



Recorder eNewsletter

- *for the botanical recording community*

September 2023

Upcoming field meetings

The field season is coming to an end but lots of [local botany](#) groups are still holding meetings and there are several events in the national calendar for September. So if you can make it to [South Essex](#), [Co. Armagh](#) or [Co. Galway](#) in the next few weeks, why not book for one of 2023's final [field meetings](#)? And if you're feeling miffed that there isn't a field meeting happening in your area, why not organise one yourself next year? Country Field Secretaries will be happy to help you plan your meeting and we have lots of resources to help you – just follow the links on our [Field Meetings & Indoor Events page](#).

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

BSBI's Recorders' Meeting 2023

Booking is still open for the [Recorders' Meeting at FSC Preston Montford](#) over the weekend of 6th-8th October. This is open to anyone who records plants and is a combination of a social occasion and a learning experience. Full board and lodging from Friday afternoon to Sunday afternoon, including registration, is only £164 for an individual, so it is excellent value for money.

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

British & Irish Botanical Conference 2023

This year's British & Irish Botanical Conference will be hosted by the [Natural History Society of Northumbria](#) in collaboration with the BSBI; it will take place on Saturday 2nd December at the Curtis Auditorium, [Herschel Building, Newcastle University](#).

We are pulling together a programme of speakers on the themes of urban botany and of plant identification. We will also have an exciting keynote talk from BSBI President Micheline Sheehy Skeffington, an array of exhibits, and some behind-the-scenes tours. We're delighted also that Summerfield Books will be in attendance with a range of botanical books and hand-lenses.

Please save the date and watch out for more details and a booking link coming soon [here](#)!

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

Scottish Botanists' Conference 2023

This year's Scottish Botanists' Conference will take place on Saturday 4th November at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE).

A diverse programme will include talks on Plant Atlas 2020 and its impact, RBGE's plant introductions for conservation, why plant names keep changing, a year in the life of a conservation ecologist, and the recently updated Caledonian Pinewood Inventory. We will learn about Plantlife Scotland's Species on the Edge Project, BSBI will be sharing updates on its projects, and as its double centenary nears the Botanical Society of Scotland will be asking the audience, where next?

The ever-popular afternoon workshop programme will include identification workshops on willowherbs, montane willows, horsetails, and bryophytes for beginners.

Save the date and look out for more details and a booking link coming soon [here!](#)

[Matt Harding](#), BSBI Scotland Officer

Irish Autumn Meeting and AGM 2023

The Irish Autumn Meeting and AGM will be held on Saturday 21 October at the National Botanic Gardens in Glasnevin, Dublin. This is a great chance to meet up with BSBI members across Ireland, and as usual, there will be a fascinating line-up of speakers and workshops.

Save the date and look out for more details and a booking link coming soon [here!](#)

[Bridget Keehan](#), BSBI Ireland Officer

Seeking Plant Stories

You may have seen a [news story recently about the discovery by David Elston of *OphioGLOSSUM AZORICUM* \(Small Adder's-tongue\)](#) as a new native species for [Kincardineshire](#). Or you may have spotted the [press release](#) about this find on the [News page](#) or the [media page](#) of the BSBI website.

We'd like to share more stories like this to raise more awareness of plants, the BSBI, and the hard work of our County Recorders so if you have made a discovery that you think might resonate with the general public, please do contact us.

As a rule of thumb, the press will probably respond well to rediscoveries of extinct species; refinds of species after a gap of a century or more; discoveries of new native species; discoveries of new invasive non-native species; and stories of extreme rarity or oddity. Species that are photogenic will also play well (do remember to take a couple of photos at the highest resolution you can manage), and orchid stories are generally a safe bet.

We won't be able to get every story out into the world, and not all of them will get picked up, but we'll do our best to tell more stories about our wonderful wildflowers and the amazing work of our County Recorders.

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

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

Growing Identiplant in Scotland

[Identiplant](#), the online training course for beginners in serious botany, is now [run by BSBI](#) and we're keen to increase the numbers of students - and the tutors to support them - across Britain and Ireland.

Are you based in Scotland and keen to support beginner botanists? Would you like to know more about becoming an [Identiplant](#) tutor? BSBI and [The Conservation Volunteers \(TCV\)](#) have partnered to establish an Identiplant Hub in Scotland, and we are holding a prospective Identiplant tutor event in Stirling on Sunday 17th September.

