BSBI *eNews* – August 2016

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BSBI Recorders' Conference 2016

A reminder that bookings are being taken for this year's Recorders Conference, to be held in Shrewsbury from Friday 2nd until Sunday 4th of September. More details can be found here. **Please note that the deadline for bookings is 15th of August, so book soon to avoid disappointment!**

Boundary Issues

Polly Spencer-Vellacot raises two important issues about entering records near vice-county boundaries. First, if you use the sitename@grid_ref quick method for entering a new site near the VC boundary, MapMate does not always assign the site to the intended VC. Second, the digitised VC boundaries in MapMate are not very accurate and there are discrepancies between them and those used by the BSBI Database (which are much more accurate). So even if the site is in the correct VC in your MapMate it might be just outside the more accurate boundary in the DDb, which will result in a DDb validation mismatch between the VC and grid reference.

In addition to ensuring you set up and use your GPS to give the most accurate readings possible (see the GPS Advice on the Resources page of the BSBI website) we therefore recommend that you take the following steps when recording near VC boundaries:

1. Plot site grid references that are very close to VC boundaries on a detailed map and check they are where you intended. The best online map is www.cucaera.co.uk/grp, which allows you to zoom in and out, displays GB VC boundaries and (using options) an OS, Satellite or Streetmap background. The Grid Reference Lookup tool in the BSBI DDb works in a similar way except that it doesn't have the 1:25,000 OS map background but at least it covers Ireland! Or, if available, use Memory Map with the VC boundary layer shown.

2. Check that boundary sites created by MapMate have the correct VC. In MapMate, if you usually only enter records in one county, you may have your defaults set to only show records from that county. You may need to go back to the main menu and click "View > My Configuration" to add neighbouring counties. You can then "Change Defaults" (in the Analysis window this is done using a little icon with a hand and a page) to allow you to search for records in neighbouring counties.

If you have accidentally entered a record with the wrong VC, you need to edit the **site.** This can be done by viewing the record, then clicking the blue text that says "site" and "view this entry". When you are viewing the **site**, you can click "record > edit record" and change the VC as you wish.
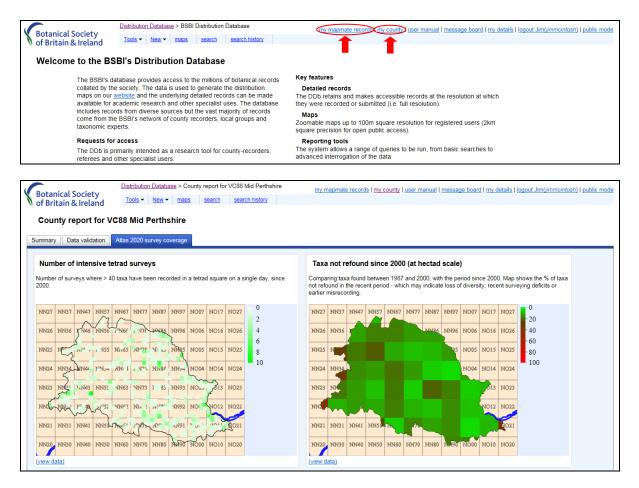
3. Finally, after each synch to the hub/DDb, watch out for any increase in the number of records listed as mismatched in the DDb > My County> Data Validation tab, "Grid-reference – vice-county boundary matching" section. And investigate and correct these mismatches. N.B. It is essential to make corrections in MapMate. The DDb will automatically be corrected after you next sync to it.

Generating a list of taxa that have not been re-recorded post 2000 in boundary squares

More on using the BSBI DataBase (DDb) to generate a list of all the taxa recorded in a grid square (by clicking Tools > Grid Reference Lookup, typing the square reference, clicking look-up grid reference and clicking View taxon list for…):- Tom Humphrey has just added an option to the taxon list page to limit to a particular vice-county where the grid-square intersects multiple counties. This is really handy for Atlas 2020 re-recording. It means you can select to only see the taxa you have yet to re-record for your side of the VC boundary in the square. Take a look at this example.

My county **and** *my mapmate records*

If you are a VC Recorder and use the BSBI Database – which I strongly recommend you do - when you log on you should see a tab at the top of the webpage entitled "my county" alongside "user manual", "message board", etc. This gives access to useful maps and analysis on Recording, Atlas 2020 coverage and Data Validation (example below). Let your Country Officer know if you can't see the "my county" tab, or if you would like any local members, who are already registered as DDb users, to also have access to it. This is another useful way to encourage Atlas 2020 recording, in addition to the above view taxon list feature.

