



Recorder eNewsletter

- *for the botanical recording community*

June 2023

BSBI Forum meeting – report and request for feedback from BSBI members

We held a BSBI Forum meeting in April, a key opportunity to discuss how we work together across BSBI and set BSBI's future agenda. We have now published the [draft report](#) which is available via the [Forum page](#) of the password-protected [members' area](#) on the BSBI website. The report includes updates on progress against points raised at last year's Forum meeting and new discussions on: 1) how do we best support VCRs (building on VCR's annual report feedback) and 2) how do we plan and support a cohesive events programme?

We would welcome members' feedback on the ideas and suggestions in this report. It would be good to hear if you agree with the key themes and suggested actions and can help implement any or have other ideas to add. Please send your feedback to Julia Hanmer by 30th June 2023, so your views can be included in the final version of this report, which will feed into BSBI's planning cycle for the rest of this year and our Strategy refresh consultations over the winter of 2023/24.

[Julia Hanmer](#), BSBI Chief Executive

Querying the Database & Plant Atlas

Most of you will have discovered that you can use synonyms when searching for taxa in the BSBI Database (DDb). Well, you can also use synonyms when searching the new Plant Atlas. Which is handy if, like me, you struggle to remember all the new Stace 4 names! Helpfully, both the synonym and the current name are both shown before you hit return, after which only the current name is shown.

You can also search by abbreviating the genus to just its initial letter, followed by just as many letters of the species name as it takes to narrow the options down until you can see and select your intended species. This also works in both the Plant Atlas and DDb. Useful for long and hard-to-spell genus names. Try searching for "S aut" for *Scorzoneroides autumnalis* or "S palu" for *Scheuchzeria palustris* for example! (Ed. - No full stops required after the genus initial.)

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Recorder for Mid-Perthshire and retired BSBI Scotland Officer

Landowner permissions

We have recently had a complaint from a farmer (via his farmers' union) about meeting a BSBI group on his land, when the group had not asked for access permission. So please can

we remind all organisers of BSBI field events and recording trips that it is important to seek landowner permission prior to accessing sites.

[Julia Hanmer](#), BSBI Chief Executive

FISC Level 5 botanists needed

BSBI is now regularly being contacted by ecological consultancies asking for experienced botanists (FISC Level 5 equivalent or above) to oversee botanical surveys as contractors.

We are also being contacted by FISC Providers for FISC Level 5 botanists to help with FISC assessments as Gold Standard Surveyors. Gold Standard Surveyors are skilled botanists (FISC level 5 equivalent or above) who record plants alongside the FISC candidates in the field test part of the assessment. If you are a FISC level 5 or equivalent botanist interested in undertaking such freelance work, please get in touch with me for further details.

[Chantal Helm](#), BSBI Training Co-ordinator

Upcoming FISC dates

Our BSBI Field Identification Skills Certificate (FISC) tests always book up really quickly but we can offer a few places on the 8th June test at Preston Montford FSC Centre, Shrewsbury.

Book [here](#) - please share with your networks, and do book quickly if you want to secure a space.

Although there are very few dates and locations this year, we are working hard to expand provision for next year; FISC details are posted [here](#) as soon as they become available.

[Chantal Helm](#), BSBI Training Co-ordinator

Scottish ID Workshops

There are four upcoming ID Workshops in Scotland with spaces still available. These are:

- [Plant Families Workshop](#), 18 June, Holyrood Park Education Centre, Edinburgh (v.c.83)
- [Plant Families Workshop](#), 1 July, Dulnain Bridge (v.c.95)
- [Grasses Workshop](#), 29 July, Birnam (v.c.88)
- [Ferns for Complete and Utter Beginners](#), 2 September, New Lanark (v.c.77)

These workshops are ideal for anyone getting started with botany, so please spread the word about them to your networks.

[James Harding-Morris](#), BSBI Countries Support Manager

Field meeting aimed at both entomologists and botanists

There are just two spaces left on our field meeting at Daneway Banks, W. Gloucs. on 17 June. It's a joint members-only meeting with the Royal Entomological Society. More info and a booking link [here](#).

