

Lanarkshire Botany

April update, 2017



Information

Firstly, many apologies for some less-than-perfect delivery of information via our Google Group. (It may have something to do with my email configuration, apparently.) For the time being, I'll send out stuff via individual emails, until we get the matter resolved.

You should already be in possession of our 'Spring Update' (February) and our Programme for April and May. If either of these has not reached you, do let me know and this will be rectified.

Our 2017 programme

Our season of activities begins on Sunday 23rd April with a plant-hunt in and around Carmunnock. From that date onwards, we generally have one full-day outing each weekend (Saturday or Sunday), and one weekday evening outing - so there's plenty of opportunity for you to get involved. You contribute an extra pair of eyes, and in return you can enjoy beautiful locations, physical exercise, social interaction, and some fresh learning for the mind!

Some of our outings are in the wilds of rural Lanarkshire, while others will probe fascinating corners of urban Glasgow. Most weekday evening outings will include a particular emphasis on learning plants, so are ideal for those who want to improve their knowledge and experience. Wherever we find ourselves, there will undoubtedly be surprises to enjoy.

The Programme up until the end of June is being sent out along with this Update. Please take careful note of any dates that interest you, together with the gathering time (which varies) and the precise rendezvous location (which may sometimes be challenging to find!).

And **please remember to let us know in advance** if you're going to be present at any of our outings: then we'll know when the party is complete.

To help you find the rendezvous-point, here's a photo of me with my car. Big blue car, red jacket. (I'll always wear the jacket while we're gathering!)



Training opportunity

This may be of particular interest to those who consider themselves 'Beginners' or 'Improvers'.

Plantlife and BSBI are running two workshops in May for 'Identifying Wildflower Families' with Dr. Faith Anstey. We have already included the details within our Programme.

Booking in advance is essential, and there is a charge.



**SATURDAY
13 MAY 2017**
Eglinton
Country Park,
Ayrshire
10am – 4.30pm

**SATURDAY
20 MAY 2017**
Glasgow Museums
Resource Centre,
Nitshill
10am – 4.15pm

**IDENTIFYING
WILD FLOWER
FAMILIES**

Image by Sarah Eno
© BSBI

*Learn to identify wild flowers
through their families.
Build your confidence in
using keys. Dr Faith Anstey
and BSBI tutors lead these
highly acclaimed workshops.*

**Participant Fee £25
Full-time Students £17**
BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL

For more information and booking,
see the website www.bsbi.org.uk/scotland.html
or contact Liz at eldlavery@outlook.com

Guidance on recording plants

One request for those making lists of plants: it is vitally important to note which map square (monad) you saw the plant(s) in. But a valuable addition to this rule is when you are in a bounded site, e.g. a public park, or a community woodland, or the grounds of a property which extends across more than one map square. Here, as well as the grid reference of the square, it would be very helpful to specify what was within the site and what was outside it. Then we can easily generate a list for a whole site as an alternative to square-by-square.

Thank you.

'Home Monad' project

Those who have undertaken to make a list of species growing in the map square where you live will already be active. Don't forget to let me know which square it is that you're monitoring . . .

Glasgow city centre

Among the many locations we are targeting this year is the extraordinary tetrad which includes much of Glasgow's city centre. Rather than spending a day with a small team surveying in those streets and lanes, we are inviting the whole of Team 77 to contribute throughout the year!

So, whenever you are in Glasgow and have a little time to spare, please look around and note down what plants you see. And, no matter how 'ordinary' your jottings may seem, send them in!

For ease of reference, the area in question can be regarded as bounded neatly on the west side by the Kingston Bridge/M8; on the south by the Clyde; on the north by Bath Street and over to Strathclyde University, and on the east by Saltmarket/High Street. (The tetrad extends beyond in some directions, including the south side of the Clyde, but let's focus here on the main city centre.)

George Square, Central and Queen Street stations, and the whole checkerboard of streets from Blythswood Square to Glasgow Cross - they're all included. So go for it, and report back!

Report anything interesting you find

One member of the team recently reported finding *Saxifraga tridactylites* (Rue-leaved Saxifrage) by the Clyde in the Finnieston area. He has since found the same species in the Park Circus area of the city, which is a new location: only the third tetrad for this species in the whole of Lanarkshire.



Saxifraga tridactylites at Finnieston (rosettes of often red leaves which develop three prongs - as on right)

Therefore, the message is: please don't assume something isn't worth mentioning. Better to have loads of duplicate records than miss something a bit special.

Schools

Some schools in South Lanarkshire have begun to get involved in botany.

I visited Machanhill Primary School in Larkhall during their recent Science Week, and we are organising a 'plant hunt' together in May.

Tinto Primary School, near Biggar, have our Training Pack No.1 and are also planning a 'plant hunt' soon.

And Uddingston Grammar School's Eco Club will also be out and about looking for wild plants.

GPS data

Some of you may have a hand-held GPS device, to give very accurate location references when required (useful both for pinpointing something you find and for finding your way back to a plant logged previously).

These devices, though useful, can be costly. However, many of you will have iPhones or Android phones - and you may therefore be interested in this app:

GB Grid Ref Compass (it costs 99p)

This gives your position, accurate to 10 metres, and a compass heading if required. Also, you can text or email your location (so you can send a species name and location on the spot).

This facility, together with their excellent cameras, makes such phones a great tool for botanists!

Keep in touch

Your feedback, questions, ideas, suggestions and requests are always welcome.

You are welcome to send in photos of anything special you find - or indeed of things you can't identify with certainty.

If you would like to 'host' one of our weekday evening walks, get in touch. Your local knowledge, with or without botanical expertise, could be very helpful.

Do try to join us soon on one of the outings in the programme. And remember to let us know in advance that you'll be there!

See you soon,

Michael Philip (BSBI recorder, vc77)

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