Also, if you use MapMate and the BSBI Database, when you log on you should see the "my mapmate records" tab. It gives access to much useful analysis of your MapMate records. If it does not display then please let your Country Officer have a note of your CUK and ask for it to be enabled.

MapMate Importing Spreadsheets

Last month I recommended that small and infrequent contributions of records might be more easily made to County Recorders using the MapMate Importing Spreadsheets on the BSBI Resources page. Andy Amphlett, who developed the spreadsheets, points out that users <u>must</u> read and follow the simple instructions on the first tab *before* importing the records into MapMate.

***Callitriche palustris* Records**

Peter Stroh writes "I have been alerted by Ken Adams to a flurry of new records on the DDb for *Callitriche palustris* (the one with the black fruits). It is possible that some of the entries are data entry errors for *C. stagnalis*. Could you please check to see whether this applies to you? Equally, it would also be good to hear if some are not data entry errors, as this species, first confirmed as an addition to our flora in 1999, has only two localities in the last Atlas. The quick link to the latest DDb map is here. If you spot a similar mapping anomaly on the DDb for another species, it would be extremely helpful, as Ken did, to let me know. Data entry is fraught with danger; it is very easy to type in the wrong code or species name when entering loads of records."

Taxon Identification

I mentioned the BSBI webpage devoted to links to help with Identification last month. Claudia Ferguson-Smyth writes "I worry about records of narrow-leaved **Pondweeds** whose stipules have not been carefully examined - a technique which requires some practice." The Plant Crib confirms that failure to do so is a common cause of misidentification and that stipules can only be seen with ease under a microscope. Here is a link to the full extract on *Potamogeton* from the Plant Crib on the BSBI Identification page.

I should have also reminded recorders to refer to *Notes on identification and some difficult and under-recorded taxa* (Stroh *et al*, 2015) which is on the BSBI Atlas 2020 webpage, and was distributed with BSBI News last year to all members. This is a mine of useful information – including when to record aggregates, which species the aggregate includes and the recommended identification references. So, for example, "Unidentified **Callitriche** should be recorded as *Callitriche* agg. and not as *C. stagnalis*. We are fortunate that the identification of *Callitriche* in Britain and Ireland has been greatly aided by the publication of Lansdown (2008)." - The BSBI Handbook on Water-Starworts.

Taxon Identification - Stoneworts

An excellent handout on Stoneworts has just been added to the BSBI Identification webpage. It includes a key to the identification of the most common species, sketches showing stonewort features, a list of species conservation statuses and a taxonomic list with synonyms (which I recommend you use to update your BSBI Charophyte Handbook). It was produced by Nick Stewart for the Scottish Recorders' Conferences this spring. Nick is repeating that presentation and running workshop sessions on Stoneworts at the Recorders' Conference in Shrewsbury in September.

Engler Medal for the Hybrid Flora

Congratulations to Clive Stace, Chris Preston and David Pearman, who have been awarded the prestigious Engler Silver Medal for the Hybrid Flora of the British Isles. See BSBI News & Views, where recent posts also include a report from Mary Dean about the BSS/BSBI recording meeting in Dingwall, a pre-publication offer for *A New Flora of Devon* and a note from Pete Stroh on Collecting Seed for the Millennium Seed Bank.

New Journal of Botany

Ian Denholm writes: "The latest issue of *New Journal of Botany* has now been published and features six papers, one short note and three book reviews. Recorders may be particularly interested in the paper by Mitchell *et al.* on potential impacts of ash dieback on woodland vegetation in the UK, in Tony Mundell's paper on *Conyza* and in the paper by George *et al.* on True Service-tree in Britain. This note in BSBI News & Views explains how to access the latest issue of *New Journal of Botany.* Louise Marsh and I hope that you enjoy it."

BSBI News

The deadline for submission to the next *BSBI News* is **31st July.** If you would like to submit material for *BSBI News*, please send your contribution as soon as possible to Trevor James, *BSBI News* Receiving Editor.

BSBI *eNews*

The current and recent back issues of BSBI *eNews* are now available on the Publications page of the BSBI website – and there is even a piece about that in BSBI News & Views here. An email with a link to BSBI *eNews* is circulated to BSBI Recorders, Referees, Staff and Committee members. Please feel free to forward it to anyone who you think would be interested. I'd welcome short contributions from anyone on topics of interest and relevance to fellow readers. It is generally published on the 1st of each month so contributions should ideally arrive around the 21st of the preceding month. Please send them to me, Jim McIntosh. I'd also be pleased to have any comments or corrections to BSBI *eNews*.

Let me know if you'd prefer not to receive the BSBI *eNews* email, or would like me to use another email address.