

# Field Botany in Renfrewshire

Newsletter - Autumn 2022

## **Progress**

2022 has again seen lots of plant-recording activity in Renfrewshire. We've run 14 outings and several people have contributed records on their own. As a result the total number of records sent to the BSBI database for the year is likely to be in excess of 8,000.



Renfrewshire landscape near Howwood

## **Looking ahead**

With the 2022 season now coming to an end, we can spend the winter months building up our plant knowledge and contemplating how best we can each contribute to botanical activity next year.

The Winter Study Groups which we trialled successfully last autumn are not running this time around. However, the BSBI offers a fabulous array of resources. Visit the website and have a 'clickabout':

<https://bsbi.org/identification>

<https://bsbi.org/videos>

You may like to subscribe to the BSBI YouTube channel, where there's a huge collection of helpful videos :

<https://www.youtube.com/c/BotanicalSocietyofBritainandIreland>

For users of Twitter, there's the popular 'Wildflower Hour':

<https://bsbi.org/wildflower-hour>

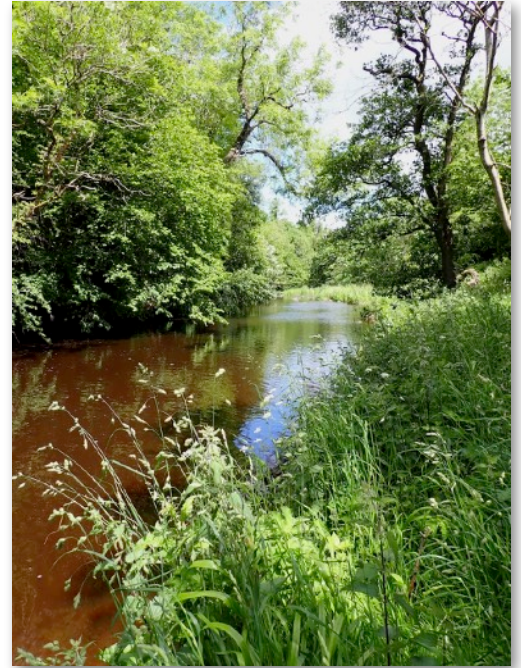
Or why not pick a title or two from Summerfield Books that people could give you for Christmas?

<https://www.summerfieldbooks.com/product-category/life-science/botany/>



## Photos from the field

Our outings have taken us to some wonderful places this year: from the streets and piers of Gourrock to remote country in the Renfrewshire Heights; and from the banks of the Cart to the shores of the Clyde.



Above: on the shore of the Clyde near the Erskine Bridge

Right: looking from the grassy Lanarkshire bank across the River Cart to the tree-lined Renfrewshire bank

Below: pondering the flora of the Greenock Cut



## Recent finds



Upper left: *Lysimachia tenella* (Scarlet Pimpernel)

Lower left: *Teucrium scorodonia* (Wood Sage)



Upper right: *Pulicaria dysenterica* (Common Fleabane)

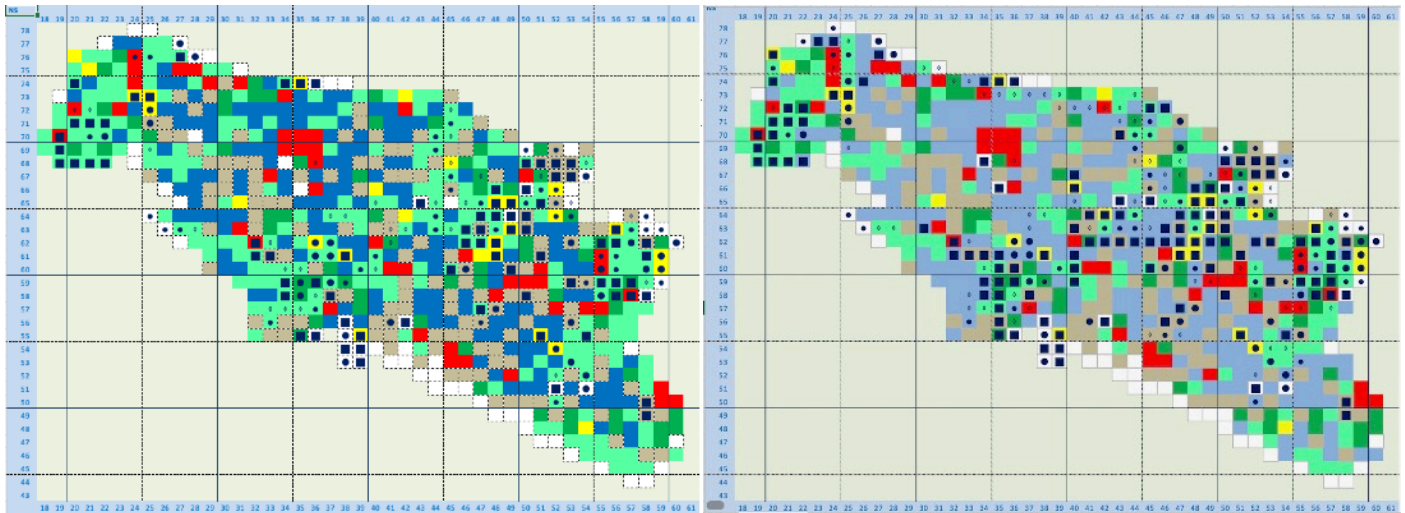
Lower right: *Epipactis helleborine* (Broad-leaved Helleborine)



