

Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland

Welsh VCR Newsletter, winter 2014

Euphrasia workshop at the NMW on 12th February 2015

This meeting has had a very good uptake and is now fully booked. Chris Metherell has said he is happy to run an extra day if there is enough interest.

Digitising records and sending to MapMate Hub

I know it is very time consuming inputting data, and for many it is a winter job! It would be great if you could make a real push to have your records digitised and sent through to the MapMate Hub, or to Tom Humphrey for those of you who don't use MapMate, over the next few months. BSBI will then be able to take stock of where we are at an early stage in the New Year – ahead of the final five years of Atlas 2020 – which will be useful for planning purposes.

To ensure that none of your records have gone astray I recommend you periodically Reset Sync Record with the hub then Sync All your records through. Would everyone please give it a try? (Instructions below if required).

Make sure you receive the confirmation of receipt email entitled "Sync Received Ok" from 2qg to [your CUK]" from Bob Ellis and check with him if it doesn't arrive. bob.ellis@bsbi.org

Tom Humphrey can be contacted at tom.humphrey@bsbi.org

Instructions to Reset Sync Record:

1. If necessary change default partner to hub – Replicator>Change Default Partner> and select "2qg – BSBI Hub" or "2qg – Unknown" from drop down list. (Please note it will only say "2qg – BSBI Hub" if Bob Ellis has sent you a sync).
2. Check filters have been set Replicator>Special>Set Filters... Records..All Records, Sites..[Your VC], Taxa..Vascular Plants (microspecies) and charophytes and click OK.
3. Then Replicator>Special>Reset Sync Record & click OK.

Instructions to Create and Send Sync file:

1. To create sync file...Replicator> first check it says "Synchronising with Centre – 2qg – BSBI Hub" then click on the "Synchronise" button on bottom right hand corner and follow instructions...
2. To Send sync file...Double click the sync file "[Your CUK]" to 2qg.sqz to upload to MapMate web server and then click the "Upload" button.

Map references in “comment” field in MapMate and how the DDb edits them:

Some years ago it was suggested that 6, 8 & 10 figure map references in MapMate were better placed in the “Comment” field, however BSBI would much prefer if all high resolution map references were placed in the “Site” field.

The DDb now has the ability to extract the map reference from the comment box and swap it with the monad or tetrad used as the “site”. For example the site was set up as ST5065 in MapMate and in the comment was put as: ST506655 One plant by steps from road to Arrivals/Departures building. The DDb has replaced ST5065 with ST506655.

MapMate not syncing?

When you connect to the MapMate server to send (or receive) a sync file, a box saying “Welcome to the MapMate web-server” pops up in the bottom right corner accompanied with a slap-crunch noise (assuming sound is enabled). However if that does not happen, or if the box appears and the sync starts but there is then a long pause and you are told ‘sync failed or stopped by user’, one of the most frequent problems is that your computer’s firewall may have intervened to prevent the connection. It is always worth *temporarily* disabling your firewall, if your security software permits this, and then trying to sync, just to check whether that is the problem.

MapMate have recently changed the IP Address for their services. Typically you need do nothing unless you have set a Firewall rule - in which case you will need to change the friendly IP address for MapMate to **88.208.192.96**. On some recent McAfee versions, under certain providers, MapMate is blocked by default and you need to add a new friendly IP. If you need help to do this let me know.

The BSBI Database (DDb)

Talking about the DDb, if you haven’t already registered to use the [BSBI DDb](#), I cannot recommend it highly enough. It is very simple to use and truly amazing. Give it a go! Also take a look at DDb Message Board and the grid reference look-up Tool – which plots the grid reference on an OS 1:50k map and tells you which VC it is in. (You don’t need to login to use these).

The DDb is updated from the MapMate Hub every 2 to 3 weeks. Generally there will be more records on the DDb than in locally-held databases like MapMate for any given vice-county. That is not to downplay the importance of MapMate of course. It is **the** way we recommend Recorders enter data and contribute their records to the Hub & DDb. Records held in MapMate and other systems that are not forwarded to the Hub / DDb will not be available to other users of the DDb. So please do consider adopting MapMate - if you haven’t already!

