successful field meeting jointly with the Botanical Society of Scotland (BSS) at Fortrose, concentrating on urban records, and a similar event is planned for Strathpeffer in 2018. I also led an Inverness Botany Group/BSS outing at North Kessock and took part in local field club outings. In addition, I have been involved in the Scotland –wide BSS Urban Flora project, entering records on irecord for various parts of the country and these should come to the BSBI in due course.

East Sutherland (vc107) Mick Crawley

In order to botanise some under-recorded and remote locations on the border with West Sutherland (v.c. 108) I rented two extraordinary properties in 2017: Corrykinloch in June and Ben Armine Lodge in July. Corrykinloch is one of the most remote holiday lets in Scotland.



Beinn Leoid, on the boundary of East & West Sutherland, Mick Crawley © 2017

Three km east from here is the remote summit of Beinn Leoid (792m) (above) whose crest marks the boundary between East and West Sutherland. The richest area was the north-facing crags on the v.c. 108 side of the ridge, with *Draba incana* (Hoary Whitlow-grass), *Luzula spicata* (Spiked Wood-rush), *Polystichum lonchitis* (Holly Fern), and *Saxifraga oppositifolia* (Purple Saxifrage), all of which, along with the other species we saw, were recorded by A.G. Kenneth from this location in 1973. So, no gains and no losses of flora in 44 years from here then.

The second base was even more remote at Ben Armine Lodge (NC704193), 12 km up a private road north of Sciberscross in Strath Brora. The botanical interest hereabouts is restricted entirely to the highest ground, and within this, to the very localised craggy outcrops near the summits. Here grows a somewhat diluted subset of the typical mountain flora of northern Scotland with *Alchemilla filicaulis* subsp. *filicaulis*, *Arctostaphylos alpinus*, (Alpine Bearberry), *Kalmia procumbens* (Trailing Azalea), *Salix lapponum* (Downy Willow) and *Saussurea alpina* (Alpine Saw-wort).



Vaccinium microcarpum (Small Cranberry) Mick Crawley ©2017

The lower ground to the east of here is the enormous and rather bleak expanse of Strath Skinsdale, an area that is extremely remote and difficult to access. Needless to say, it is very poorly recorded, but the flora is distinguished by the occasional presence of *Vaccinium microcarpum* (Small Cranberry) and the region is a hot spot for *Betula nana* (Dwarf Birch).

West Sutherland (vc108) Ian Evans

Another successful year, with recording during June to August focussed on areas accessible from self-catering accommodation at Tongue (thanks to a generous grant from the Lloyd Binns Bequest fund administered by the Glasgow Natural History Society). In three weeks we logged some 3400 records from 26 monads, spread from Loch Meadie (NC4939) and A'Mhoine (NC5160) in the west to Forsinard (NC8942) and Melvich (NC8865) in the east. *Goodyera repens* (Creeping Lady's-tresses) was found at Rhitongue (NC5959) by entomologist Stephen Moran, in an area where it had last been recorded (without precise locality) in 1897 and 1958. We are grateful to Wildland Ltd., who now own substantial areas of this part of West Sutherland, for help with access to areas south of the Kyle of Tongue.

Recording elsewhere in the vice-county concentrated on areas on the west coast, mainly in Assynt, last recorded, at tetrad level, prior to 2000. 17 monads yielded 2300 records, including the first confirmed local record for *Salix phylicifolia* (Tea-leaved Willow) on an

island in Loch Urigill (NC2409) and the first record of *Lemna gibba* (Fat Duckweed) 'in the wild', at Lochinver (NC0822), previous records having been from garden ponds.

With additional contributions from Luke Gaskell, Kathy Velandar and Phil Smith, the total for the year was some 6000 records. It is also worth reporting the completion of the inputting by Avril Haines, funded by the BSBI, of a backlog of some 14500 records made during 2012-2016. Special thanks to Andy Amphlett for assistance in the processing and subsequent verification of this backlog and to Ro Scott for her contributions during the August week at Tongue.

Caithness (vc109) Francis & Margaret Higgins

We recorded between April and September 2017, covering 80 monads (18 hectads) and submitted 7330 records via MapMate to BSBI. In the Spring, we found *Adoxa moschatellina* (Moschatel) and *Ceratocapnos claviculata* (Climbing Corydalis) in abundance, so obviously not rare in Caithness after all. In June, Jim Macintosh spent two full days with us; on one day we found the hybrid violet *Viola x intersita* (*V.riviniiana* (Common Dog-violet) x *V.canina* (Heath Dog-violet)) confirmed by Mike Porter, and on the second day, a potentially rare hybrid orchid - but we'll need help to re-find it this year for proper identification as an NCR. Also in June, John Crossley, the Orkney Recorder, came to stay, and he and Francis spent a long day covering three fairly remote monads – with interesting finds.

The Caithness Rare Plant Register lists *Lycopodium annotinum* (Interrupted Clubmoss) at Ward Hill, 2008; this year we found only *Diphasiastrum alpinum* (Alpine Clubmoss) at that site so maybe the first entry was incorrect. However, we did re-find *Lycopodium annotinum* (Interrupted Clubmoss) at Cairn of Gets, last seen in 2005, growing with *Lycopodium clavatum* (Stag's horn Clubmoss) and *Huperzia selago* (Fir Clubmoss).

