



Recorder eNewsletter

- *for the botanical recording community*

December 2022



New Country Support Staff

Both James Harding-Morris, our new Countries Support Manager, and Matt Harding, our new Scotland Officer, started this week. Jim has been handing over to them in the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, where Matt plans to base himself two of his four days a week. I'm sure everyone will want to join me in welcoming them to the BSBI and wishing them well in their new respective roles!

We have also just recruited Chantal Helm as BSBI's Training Coordinator. Chantal will start work in early January and will work two days a week to coordinate [Identiplant](#) and FISC. The funding for her post is coming from the income raised through the new ways of working on the Identiplant and FISC initiatives. Chantal will be line-managed by James Harding-Morris in the Countries Support team.

Chantal is currently a Visiting Lecturer at University of Hertfordshire and freelance ecologist. She has previously worked for Cambridge University Botanic Garden coordinating an education project focused on higher education and research, when she was also a tutor at the Gatsby Plant Science Summer School. She did a PhD on the autecology of a keystone tree species in Kruger National Park.

[Julia Hanmer](#), BSBI Chief Executive

Winter Talks

The first talk in our 2022 Winter Talk Series is from Hannah Hall on the evolution and taxonomy of Hyacinthinae and will be on Wednesday 7 December at 7.30pm. Hannah is a PhD student at the University of Reading and will be telling us about her work. The talk is free but [you must book](#).

Generally, the talks will be held on the first Wednesday of each month, so for example, January's will be on the 4th and it would be worth noting the date, even although we have yet to finalise the speaker!

[George Garnett](#), BSBI Winter Talks organiser

Scottish Botanists' Conference 2022

One hundred and forty-six botanists enjoyed this year's Scottish Botanists' Conference, with 26 exhibits including the Photographic Competition, eight talks, six workshops, tours of the library and herbarium, the Scottish AGM, a Q&A session, Summerfield Books, a conference dinner and a retirement celebration for me!

We have never had such complimentary feedback before and I'm sure it was because of the sheer joy of meeting up with old and new friends after the past two years. If you missed it, I recommend viewing the talks on the [Scottish Botanists' Conference](#) page. The two main talks were particularly good.

Jim McIntosh, BSBI Scottish Officer

British & Irish Botanical Conference

After two years of Zoom meetings, it was great to be back at the Natural History Museum in London on 19 November for a face-to-face [British & Irish Botanical Conference](#) (the new name for the Annual

Exhibition Meeting). 254 people booked for the event which had a theme of '*A Festival of Plants*'. We recorded the nine talks, including a very well-received keynote from Chris Preston on "How 'natural' are our alien plants?" Links to the videos, flash talks and many of the 23 exhibits can be found on the [British & Irish Botanical Conference 2022 webpage](#).

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

BSBI AGM & talks

Our AGM was held online on 17th November and you can view the minutes on our [AGM webpage](#), where you will also find links to the two pre-AGM talks: Mick Crawley gave a talk about the [flora of London](#) and BSBI Chief Executive Julia Hanmer provided a summary of [BSBI's activities and successes](#) over the past year.

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

Vice-County Annual Reports for 2022

We will call for Vice-County Annual Reports shortly. The reports will be published in country newsletters and on county webpages in the New Year. Readers will be interested to read about what has been happening in the counties.

Guidance on the format, content and word limit will accompany the call. But so you can start thinking about it, you need to include brief details of any projects - field or desk based - that you were involved in. That includes general, country or local recording initiatives, publications such as checklists, CRPRs and floras, brief details of local group activity and any workshops or talks given. Finally, you can list your exciting botanical (re-) finds – and upload photos of them.

Jim McIntosh, BSBI Scottish Officer

MapMate

Now we are at the end of the field season, would County Recorders please do their annual reset sync once fully up to date with data entry? Open MapMate and click Replicator > Special > Reset Sync Record and create *and send* a sync file that includes all your 2022 records to the BSBI Database (DDb). If successful you should get a confirmation email from the BSBI Database.

This would also be a good time for all MapMate users to back-up their MapMates. The best way is to copy your entire "My MapMate" folder onto an external drive (e.g., a pen drive).

