



Recorder eNewsletter

for the botanical recording community
January 2024

Vice-County Annual Reports for 2023

County Recorders should have received an email on the 12th of December with a link to submit Annual Reports. The deadline for submissions is the 14th January. If you are having any problems with writing or submitting your report, please contact your Country Officer or me.

I look forward to reading about the wide variety of activities that have taken place over the past year, and I'm sure our members will feel the same.

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

New Year Plant Hunt 2023

Our thirteenth [New Year Plant Hunt](#) starts on Saturday 30th December 2023 and runs until Tuesday 2nd January 2024. This is your chance to enjoy some midwinter botany while helping us understand more about how British and Irish wildflowers are responding to a changing climate.

To help first-timers get the most out of the Hunt, we have prepared a selection of helpful resources: there are spotter sheets showing the [Top Ten](#) and [Top Twenty](#) wild and naturalised plants most likely to be in bloom in midwinter; there are tips on [how to plan your route](#); guidance on [using the Plant Hunt app](#) and on [how to take plant photos for identification](#); a page of [definitions](#) explaining what we mean by 'naturalised', 'native', 'wild' etc.; and a [page of group Hunts](#).

If you know of any group Hunts in your area, there is still time (just!) to [send us details](#) so we can help with promotion.

We hope that this will be our biggest ever [New Year Plant Hunt](#) so please keep spreading the word to your local contacts, organisations and on social media. Happy hunting!

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

BSBI grants are live

Our grants programme for 2024 is now open for applications. We have [grants for training](#) - these are ideal for any beginner botanists in your network who want to take a short plant ID course; [grants for plant study](#) - these are aimed at undergrads and postgrads; and [grants for science and research](#) - these are aimed at PhD students, academic researchers and amateurs working on botanical research.

All the forms and guidance can be found on our [grants page](#), where we also share links to any other sources of grant funding that we know about. So don't delay, apply today - and help us spread the word that BSBI grant applications are now open!

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

MapMate

This seems a good opportunity to request that all County Recorders who use MapMate check that all their records have been safely sent to BSBI's database. Even if you are sure that you are already up to date, please try resetting, to ensure that no records have been skipped. To reset, open MapMate and click Replicator > Special > Reset Sync Record and create and send a sync file. If the file is too large for MapMate to upload, then you can [upload the sync file directly to the DDb](#).

This is also a good time for all MapMate users to back-up their MapMate database. Ideally you should sync and back-up after every data entry session. The best way is to copy your entire "My MapMate" folder onto an external drive (e.g. a USB drive).

[Tom Humphrey](#), BSBI Database Officer

New BSBI documentation website

In the past few months, we have been developing a dedicated website providing guidance on BSBI's key systems and processes relating to botanical recording. The site aims to bring together useful resources (including a guide to using the DDb) in a single and searchable location. You can find the site [here](#) - it is very much a work in progress, and we would very much appreciate your feedback as we can continue to develop it through next year.

[James Drever](#), BSBI Data Support Officer

BSBI News, Ireland Country Roundup - call for volunteers

If anyone is interested in putting together the Ireland Country Roundup for future editions of *BSBI News*, please do let me know. This can be a really pleasant task, collating and highlighting the best finds of the season, capturing recorders' surprise and delight at new and unexpected finds, even recounting the trials and tribulations of plant hunting!

If this sounds like something you'd enjoy, and you'd like to give it a try, please get in touch - your help would be much appreciated.

[Bridget Keehan](#), BSBI Ireland Officer

BSBI News, Scotland Country Roundup – call for volunteers

Ian Strachan has now stepped back from producing the Scottish Country Roundup for *BSBI News*, having done a fantastic job for many years. His contributions were always beautifully written and full of interesting detail, a highlight of the newsletter for me, so a huge thank you to Ian from me and BSBI!

It would be great to have another volunteer to work with me to produce the next few roundups, so if anyone would like to join me to showcase Scotland's finest discoveries, please let me know!

[Matt Harding](#), BSBI Scotland Officer

British & Irish Botanical Conference 2023

The [2023 British & Irish Botanical Conference](#) was a huge success! 300 people booked to attend the event in Newcastle, although rail strikes caused problems for some of us. We recorded most of the talks and they are now available on the [BSBI YouTube channel](#). You can access the videos, and view digital versions of some of the exhibits, via the links on the [Conference webpage](#). Huge thanks to all the speakers and exhibitors who made the event so successful!

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

Field Meetings and Indoor Events in 2024

The final touches are being put to the meetings programme for 2024 and you can get a sneaky peek on [this poster](#), displayed at last month's B&IB Botanical Conference. There will be details available soon on the [Field Meetings & Indoor Events page of the website](#) and in the 2024

BSBI Yearbook, which goes out to all members; there will also be pdf and Screen Reader versions of the Yearbook on the members' area of the website.

Two of the bigger events are the [Recorders' Meeting](#), which runs from 19 - 21 April and the [Annual Summer Meeting](#) (ASM) from 20 - 24 May. The Recorders' Meeting will again be held at FSC Preston Montford and will have a priority for people just starting to record plants in a more formal way, with an emphasis on training, so it is subtitled "A Recording, Plant ID and Skills Conference". The ASM is being held on Guernsey, where there will be plenty of unfamiliar plants to see. Booking for these should go live in the near future so do keep an eye on the webpages.

At the February meeting of the Events & Communications Committee we review the [guidance given to leaders and organisers of meetings](#), and to [participants at meetings](#). If you have any suggestions for updates or improvements do send them to me

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

England Annual Meeting

The [England Annual Meeting](#) will take place via Zoom on February 25, starting at 2pm, and will include the AGM, several short talks, a keynote talk on the biological control of alien species, and the Chair's address on What and where I record (not just plants). If you are interested in helping on the Committee for England there are plenty of possibilities. We could do with a secretary to take notes, an editor for the bulletin and would particularly welcome younger members who can help with social media.

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

Upcoming UK NPMS events

On the 10 January there is an online workshop on watercolours; [Wild Watercolour Snowdrops](#).

On 18 January there will be a talk on the [Plant Atlas 2020](#) by our very own Kevin Walker. I'm guessing readers of Recorder eNews will probably know all about the Atlas, but this could be of interest to members of your recording networks?

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

Join a BSBI Committee

Joining a BSBI committee is a great way to help shape our plans and activities going forwards. We have vacancies on two committees. Join our Science & Data committee and help advance our scientific and data management work; or join our Events & Comms committee and help run events like the British & Irish Botanical Conference. For more details and how to apply see [Join a BSBI Committee](#)

[Julia Hanmer](#), Chief Executive

County Membership Lists

If, as a BSBI volunteer such as a County Recorder, you need access to members' contact details in your area, we can arrange this. We will need you to read and sign our Volunteer Confidentiality and Data Protection Agreement. For more information see the [membership list page](#).

[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