Species that are not in MapMate or the DDb

One of the questions I often get asked is can a species be added to MapMate. These I pass on to Bob Ellis. It can take some time before a new patch is ready from MapMate with the new species. Alternately you can put the record straight into the DDb rather than wait for a new patch from MapMate. I have just asked Bob to add *Lemna valdiviana* to MapMate and Tom to add it to the DDb. *L. valdiviana* is now added to the DDb. We will have to wait until there is a new “patch” from MapMate containing this update.

Summary of records added to DDb in 2014 (as of 15th December).

Query	Scotland	England	Wales	Ireland
Records added to DDb in 2014	394,785	1,842,774	220,501	547,527
New records in 2014	124,563	295,308	37,064	69,761
Vcc submitting records in 2014 (new)	38 (29)	52 (33)	13 (11)	34 (20)
New records in 2014 via MapMate	116,702	222,546	37,060	68,768
Number of new records of GB (2005) Red List taxa in 2014	1,334	1,547	235	N/A
Number of new records of NR and NSc taxa in 2014	1,444	2,306	253	335
Hectad with most taxa recorded in 2014	NT29 (442)	SU96 (1019)	SH61 (485)	S71 (510)
Number of new 2014 MapMate records with mismatch between grid reference and vice-county	6	527	11	101
% of new 2014 records at tetrad precision or better	99.75%	99.95%	91.98%	99.51%
% of new 2014 records at monad precision or better	68.43%	94.45%	71.57%	98.57%
Modal (most frequent) record precision	Monad	Monad	Monad	Monad
Number of species & hybrids recorded in 2014	1,590	2,477	1,403	1,093

Above information was supplied by Andy Amphlett

Atlas 2020 recording weeks in Wales

You may be well aware that there are three recording weeks/partial weeks in Wales in 2015: VC44 – Glynhir 21-27 June, VC51 – Northop College 13-16 July and VC48 – Caerleon 21-24 July. These can be a lot of work to organise, but are fun, a good chance to meet other members and very worthwhile for the number of records collected for the vice-county.

It may seem rather early to be thinking of the 2016 recording season for a recording week! If you fancy the idea of one in your county Polly and I would be more than happy to help organise it with you. The main thing is finding good affordable accommodation. The rest tends to fall into place.

Recording for Atlas 2020

As of early 2015 recording cards will be available on request for each VC. They will be printed on card. You may like to edit the recording card that is available from the BSBI

website, such as remove all RPR species. I can help with this if you like. Please order the cards from me.

Use of the herbarium at NMW

If you would like me to look at any specimens for you, please do ask. NMW has a scanner designed for scanning specimens; this gives an extremely good image and I can email these onto you. Each time I use the herbarium I have to log it for NMW. It really would be good to show NMW that there is a demand for the herbarium.

Collecting specimens of New County Records

Any new county record should really have a specimen to support it though. I know a lot of botanists don't like picking plants. I wouldn't expect you to pick a rare 'native' species to be pressed but any none native species should really be collected. NMW would be very happy to receive any specimens, you would like preserved for future generations.

There is a small team of volunteers who come into the herbarium and mount specimens each week. They have very kindly offered to mount the *Taraxacum* collected on the Dandelion workshop held on Anglesey in April at the start of 2015.

Specimens sent to NMW don't hang around for long before they are mounted and incorporated into the herbarium.

Site condition monitoring by the Welsh Officers

When Polly and I are out surveying rare species across Wales, we fill in a form very similar to that used for the Threatened Plant Project (TPP). We don't write up species accounts or produce more formal reports for any plants we survey. Copies of all the forms are sent to NRW and to VCRs.

Finally...

As always, if you are visiting Cardiff do call in and see me.

Have a great festive season and all the best for the New Year!

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December 2014 paul.green@bsbi.org