Jim McIntosh, BSBI Senior Country Officer

Rare and Scarce taxa

Just in case you are struggling to find the 'Nationally rare or scarce' checklist in the BSBI Database for searches, as I recently did, please note it has been updated and renamed '[Rare and scarce taxa - GB 2020](#)' as part of the Atlas work.

An Irish version, covering the entire island of Ireland, has also been added called [Rare and scarce taxa - Ireland 2020](#). The criteria in Ireland are slightly different. In GB, Rare relates to species that occur in 1-15 hectads and Scarce in 16-100 hectads but in Ireland, Rare species occur in 1-10 hectads and Scarce in 11-25 hectads. [Here is a link](#) to a search using this checklist as an example.

Jim McIntosh, BSBI Scottish Officer

Herbarium Specimens

One of my last tasks before retiring was to collect a huge private herbarium from the family of a County Recorder who had died and transfer it to RBGE. But because the specimens have been languishing in a damp, unheated spare bedroom for many years, they have become mouldy and some may be insect and mouse-damaged. There was even a mouse nest! It is unclear how many will be saved.

So, if you collect important specimens that should be deposited in an herbarium, do it sooner rather than later. If you don't need to refer to your private herbarium (or only refer to it very infrequently) then speak to the herbarium and make arrangements now - see [here for contact details](#).

The other issue is that many specimens were not properly labelled. It is crucial that each specimen is labelled with **full** record details and a unique collection number. Ideally, you'd get these details into the DDb, and use a download from that to generate an index or even the labels themselves.

Take a look at this [RBGE guidance on specimen collection, preparation and care](#).

Jim McIntosh, BSBI Scottish Officer

Field Meetings

Several residential meetings are planned for 2023, including the Annual Spring/Summer Meeting in Killarney, 19-22 May; another Recorders' Meeting at FSC Preston Montford, 6-8 October; and the Wales AGM, 2-4 August, so save those dates and get ready to book! They form part of a full programme for 2023 which also includes many non-residential day meetings. Details will appear in the BSBI Yearbook, which goes to all members, and will also be displayed soon, with booking links, on the [Field Meetings & Indoor Events page](#) of the BSBI website. However, there is still (just) time for corrections or additions, if you let me have them as soon as possible.

[Jonathan Shanklin](#), Hon. Field Meetings Secretary

Field Meeting Guidance

I am updating the meetings guidance (currently titled [Leading BSBI Field Meetings](#)), and the revised document will appear soon on the [Field Meetings & Indoor Events page](#) of the BSBI website. One significant update will be the inclusion of a bullet point guide to organising a meeting, so that you don't have to read the whole document. This should also help those organising local group meetings. The document will be retitled as simply "BSBI Meetings Guidance" and subtitled "a guide for organisers and leaders of meetings". If you have suggestions for any additional material that you would like included do let me know.

[Jonathan Shanklin](#), Hon. Field Meetings Secretary

New Year Plant Hunt 2023

Our twelfth New Year Plant Hunt runs from New Year's Eve 31st December until Tuesday 3rd January. This is your chance to help us understand more about how British and Irish wildflowers are responding to a changing climate, by recording any wild or naturalised plants you can find in bloom at midwinter. For more details about how to take part, please visit our [New Year Plant Hunt webpage](#).

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

National Plant Monitoring Scheme (NPMS)

We were delighted that Dr Rachel Murphy, NPMS Volunteer Manager, accepted our invitation to exhibit at last month's British & Irish Botanical Conference (see above). She was on hand throughout

the day to answer questions [about the Scheme](#) and deliver this [1-minute flash talk](#). You can view Rachel's [NPMS poster here](#).

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

Recorder eNewsletter

Recorder eNewsletter is aimed at all BSBI recorders, referees, members and supporters involved with recording. It has 460 subscribers and you can subscribe or view it on the [BSBI Recorder eNewsletter](#) webpage. [James Harding-Morris](#) will be its new editor and he'd welcome short contributions from anyone on topics of interest to fellow readers. Recorder eNewsletter will continue to be published at the beginning of each month so contributions should reach James during the preceding week.

Jim McIntosh, BSBI Senior Country Officer