We have also visited under-recorded monads and have found: more sites for *Primula scotica* (Scottish Primrose); *Agrimonia eupatoria* (Agrimony); the rare *Carex extensa* (Long-bracted Sedge), confirmed by Mike Porter; and Chris Metherell confirmed two rare *Euphrasias* (Eyebrights): *Euphrasia foulaensis* and also *Euphrasia confusa x foulaensis*. In addition, we attended the weekend at Kindrogan in March, the recording week in Torridon in July, and the Annual Conference in Edinburgh in November.

Outer Hebrides (vc110) Paul Smith

Good progress was made filling a few more gaps for the Atlas, particularly in NB11, which was underdone and needed some long walks for access; the one coastal tetrad was covered

to refind many pre-2000 records for this hectad. A spring recording expedition attracted only a select crew, but we made a strong effort to find spring sand dune annuals on the NW Lewis dune systems, however, there were remarkably few, and most interesting old records were not refound; probably there is less disturbance creating suitable habitat.

A milestone in recording was passed (as predicted) with the 200,000th record from vc110, which turned out to be *Trifolium pratense* (Red Clover) from the spring recording. The VCR ran two recording days for the Outer Hebrides Biological Recording project in August, one covering a rich tetrad in N. Uist, and one a joint expedition to some islands off the E. coast of Benbecula, in two tetrads with no records hitherto. One island had *Sagina procumbens* f. *daviesii* (a form of Procumbent Pearlwort) with *flore pleno* (double-flowered) flowers, and you can read all about it in the last ever issue of New Journal of Botany. Overall, approximately 2500 records were added in 2017.

Orkney (vc111) John Crossley

Good progress was made with Atlas 2020 in 2017, with 4000 records gathered from 60 tetrads. Geographic coverage is also progressing well: three-quarters of hectads with significant land area now have more than 70% of species re-recorded and more than half of these have 75% or more.



I had much help in recording from others, especially Brian Ribbands and Andrew Upton. Two days in North Ronaldsay were particularly profitable. The Orkney Field Club and its Flora sub-group were active and several outings with them to the islands of Hoy, Flotta and Stronsay and to Orkney mainland sites yielded significant numbers of records and some good finds. One of these was the distinctive hybrid between *Dactylorhiza incarnata* (Early Marsh-orchid) and *Dactylorhiza purpurella* var. *cambrensis* (Northern Marsh-orchid).

Dactylorhiza incarnata x *purpurella* = *D. x latirella* 2017 ©
John Crossley

Regarding rarities and new VC records, there was the now customary crop of alien herbs, also many non-native trees due to an effort to record in plantations. Perhaps the most interesting among native species was a new site for *Carex maritima* (Curved Sedge) in North Ronaldsay, in damp sedge-rich grassland very heavily grazed by the native sheep – not on a sandy substrate. The only new native taxon, not counting varieties and hybrids with them,

was that of *Equisetum arvense* (Field Horsetail) x *E. palustre* (Marsh Horsetail) = *E. x rothmaleri* (again in North Ronaldsay).

All records have been digitised and added to the BSBI database. Validation of records on the DDB has been completed, with the exception of the major critical groups and some individual problematic taxa.

Shetland (vc112) Paul Harvey

BSBI visits in 2015 and 2016 gave sufficient impetus to a small group of local folk to continue with recording for the new Atlas in 2017. This was advertised as a recording week and attracted a dozen folk. We focussed on gaps in previous coverage and managed to record about 20 one km squares between us – these in Foula, West Mainland, South Mainland and Bressay. Surprisingly this fieldwork revealed a new site for the endemic Hawkweed *Hieracium spenceanum* – the first new location for a hawkweed in many years. Interestingly, this was on an area of stony coastal heathland where grazing has been much reduced. Several new sites for *Ophioglossum azoricum* (Small Adder's-tongue) were also located.

Our other main focus in 2017 centred around revisiting sites for some of Shetland's rare plants that had not been recorded for a number of years. A re-survey of a site in Nesting that was subject to a planning application for a number of houses revealed yet more plants of interest. In addition to 500 Bog Orchids, over 200 Early Marsh Orchids were located, including one fine example of *Dactylorhiza latirella* (*D. incarnata* (Early Marsh-orchid) x *D. purpurella* (Northern Marsh-orchid)). It is pleasing to report that due to our protestations, this site has now been spared through the planning process.

There is only one new species to report and that an unwelcome addition to the local flora. *Crassula helmsii* (New Zealand Pigmyweed) was located in a fen area near Gulberwick, and the extent of its cover suggested it had been present for a few years. SNH was considering trying to eradicate the plant but I suspect that will prove difficult.

Finally, it is pleasing to report a small success with Shetland Amenity Trust's Hawkweed translocation programme. *Hieracium hethlandiae*, which has been extinct in the wild for a number of years, has proven difficult to re-establish in the wild; a number of efforts have failed. It would appear, however, that planting in a quarry near to its only known native site has been successful. A number of adult plants were present in a resurvey this year, while the presence of a number of seedlings was encouraging.

