

**BSBI eNews – September 2018**

**From Jim McIntosh, Senior Country Officer, [jim.mcintosh@bsbi.org](mailto:jim.mcintosh@bsbi.org)**

### **BSBI Welsh Officer**

We now have now secured funding and are currently advertising for a new Welsh Officer to replace Paul Green who stood down in June. If you are interested in this fantastic opportunity please take a look at the [BSBI Vacancies](#) page – or if you know anyone who might be interested please forward this link to them. The closing date for applications is 7 September 2018. The Vacancies page also contains details of two voluntary positions: Company Secretary and Treasurer.

[Jane Houldsworth](#), BSBI Head of Operations

### **Post Atlas Projects Consultation**

Thank you to the 64 BSBI County Recorders who have responded to the questionnaire on potential recording projects that might follow the completion of Atlas 2020. The consultation is being organised by [Robert Northridge](#) who plans to report back to the Council meeting in November. It would be nice to include the views of more Recorders, so we have extended the deadline until mid-October. Please watch out for the email from Country Officers with the form attached, asking all those who have yet to respond to complete and return the form directly to Robert before mid-October.

Later in the year, non-VCR members of the Society will be given an opportunity to comment on the suggested projects, and the results of the consultations will be used to guide the BSBI Council in deciding the details of what projects are undertaken subject to external interest, funding and availability of resources, variously.

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

### **Atlas 2020 Progress**

Seventy-nine vice counties have now sent more than 500 records to the BSBI DDb for 2018. (And amazingly 34 of them have sent more than 5,000 records!) However, that still leaves a lot of Vice-counties that have sent fewer than 500 records - or in some cases none at all.

Now I have gone on about adopting the little and often approach to data entry, uploading to the DDb and validation but I can only imagine that some recorders (who use MapMate) are waiting until the end of the season before synching their data to the DDb. Using MapMate for data entry and synching should be done regularly or you will get rusty and miss crucial steps – like sending the synch file once you have created it. Can I recommend all MapMate users synch their data to the DDb after their next data entry session? This would be also be good time to back-up your MapMate data files onto an external drive if you don't already do that regularly and haven't done it for a while.

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

## Validation of nationally rare and scarce species

Just a quick note to let County Recorders know I'll be emailing a second round of queries (L - A; I've been working backwards from Z) in early September. These are mainly 'new' post-1999 hectad records that were not in the last Atlas or historical records that have been inputted post-1999 that require confirmation, and especially when the record is far from a known occurrence. I really appreciated your help with my Z - M queries, and hopefully you also found the exercise useful. Following 'completion' of reviewing rare and scarce species (I'll need to do this all again in early 2020, but the task is now much reduced), I'll be moving on to new hectad records for other species, following a brief analysis of the post-1999 data. It would be hugely useful if you could continue validating your county records using the DDb this autumn and winter. As I've said in previous notes, the deadline for validation by VCRs of county data is the end of December 2019. You certainly don't need to look at each and every record, and Tom has devised a list for each county that focuses on key records. It really is quite straightforward in the vast majority of cases, and perhaps even fun? If you require any help with the process, then please do let me know - I'm very happy to help. And thank you!

[Pete Stroh](#), BSBI Scientific Officer

## Aquatics

In last month's BSBI *eNews* I wrote about aquatics being rather under-recorded for Atlas 2020 and promoting further field work and the services of the BSBI referees. Afterwards, I had an email from Richard Landsdown, Referee, agreeing and lamenting the fact that almost nobody ever sends him *Zannichellia* or *Spartanium* or general aquatic plant material for identification.

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

## Reflexed Saltmarsh-grass

*Puccinellia distans* subsp. *distans* (Reflexed Saltmarsh-grass) is widespread on roadsides, particularly in the eastern half of GB. *P. distans* subsp. *borealis* (Northern Saltmarsh-grass) is rarer, and is mainly recorded from the north and east coasts of Scotland, Orkney and Shetland, with additional records from the Western Isles, and vcs 74 and 102. There are two records from N. Ireland. It is not recorded from England.

The native habitat of subsp. *borealis* is principally wave-splashed rock platforms, near the lowest level at which vascular plants grow. Plants are also found on quaysides and on slipways, where they grow between stones and in cracks in concrete. Recently, subsp. *borealis* has also been found on roadsides, with records from vcs 95, 98, 108 and 110. Its occurrence as a roadside halophyte has not previously been publicised and it may be overlooked in this habitat.

An [article](#) describing and illustrating the two subspecies is available on the [BSBI Identification page](#). The article has a link to an extensive set of photographs of subsp. *borealis*, mainly from classic coastal sites in Caithness. Subsp. *borealis* may be overlooked, or misidentified as subsp. *distans*.

[Andy Amphlett](#), BSBI Recorder for Banff

## Field Meetings

Autumn is approaching after a summer of baking heat and the field season is drawing to a close. However, there are still 25 national or local meetings in the diary - so don't think it's all over just

because it's early September! I am sure that there are still many exciting discoveries to make. Members not at the meetings do like to read about them, so could leaders of the national field meetings send their reports to Trevor James and myself so that they can be published in the Yearbook.

On my local meetings I've had a couple of occasions when participants ask for a mobile phone number as they are going to be late and would like to find the group. This means that they will miss any site briefing at the start of the meeting, requiring it when they arrive to the detriment of those who are punctual. I therefore discourage such requests - emergencies are one thing, but deliberately aiming to be late is another.

