

Lanarkshire Botany

Newsletter update, Spring 2019



The new season is upon us, and there's lots **YOU** can do to contribute to field botany in Lanarkshire.

2019 strategy

As you will be aware, a new Atlas of the British Flora is being assembled - the first since the year 2000. **Atlas 2020**, to be published online and in book form, will draw on the most comprehensive data-set ever put together. 2019 is the final year for data to be added, and we want to ensure that the Lanarkshire component is as full as possible. Though much of our territory already meets the standards set by the project, we need to find more species recorded in the past which have not yet been seen again this century.

It is this hunt for 'refinds' that will drive our field activity this year.

We will of course continue to record full lists of whatever plants we find, wherever we go, but every precious 'refind' species will be a cause for celebration.

Cicerbita macrophylla
(Blue Sow-thistle)



Fieldwork will concentrate on the 11 hectads which still fall short of data thresholds. These are:

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| NS56 Glasgow (north-west) | 114 species still to be found from a list of 440 |
| NS57 Summerston, Possil Loch, Forth & Clyde Canal | 90 species still to be found from a list of 246 |
| NS65 East Kilbride & Blantyre | 93 species still to be found from a list of 337 |
| NS66 Glasgow (east) | 61 species still to be found from a list of 350 |
| NS67 Bishopbriggs to Moodiesburn | 25 species still to be found from a list of 193 |
| NS73 Lesmahagow (west) | 14 species still to be found from a list of 116 |
| NS76 Coatbridge & Airdrie | 22 species still to be found from a list of 222 |
| NS77 Mollinsburn & Luggiebank | 42 species still to be found from a list of 151 |
| NS84 Clyde Valley & Lanark (west) | 33 species still to be found from a list of 234 |
| NS94 Lanark (east) to Carstairs | 20 species still to be found from a list of 156 |
| NT03 Biggar and Coulter area | 92 species still to be found from a list of 256 |

For each of these zones, we have prepared a PDF list of all species yet to be refound (and they're not all difficult). Location data for each species is given (in as much detail as we have it), so in many cases it may just be a question of going to that spot and looking carefully!

If you would like a copy of any of these lists, please email and ask for it. Knowing what is yet to be found in an area can be a great stimulus for individual action, and your individual plant-hunting will be a vital complement to our programme of outings.

Thank you!

Outings Programme

As normal, we are publishing our Outings Programme gradually throughout the season. This will enable us to review incoming data, and to direct effort where most needed - especially as this vital season unfolds.

Those on our emailing list will be receiving the Programme for April and May along with this newsletter. (The next instalment, for June and July, will be available in early May.) If you are reading this online, you can access our Programme on the Lanarkshire page of the BSBI website - or simply email us and ask for it.



Ceratocarpus claviculata (Climbing Corydalis)

Our first outing is on Easter Saturday, 20th April, by the Forth & Clyde Canal near Kirkintilloch. Do join us if you can, and force your 'botany brain' out of hibernation!

In early June we will be making the first of several visits to the Coulter and Biggar area, which is our least well-recorded zone outside greater Glasgow. It's a beautiful part of the county, with very varied habitats and a diverse flora, so do plan to be with us for that as well.



Cymbalaria pallida (Italian Toadflax)



Parnassia palustris (Grass-of-Parnassus)

Another component of our fieldwork this year will be aquatic plants. We don't have much standing water in Lanarkshire, but be prepared for marshy ground, riverbanks and some pond- and canal-dipping.

And for the more adventurous among us, there are always the steep, narrow gorges (or 'gills') which carry burns down into the Clyde Valley. These are dark and difficult to access, but harbour some of our rarest plants. Are you feeling brave . . . ?

Taraxacum

The Dandelion season begins NOW and the daunting array of species can only be identified during the first flowering (up until early May).

Since large numbers of Dandelion species are on our refinds lists, we would appreciate your help in pinpointing the exact location of any Dandelion that looks 'different' - especially any that are very RED or have DARK BLOTCHES on the leaves.

Please alert us by email with:

- an exact location (i.e. a GPS 10-figure reference, or a precise verbal description of the location)
- a photograph if possible



One of last year's finds: *Taraxacum ancistrolobum* (Few-lobed Dandelion)

It is important that the specimen is good and healthy - not sprayed with weedkiller, chewed by rabbits, damaged by trampling, or growing in such poor conditions that it is stunted or malformed.

We will arrange to visit the plant you have pinpointed, taking a series of photos and completing detailed field-notes which will hopefully provide the referee with sufficient evidence to produce a determination!

Keep your eyes peeled!

Wherever you are, please be alert and take note of anything interesting. Don't just turn a blind eye to plants you don't know: after all, the easy ones have mostly been found now. Urban weeds are a case in point: last year a rare little Plantain (*Plantago afra*) was noticed on a quayside in Glasgow, and the year before a very uncommon Goosefoot (*Chenopodium vulvaria*) was found as a pavement weed near the Kelvin Hall.

Grasses are another good example - if it looks unfamiliar, report it in, please!

Photo Project

Throughout the year, you can also help the botany cause in Lanarkshire by taking photos of plants. Our long-term goal of creating a website to celebrate our county's flora, and to provide valuable help with identification, continues to take shape.

In the New Year 2019 newsletter, we published a list of dozens of species for which good photos are still required - many of which are very common. We're looking for photos of the whole plant in its habitat context, as well as pictures of leaves, stems, buds, flowers, or seeds - and other key close-up features such as hairiness, stipules, ligules, stamens, anthers, or bracts . . . Please help us if you can!



Lamium purpureum (Red Dead-nettle)

Keep in touch

Your emails on any botanical matters are always welcome. I may not be able to answer everything myself, but this is a network so there will be an answer!

Also, if you know anyone who would be interested in receiving the programme of events and occasional newsletters, please ask them to get in touch: Team 77 is itself a growing organism!

I look forward to seeing you in the field whenever you can join us - you'll be made most welcome. Remember that our first outing is on **April 20th**.

Michael Philip (BSBI recorder, VC77)

email: botany@opus44.co.uk

Picture credits: (not all taken in Lanarkshire this time, but all relevant to our fieldwork!)

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| <i>Cicerbita macrophylla</i> | Michael Philip, at Lochwinnoch, 26th July 2011 |
| <i>Ceratocarpus claviculata</i> | Michael Philip, at Broadwood Loch, Cumbernauld, 9th August 2011 |
| <i>Cymbalaria pallida</i> | Michael Philip, at Coulter, 17th September, 2017 |
| <i>Parnassia palustris</i> | Peter Wiggins, at Unthank, near Coulter, 15th September 2018 |
| <i>Taraxacum ancistrolobum</i> | Peter Wiggins, at Glasgow Botanic Gardens, 11th May, 2018 |
| <i>Lamium purpureum</i> | Michael Philip, at Marlage, near Larkhall, 23rd March 2019 |