[James Harding-Morris](#), BSBI Countries Support Manager

Dactylis polygama – Slender Cock's-foot

The grass *Dactylis polygama* is probably overlooked here and there. It has turned up in a few places in the last couple of years. It is very like *D. glomerata* (Cock's-foot), but has glumes and lemmas with a very short fringe of hairs (sometimes sparsely so) and generally to the naked eye can look more or less glabrous. Cock's-foot has a distinct fringe of long hairs on these parts (beware late plants). The two species have different chromosome numbers and can be confirmed by the size of the stomata. If you think you have this, please take details and collect several heads with a few leaves (I don't need the whole plant), when it is more or less in flower, as hybrids between the two could occur and with good details you may be able to go back and re-find the plant to check again.

[Michael Wilcox](#) – see BSBI Yearbook for postal address.

Pentaglottis sempervirens with larger flowers

Pentaglottis sempervirens, Green Alkanet, can have larger flowers than the books state, (up to 18mm). Those with smaller flowers may have some differences to those with larger flowers. There seems to be slight calyx differences between these, but it would be best to see material. If you do see any - maybe photograph the plant (take GRs etc) and send the images and preferably also send a length of flowering stem, the top half, or strip some of the leaves off the stem in order of size including the petiole if present (usually so in lower leaves) and then specifically include some fruiting calyces; the flowers don't travel well but the other fruiting features of the calyx and the leaves should be ok.

[Michael Wilcox](#) – see BSBI Yearbook for postal address.

Support for *Euphrasia* PhD work required

Euphrasia (Orobanchaceae) is a complex genus of semi-parasitic flowering plants that grow across the UK. Species of *Euphrasia* (eyebright) can be either diploid or tetraploid and experience frequent hybridization. For two related projects, one investigating the consequences of interploidy hybridization in natural populations and the other looking at local adaptation and host preferences in British parasitic plants (namely *Euphrasia arctica* and *Odontites vernus*), we are hoping to make a trip down to Cornwall to collect samples around late July. If you are planning a trip and would be able to help us (two PhD students) drive to the 15 sites we'd like to visit in Cornwall and Devon we would be extremely grateful and happy to repay in fuel costs, lodging, and stimulating conversation.

Lizzy Davies edavies@rbge.org.uk
Grace Doherty g.l.doherty@sms.ed.ac.uk

Recording impacts of invasive species through citizen science: a pilot study

Coventry University, in collaboration with the North Wales Wildlife Trust, is running a new project exploring the use of citizen science for the recording of impacts of invasive plants. This is a pilot study testing the approach for Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*), Cherry laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*), Himalayan honeysuckle (*Leycesteria formosa*), Variegated yellow Archangel (*Lamiastrum galeobdolon* subsp. *argentatum*), Japanese rose (*Rosa rugosa*), and Winter heliotrope (*Petasites pyrenaicus*).

These species have been selected to represent various degrees of establishment and lack of knowledge about impacts. If you are aware of these species in your area, [please sign up](#) and you get access to the recording protocols including a digital sampling protocol using the Epicollect app. People based in Wales can also participate in field events organised by the project team. You can [register here](#).

[Katharina Dehnen-Schmutz](#), University of Coventry

National Plant Monitoring Scheme - Annual Report Published

The [NPMS Annual Report](#), which was published recently, provides an excellent overview of survey coverage since 2015 as well as how NPMS data are shared and used for research. There are also volunteer case studies that highlight personal experiences of the survey. Feeling inspired? You can [sign up here](#).

[James Harding-Morris](#), BSBI Countries Support Manager

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 BSBI Recorder eNewsletter webpage. I'd welcome short contributions from anyone on topics of interest to fellow readers. Recorder eNewsletter is generally published at the beginning of each month so contributions should reach me at the beginning of the preceding week. I'd also be pleased to have feedback.

[James Harding-Morris](#), BSBI Countries Support Manager