

Lanarkshire Botany

Autumn 2022



Progress

This 2022 season has been busy on a number of fronts. We have held 16 field outings in locations all over the county, played a continuing part in the Botanical Society of Scotland's 'Urban Flora Project', and formed new working partnerships with other organisations.



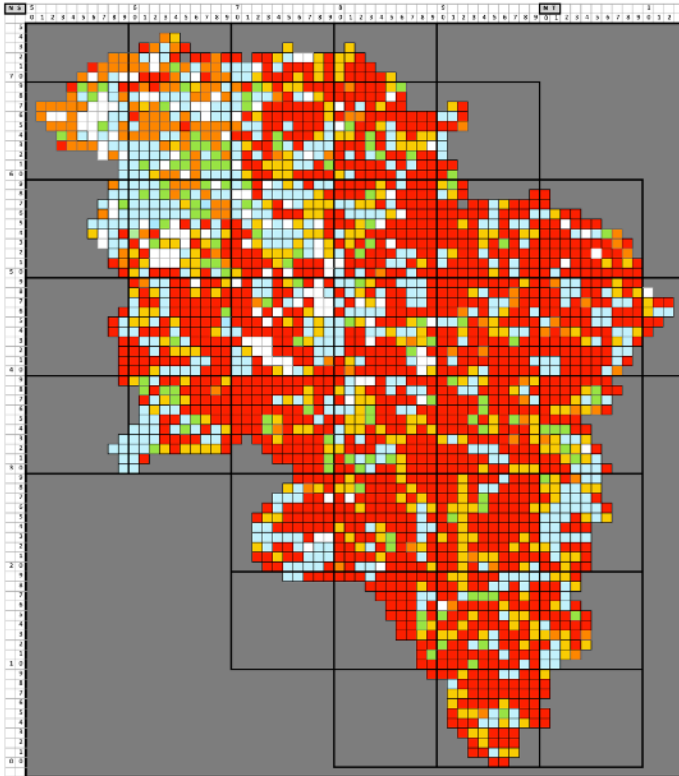
Corra Linn - in the Falls of Clyde Reserve

One such partnership has been with the Scottish Wildlife Trust at the Falls of Clyde Reserve, where we were invited to assist with producing a new, updated species list. Over numerous visits, in ones and twos as well as in two larger group outings, we have submitted exactly 1,001 records giving the distribution of 275 plant species across the site. Further work will be added next year - particularly in hunting for some of the rarer plants that have previously been noted on the Reserve.

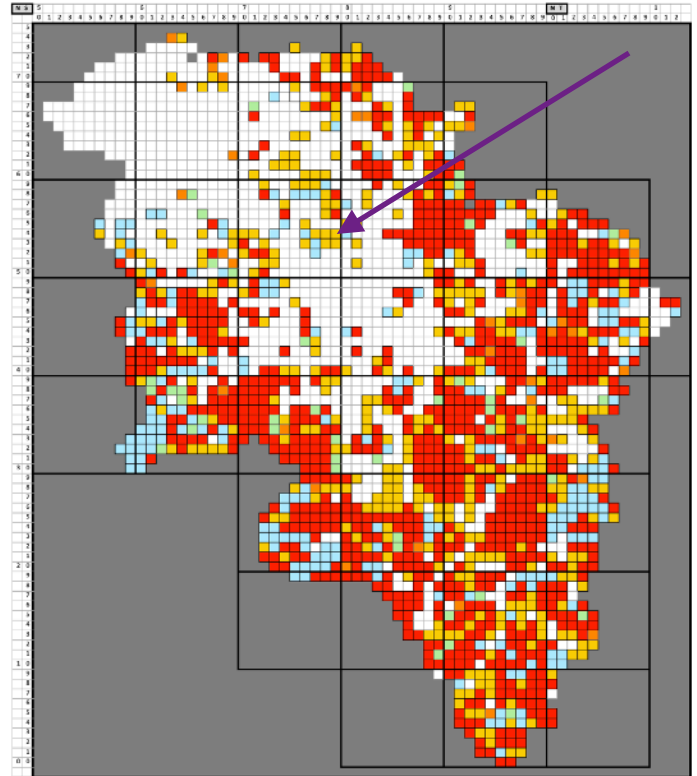
This partnership has also led to the opportunity to hold a BSBI Workshop next year at Falls of Clyde. 'Ferns for Complete Beginners' should take place in early September (full details in due course).