See [this poster](#) for more details, and sign up now at [Growing Identiplant in Scotland 17 Sept 2023](#)! If you can't make the event, but are still interested in becoming a tutor, email us at identiplant@bsbi.org to find out more.

[Chantal Helm](#), BSBI Training Coordinator

[Matt Harding](#), BSBI Scotland Officer

BSBI Referees page

We've created a new [Referees page](#) on the password-protected members-only area of the website. A table sets out contact details for each Referee and the material you'll need to send them. There's also a helpful search button to take you straight to the plant group you want - handy for when you have an interesting plant specimen but you're out in the field and don't have your copy of the Yearbook to hand.

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

Recording infraspecific variation in *Trifolium pratense* (Red Clover)

The treatment of infraspecific variation in Stace's Flora is incomplete cf. Sell & Murrell, and this can lead to identification errors. Here is an example.

Robust, tall specimens of *Trifolium pratense* (Red Clover), on roadsides, re-seeded amenity grasslands, waste ground etc. usually have a hollow stem. These are mentioned in Stace as var. *sativa*, and that name is available in MapMate. However, Sell & Murrell include two varieties of *T. pratense* with hollow stems in their Flora: var. *sativa* (with appressed hairs on the stem, or glabrous) and var. *americanum* (with spreading hairs on the stem).

I have been recording var. *sativa*, but without checking stem hairs. I recently found both vars. in Inverness ([v.c.96](#)), the var. *americanum* being new to Scotland, though no doubt overlooked. As that name is not available in MM, put the name in the Comments field, and the record can be edited in the DDb to use the correct name. Var. *sativum* is recorded from 356 hectads, while var. *americanum* from only 9 hectads. It is highly likely that some records of var. *sativum* on the DDb refer to var. *americanum*.

[Andy Amphlett](#), VCR for Easternness

Entering null records and DAFOR frequencies in MapMate

It can be useful to include null records for rare species in the DDb, as it helps build a record of search effort. For example, *Gagea lutea* (Yellow Star-of-Bethlehem) was last seen in Stirlingshire in 1997 ([DDb search here](#)). It has been searched for at this site many times by various botanists since then without success, but no shared record has been made of these searches.

For the [Scottish HectAd Rare Plant Project \(SHARPP\)](#), where old records of rare plants are being re-checked, submitting null records is encouraged. To submit a null record in MapMate, enter '-7' in the Quantity field for the relevant species record. Please include a comment that describes the area that you searched and the basis for your conclusion.

There are also MapMate codes for entering qualitative frequencies using the DAFOR scale, which is preferable to leaving information such as 'Abundant' or 'Rare' in the Comment field where it is easily overlooked. The table below summarises these, and more MapMate data entry tips can be found at [MapMate data import – column headings \(bsbi.org\)](#).

Frequency	Quantity Code
Dominant	-1
Abundant	-2
Frequent	-3
Occasional	-4
Rare	-5
Not found (a null record)	-7

[Matt Harding](#), BSBI Scotland Officer

BSBI Awards

If someone has impressed you with their work for BSBI why not nominate them for a BSBI award? Check the guidelines at [Nominations & Awards – Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland](#). We want to recognise activity in all parts of Britain and Ireland. The deadline is 31 December.

[Christopher Miles](#), Chair of the BSBI Board of Trustees

New Year Plant Hunt: save the dates!

Our thirteenth [New Year Plant Hunt](#) (NYPH) will run from Saturday 30th December 2023 to Tuesday 2nd January 2024. Recording plants that bloom in midwinter may be the last thing on your mind when we're only just entering September, but if you're thinking of arranging a group hunt, you'll want those dates asap! If you let us know about group hunts at nyplanthunt@bsbi.org we can advertise them on the website and help you with promotion

and if you'd like to [register your interest in NYPH now](#), we'll send you reminders and resources nearer the time.

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

Upcoming NPMS events

There are a number of habitat-specific [NPMS talks](#) coming up over the next few months, including [Flushes and Springs](#) on the 14th September. If you haven't set up your NPMS square yet, or if you have recorders in your county that are looking to get started, then there is an introduction to NPMS and the survey methodology in early November that you can [book onto now](#).

I recently received my NPMS Summer Newsletter, packed with opportunities and information and featuring an article on upland calcareous grassland by our very own Kevin Walker. If you'd like to receive the newsletter then [please 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. If you have active recorders in your county that you think would appreciate receiving it then please encourage them to [subscribe to it here](#).

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