[Jonathan Shanklin](#), Honorary Field Meetings Secretary

## Indoor Meetings

Meeting	Date(s)	Venue	Comments
<a href="#">BSBI Ireland Autumn Meeting</a>	22 September	National Botanic Gardens, Dublin	No booking required.
<a href="#">Recorders' Conference</a>	12-14 October	FSC Preston Montford, Shrewsbury	Book now!
<a href="#">Scottish Botanists' Conference</a> (the new name for the Scottish Annual Meeting)	3 November	Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh	Online booking soon. Flyer with September <i>BSBI News</i> .
<a href="#">Annual Exhibition Meeting</a>	17 November	Edge Hill University, Ormskirk (just north of Liverpool)	Online booking soon. Flyer with September <i>BSBI News</i>

## The BSBI Recorders' Conference 2018

This event takes place at FSC Preston Montford over the long weekend of 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> October. It is aimed very much at active recorders, VCRs and referees – that means you! There's a selection of 13 different workshops or drop-in sessions to choose from on subjects such as recording docks, brambles, orches and firs, or dandelion and grass ID for beginners; there are 11 talks, from Tim Rich & Andy McVeigh on new Gentianaceae taxa to Geoffrey Hall on 'citizen science and the recorder' to Pete Stroh on Atlas 2020: the final countdown. There's a field trip on the final day with John Poland to road-test his new Twig Key, and of course there will be Summerfield Books' pop-up shop to browse and lots of networking opportunities. To find out more and book your space, head to the [Recorders Conference page](#). See you there!

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

## The BSBI Ireland Autumn Meeting 2018

The BSBI Ireland Autumn Meeting 2018 (including Irish AGM) is taking place on 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept at the National Botanic Gardens. The plan for the day includes a talk by Úna FitzPatrick on the pilot 'Rare plant monitoring scheme' run by the National Biodiversity Data Centre, a report back on the Charophyte Workshops run earlier this year, a session by Paul Green entitled 'Atriplex around the Irish coast', and more. The event runs from 10 to 5, all are welcome and booking is not required, so come along! Further information available to download on the new [BSBI Irish Autumn Meeting/AGM webpage](#) - which you can also link to from the main Irish page: <http://bsbi.org/Ireland>.

[Maria Long](#), BSBI Irish Officer

## ***Flora of Great Britain and Ireland***

The fifth and final volume of Sell & Murrell's *Flora of Great Britain and Ireland* was published in June. At the event to celebrate the publication of the final volume of 'Sell & Murrell', Gina Murrell thanked all those responsible and outlined the history of the project in tribute to Peter Sell. The tribute can be downloaded from the [Obituaries page](#). Publishers Cambridge University Press have very kindly offered BSBI members a 20% discount if they wish to purchase copies of any volume, and have also allowed BSBI to reproduce the 20-page section, covering variation, from Peter Sell's Introduction. A new webpage has been created from which you can download the pdf and find out how to claim the discount: [Variation in Sell & Murrell's Flora](#).

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

## **On the News & Views blog in August**

Irish botanist Fiona [reviews a training course](#) she attended in north Wales on fern ID, taught by BSBI President Chris Metherell; we offer three blogposts from the BSBI Mayo Recording Event, the main recording event of the year for Irish botanists and visitors from Britain, [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#); David Morris, County Recorder for Oxfordshire, reports from the publication launch of *Oxfordshire's Threatened Plants*; this month's [blogpost about Byron's Gin](#) focuses on Scots Pine, one of the botanicals used in the distillation process; [Philip Oswald reports](#) from the launch of the final volume of the *Flora of Great Britain and Ireland*; and we reminded you all about our [two autumn treats for botanists](#), the Irish Autumn Meeting and the Recorders' Conference.

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

## **New on the BSBI website in August**

- The latest issue of the Welsh Bulletin and all back issues are now available to download free of charge from the [Wales page](#). Many thanks to editors Richard Pryce, Katherine Slade and Sally Whyman.
- The winners of this year's Presidents' Award, made jointly by the Presidents of BSBI and the Wild Flower Society, were announced on [this webpage](#).
- There is a new county webpage for [Ayrshire](#) with contact details for Dave Lang, one of the three County Recorders, and reports on recent local group meetings.
- County webpages updated in August to include forthcoming field meetings or reports on meetings which have already taken place, local newsletters and/or local botany blogs: Fife & Kinross, Kirkcudbrightshire, Lanarkshire, North-east Yorkshire and Warwickshire. Use the links on the [Local Botany](#) page or the interactive map on the homepage.
- As well as the new webpages mentioned above for the [Irish Autumn Meeting](#) and the [Sell & Murrell note on variation](#), we also have a new page on [volunteering opportunities with BSBI](#).
- The [Governance page](#) has been updated to include the names of several new committee members and minutes have been uploaded to the [members-only Governance website](#), in readiness for the autumn round of committee meetings.
- The [National Plant Monitoring Scheme webpage](#) has been updated to include a link to the newly published NPMS Newsletter for 2018.
- A revised [Species Account](#) has been uploaded for *Juncus compressus*.
- The [News page](#) was updated with items on the new website for the University of Reading Herbarium, a new Open Access paper about *Betula nana* and on John Akeroyd's interview on BBC Radio 4's 'Last Word' programme, where he paid tribute to his late colleague Hugh Syngé.

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

## **BSBI eNews**

BSBI *eNews* is aimed at all BSBI recorders, referees and members involved with recording. 240 of the 306 regular BSBI *eNews* recipients have now opted in to continue to receive their monthly news email. This includes many who took the opportunity to update their email addresses. Thank you very much indeed. Remember you can update your contact details or unsubscribe at any time.

If you are reading this online, or perhaps because it was forwarded to you, and are one of the County Recorders or Referees who did not sign up - you can do so via a link on the [BSBI Publications](#) page at any time.

I'd welcome short contributions from anyone on topics of interest to fellow readers. BSBI *eNews* is generally published on the 1st of each month so contributions should reach me by the 21st of the preceding month. I'd also be pleased to have feedback on any of the articles in BSBI *eNews*.

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer