

Field Botany in Dunbartonshire

Newsletter - Summer 2023

Latest update

The 2023 season is in full swing!

One interesting development is that, across our three networks, there has been a marked upsurge of people wanting to be involved. This may be evidence of growing environmental concern in the population at large, with people wanting to do something practical to make a difference.



This spring has seen an unusually dense and brilliant flowering of *Ulex europaeus* (Gorse)

The key to positive action is of course learning - and there is no better way to learn than taking part in our field outings. The programme for the second half of the season is being circulated now, so please join us whenever you can. We get to great places and find wonderful things in the company of wonderful people!

The programme also includes information about BSBI Field Meetings and Workshops. One that may be of interest locally is the "Ferns for Complete and Utter Beginners" workshop, to be held in the classroom at the Falls of Clyde Reserve, New Lanark on Saturday 2nd September. Here's your chance to make a start on learning to identify some fern species! As this is an official event in the BSBI calendar, there is a booking process and a fee. It will be staffed by people from within our fellow Lanarkshire network.

For details, go to: <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/botanicalsocietyofbritainireland/867094?>

Visit to Gartlea

We recently spent a day as guests of Janet Beveridge at Gartlea, her farm which sits right on the border with Stirlingshire south-east of Gartocharn.

Janet is prioritising botanical biodiversity and over the last two years over 200 plant species have been recorded here. One of the attractions of her land is a couple of old, dried-out and overgrown ox-bow bends of the Gallangad Burn: home to a spectacular population of *Leucojum aestivum* (Summer Snowflake).



Janet Beveridge (centre) discussing plants during our visit

Hawkweeds visit

On Wednesday morning, 21st June (sorry for the short notice!) at Dumbarton Library at 10am, we will be hosting a visit by Brian Burrow, the BSBI referee for Hawkweeds.

Hawkweeds (*Hieracium*) are a notoriously difficult plant genus, so we will be examining fresh specimens both to gain some valuable, expertly-determined records and to learn some identification skills.

If you would like to join us you'll be most welcome - especially if you bring some Hawkweed specimens! For full details, please contact Michael:

botany@opus44.co.uk

Zoom Study Groups

Over the winter 2021-22, Peter Wiggins pioneered a series of Winter Study Groups. As reported in our Newsletter, these were very popular and there has been a clamour for more such training.

So a new five-session, monthly Summer Study Group is already underway, offering basic training in plant identification, and there will be a brand new series over the coming winter to challenge the more experienced learner.

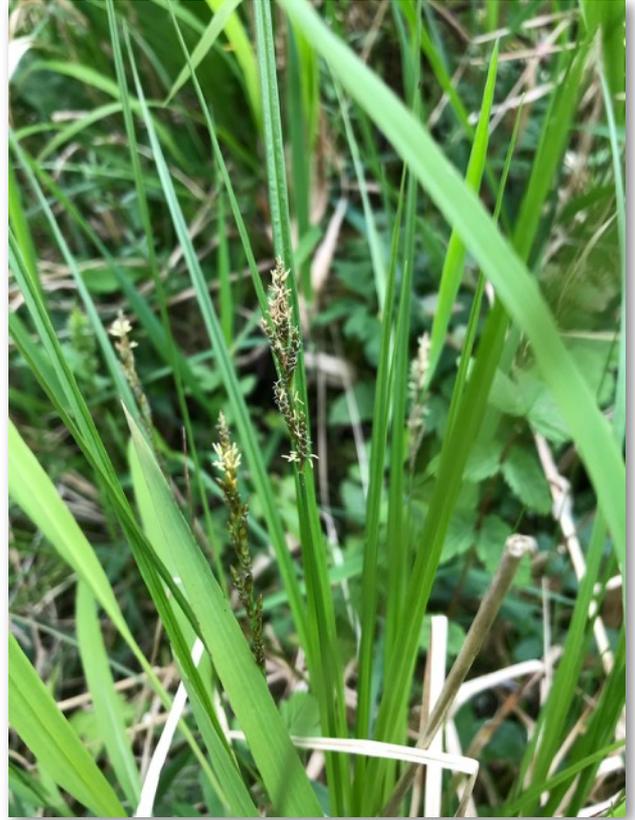
Although the Summer Study Group has now formed, there's plenty of time to opt into the Winter series. To register your interest, or for more information, please contact Peter:

pswiggins@gmail.com

Recent Dunbartonshire finds



Cardamine amara (Large Bittercress)



Carex elongata (Elongated Sedge)



Veronica hederifolia (Ivy-leaved Speedwell)



Taraxacum maculosum
(a Dandelion species confirmed by the referee)

Following our request for sets of Dandelion photos (see Spring newsletter) we have so far had four species identified by John Richards, the BSBI referee, this year.

BSBI

The Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland exists to advance the study and understanding of our wild plants and support their conservation across Britain and Ireland.

It is also home to the national plant distribution database, to which we contribute all our plant records. This nationwide volunteer effort is continuous, providing a detailed picture of the constantly changing distribution of wild plants: most recently and impressively captured in the BSBI publication 'Plant Atlas 2020'.

Many of our readers are already members of the Society: but for those who are not, membership is definitely something to consider. You will be supporting the study and conservation of our flora as well as enjoying many opportunities to get involved personally. And through special rates for various BSBI courses and workshops (and a discount on purchases from Summerfield Books) your subscription can quickly pay for itself!

Through the portal of its busy website, BSBI offers a marvellous array of:

- publications
- photo galleries
- social media groups
- courses
- study grants
- workshops
- field meetings (single day or whole week)
- conferences
- expert advice
- plant identification aids
- a dedicated YouTube channel, full of helpful videos
- local botanical activities
- searchable plant distribution maps
- handbooks on specific plant groups
- the national plant distribution database
- the Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC)
- the Identiplant course
- a nationwide network of local Vice-County Recorders
- reports and consultations
- Plant Atlas 2020 (through a dedicated website)

As in our local experience, there has been a recent surge in membership as people realise it's time to learn about plants and do whatever can be done in their local area to protect plant biodiversity.

Please visit the BSBI website and click your way around to get a flavour of the Society's activity:

<https://bsbi.org/>

Plant Atlas 2020 website: <https://plantatlas2020.org/atlas>

'Live' zoomable species distribution map: <https://bsbi.org/maps>





Leucojum aestivum (Summer Snowflake) - see Gartlea article above

Keep in touch

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

You can also keep in touch via the Dunbartonshire page on the BSBI website, which is updated regularly: that's the place to read past issues of this Newsletter, and our Outings Programme.

Michael Philip (BSBI Recorder, vc99)

email: botany@opus44.co.uk

Photo credits*:

<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	Michael Philip, Kilpatrick, 9th May 2023
Gartlea visit	Michael Philip, Gartlea, 13th May, 2023
<i>Cardamine amara</i>	Michael Philip, Auchnacraig, 15th May, 2023
<i>Carex elongata</i>	Michael Philip, Boturich shore, 12th May, 2023
<i>Veronica hederifolia</i>	Sarah Longrigg, Milngavie, 14th May, 2023
<i>Taraxacum maculosum</i>	Michael Philip, Boturich shore, 12th May, 2023
<i>Leucojum aestivum</i>	Michael Philip, Gartlea, 13th May, 2023

* 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. Photos of 'people doing botany' are especially wanted!