Fieldwork progress

For those who like a graphic to look at, the dot maps below show our progress in plant recording since the start of 2017. Each of the tiny squares represents a 1km map square. In this schematic treatment, white squares are the well-recorded ones: the aim is therefore to remove all colour by building a good plant list, square by square. The main priority is to target the 'red' squares, where no plant recording has ever been done, and the 'yellow' squares, where the all-time plant list is fewer than 10 species.



Situation as at the end of 2016



Situation as at October 2022

As an example, the square indicated by the arrow is the centre of Wishaw (**NS7954**). When a good plant list for that square comes in, the yellow will disappear. Anyone fancy a go? (it can become addictive!)

Urban Flora Project

This has been the sixth year we've participated in the Botanical Society of Scotland's 'Urban Flora Project' and we have again contributed records from several towns: Hamilton, Motherwell, Shotts, Strathaven, Tannochside and Lanark.

2023 is scheduled to be the final year of data-gathering for the Project and we intend to organise further urban field outings in Biggar, Blantyre and Bellshill (details in the 2023 programme in due course).

South Lanarkshire Ranger Service

We have done some work this year with Melanie Craig, one of the Rangers in South Lanarkshire Council. Following a couple of walks in Udston and Glenlee Woods in Hamilton to gather species lists, Melanie has invited us to participate next year in recording plants in Hamilton Low Parks, for which she has been responsible for some 12 years.

This large area mainly occupies the space between the M74 and Hamilton Racecourse, with smaller satellite sites nearby, and no systematic botanical work has been carried out there in the past 20 years. This promises to be a treat to look forward to!

Photos from the field



Wading through a large colony of *Carex riparia* (Greater Pond-sedge) near Elsrickle



Collecting aquatic specimens at Roughrigg Reservoir

Some Lanarkshire finds



Neottia nidus-avis (Bird's-nest Orchid)



Carex x involuta (hybrid between Bottle Sedge and Bladder Sedge)



The sky-blue flower of *Lycopsis arvensis* (Bugloss) - formerly known as *Anchusa arvensis*

Looking ahead

With the 2022 season now behind us, 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/>

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.

Our outings take us to some wonderful places.

Here is the River Clyde at Bonnington, just upstream from the Falls of Clyde near Lanark (see item on first page).

Such a scene is greatly enhanced when we discover what plants grow there.

On the day this photo was taken, 137 plant species were recorded within shouting distance of this spot.





A field of *Alopecurus pratensis* (Meadow Foxtail) on a blowy summer's day

Keep in touch

We appreciate your emails on all sorts of botanical matters - keep them coming!

You can also keep in touch via Lanarkshire page on the BSBI website, which is updated regularly: that's the place to read past issues of this Newsletter, and our Outings Programme for next season will appear there just after being circulated to everyone next March.

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Photo credits*:

Corra Linn	Michael Philip, Falls of Clyde, 11th September 2022
<i>Carex riparia</i>	Jan Davidson, near Elsrickle, 4th June 2022
Collecting aquatics	Liz McTeague, Roughrigg Reservoir, 3rd September 2022
<i>Neottia nidus-avis</i>	Jacqueline Reid, Calderglen Country Park, 27th July 2022
<i>Carex x involuta</i>	Jan Davidson, Dunsyre, collected 20th September 2022
<i>Lycopsis arvensis</i>	Jan Davidson, near Dunsyre, 24th July 2022
The Clyde at Bonnington	Peter Wiggins, Falls of Clyde, 13th August 2022
<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>	Peter Wiggins, near Chapelton, 29th May 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.