## How are we doing?

The dot-maps below show in graphic form the progress made in 2022.

The status of each map square up to the end of 2020 is shown by colour-coding (which can be explained further if anyone wants to know), while recording activity from 2021 onwards is shown by black marks. A solid black square indicates that more than 100 species have been noted in these last two years, and it can immediately be seen that more than 30 such squares have been added in 2022.



Situation as at 31st December, 2021

Situation as at 19th October, 2022

Some 270 squares (i.e. over a third of the vice-county) have had something recorded in 2021-22. Of these, 123 squares have had over 100 species recorded.

Empty yellow squares have fewer than 10 species ever recorded and empty brown squares have not seen any recording activity since before 2000.

There are still many completely unrecorded squares (shown in white), such as a whole string of fragments along the boundary with Ayrshire. Visiting such places is often quite challenging, both physically and cartographically, but it has a certain appeal and can become addictive! (Anyone fancy a go?)

## What you can do to help

Several people in our local networks have taken the plunge and led outings this year. This is immensely helpful, as a wider array of leaders enables us to sustain a wider-ranging programme. If you would be prepared to lead an outing in 2023, do let us know: all it involves is being at the venue to welcome people and supervise the task in hand (i.e. following a route and ensuring that someone is writing down what is found). Botanical expertise is not a requirement - the group will record within its combined skill-level.

Some of you have done recording on your own, and again this is extremely valuable. All records are welcome, and loads of support is available to answer questions, identify plants from your photos, or even to revisit a site to confirm anything you're not sure about. If you'd like advice on how to go about this, please get in touch.

If you've not yet done so, join us on an outing! It's always enjoyable, and the learning curve can be rapid. With even just a glimmer of interest in wild plants and a willingness to expand your knowledge and experience, you will quickly build confidence (and surprise yourself with how much you already know!)

Please recommend us to your family and friends. With the environmental agenda now becoming more pressing for society as a whole, now is the time for us all to learn about wild plants and appreciate our precious planet at a deeper level.

## Information

Please join in our activities whenever you can. Some people may fear that recording plants will require expertise they don't possess: however the very opposite is true! It's fine just to tag along and be a 'silent' member of the party. You can watch, listen and ask lots of questions - how do you think everyone else learned what they know?

Peter is the person to send plant lists to. These are welcome from anyone, anytime. Do get out and record plants on your own - if you'd like some guidance on the best way to do recording, please get in touch. Records can be in the form of scanned lists or Recording Cards, spreadsheets or Word documents - or even paper lists by post or photos of the scribbles in your notebook!

Photographs, especially views of the Renfrewshire landscape or stunning pictures of plants, are always welcome. Any (but not all!) photos you submit may appear in Newsletters, the webpage or other literature.

You are welcome to email Keith, Peter or Michael at any time. They are also willing to have a go at identifying plants from photographs if you get stuck!

And please visit the Renfrewshire page on the BSBI website: <https://bsbi.org/renfrewshire>

## Contact details

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### **Photo credits\*:**

Renfrewshire landscape	Jim Blackwood, near Howwood, 22nd May 2022
Shore of the Clyde	Kirsty Menzies, Boden Boo, 7th August 2022
River Cart	Peter Wiggins, Linn Park, 18th June 2022
Greenock Cut	Jim Blackwood, above Greenock, 21st August 2022
<i>Lysimachia tenella</i> (formerly <i>Anagallis</i> )	Jim Blackwood, Lochwinnoch, 13th September 2022
<i>Pulicaria dysenterica</i>	Jim Blackwood, near Lochwinnoch, 24th August 2022
<i>Teucrium scorodonia</i>	Pauline Wood, roadside near Neilston, 16th July 2022
<i>Epipactis helleborine</i>	Pauline Wood, RSPB Lochwinnoch, 4th August 2022

\* Remember you're always welcome to send in photos, either for potential inclusion in the Newsletter or the webpage, or to request help in identifying a plant.