



Recorder eNewsletter

for the botanical recording community

September 2024

Recording App data & iRecord data in the DDb

The Country Support Team has had a few queries about where to find Recording App data in the DDb. There is a [guidance page](#) on the Documentation Site that shows you how to access this holding pen and includes suggestions on searches to best sort through the records.

Similarly, there is also a [guidance page for iRecord](#) (and other Indicia sources) which shows you how to access these workspaces and provides some suggested searches for finding the most interesting records.

[James Harding-Morris](#), (& the Country Support Team)

Ghost Orchid re-found after years of hunting!

Congratulations to BSBI member Richard Bate who recently re-found the elusive [Ghost Orchid](#) at a site in southern England. This is the first sighting since 2009, and Richard has been hunting the Ghost for three decades. The find has been verified by BSBI's Head of Science Kevin Walker, but the location is being kept secret. Read the [full story here](#) and across the media. A great reminder that it's always worth going out plant hunting and recording your finds - you never know what might turn up if you just keep looking!

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

Could you be an Identiplant Tutor?

[Identiplant](#) is a tutor supported online plant ID course for beginners in serious botany run by BSBI. Last year we had a record number of students apply and only had capacity to give places to 65% of the applicants. We are keen to recruit a good number of new tutors for 2025 to support keen beginner botanists.

If you are an experienced field botanist with good local knowledge and are interested in developing the botanical skills of relative beginners, please consider becoming an Identiplant Tutor. In return you will receive a fee for each student tutored, full directions on course delivery and mentorship from the experienced tutor team.

BSBI will be hosting an online information evening on 15 Oct 7pm. Please email identiplant@bsbi.org to find out more.

[Chantal Helm](#), BSBI Training Coordinator

Are you a botanist with excellent botanical skills?

BSBI is looking for experienced field botanists at or above Level 5 on the [botanical skills ladder](#) to help run [FISC](#) assessments in 2025 as FISC Assessors. We have been expanding FISC provision across England over the last two years, with 31 FISCs being run in 2024. We hope to expand further into all regions, but also into Scotland and Wales next year. We have partnered with the Field Studies Council, Natural England, universities, Wildlife Trusts and a number of consultancies to help deliver FISCs, but capacity is limited by the availability of FISC Assessors. Through providing an independent and rigorous assessment of the field skills of fellow botanists, FISC Assessors are highly valued and are paid well for their time.

We will be hosting a FISC Assessor recruitment event on 24 September 7pm online.

If you are interested in joining the FISC team to help deliver FISCs, [please sign up here](#) or email fisc@bsbi.org to find out more.

[Chantal Helm](#), BSBI Training Coordinator

British & Irish Botanical Conference

This year's big annual get-together, the British & Irish Botanical Conference, will take place on Saturday 23 November at the Natural History Museum, London. We're just firming up the programme to offer you a great selection of talks and opportunities to join a behind-the-scenes tour of the world-famous Sloane Herbarium. It's all free, although as always, we welcome donations.

The programme and the booking link will go live before the end of September so please keep an eye on the [Conference webpage](#). Please contact me if you would like to offer a poster or some other kind of exhibit about your botanical highlights of the year.

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

New Year Plant Hunt

Our fifteenth [New Year Plant Hunt](#) will run from Sunday 29 December 2024 to Wednesday 1 January 2025. Thousands of people took part last year and we expect even more participants this time. We are particularly keen to offer even more group hunts - they are a great way for beginners and seasoned recorders to go out plant-spotting together and share ID tips, so if you are planning a group hunt please let us know so we can help you publicise it. We can also help with organisation if you've never led a group hunt before. Please also spread the word to beginner botanists in your network and encourage them to [register](#) for the Hunt to receive helpful spotter sheets and guidance on how to get the most out of their Hunt.

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

Irish Autumn Meeting and AGM

Bookings will open soon for the 2024 Irish Autumn Meeting and AGM, which this year will be held in Northern Ireland, at Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, near Craigavon, Co Armagh, on Saturday 12 October.

As usual this promises to be a fantastic day: a great chance to meet with other botanists, with a brilliant line-up of speakers on the general theme of 'Lough Neagh and the Northeast of Ireland'. Thanks to a collaboration with CEDaR, who have generously provided some funding for this event, there will also be an exhibition space where you can find out about some of the other exciting projects going on in the area and chat to representatives of other organisations working across the region.

If you would be interested in displaying a poster or similar exhibit in this space, on any topic you think would be of interest, from any part of Ireland (for example, a botanical project you have been working on, or a subject you have a particular interest in) please [contact me](#).

As always, the event is free of charge, but don't forget to book online, as places will be limited.

[Bridget Keehan](#), BSBI Ireland Officer

Ireland: Reminder to make detailed records of invasives and rarities

Part of my remit as Ireland Officer is to facilitate and encourage recording of particular groups. This year, there is a special focus on detailed recording of the following.

Invasive species: With these becoming problematic in some areas, and ever-increasing opportunities for new species to colonise, it is useful to have detailed records of where such species are and how their status is changing over time. Please record occurrences of invasive species in detail, with a ten- or eight- figure grid reference and also provide some notes on the population size, spread, fruiting etc.

Of particular interest are [Invasive Alien Species of Union Concern](#), which are becoming problematic in a European context. Some of these are as yet unknown in Ireland; others are just starting to colonise, or may be long-established. To help you, they have been added as a category in the DDb, under the 'Checklist/linked attribute/Invasive species' tab.

If you come across a horticultural species not necessarily classed as invasive but looking as if it could become so, please visit [Plant Alert](#) and follow the links to record your plant.

Red List species and other rarities: If you have time, you might like to try and re-find some of the rarer species in Ireland that have not been seen for a while, and to record them as

high a resolution as possible (8- or 10-figure grid reference), ideally with notes on habitat, population, associated species etc. Older (pre-GPS!) records tend to have only a monad or 100m reference, and more detail would be really helpful in trying to reassess or monitor the populations of any such species in future.

It is possible to run a search on the DDb to help highlight such species - for example, you could run a search for Red List species that have previously been recorded in your county but have not been seen in the last ten years. Here is an [example search](#) that would find all such species in Ireland; you can substitute your county into the 'county/region' field to get localised results.

[Bridget Keehan](#), BSBI Ireland Officer

Field Meetings in Northern Ireland

On **6 September** there is a field meeting at Castle Cauldwell, Fermanagh which has delights on offer such as the endemic Irish Whitebeam *Sorbus hibernica*, the only known specimen in Ireland of the hybrid willow, *Salix x friesiana*, and the rare Mackay's Horsetail *Equisetum x trachyodon*. [Book here](#).

On **7 September** there is a field meeting at Correl Glen, Lough Navar Forest, Fermanagh. This is one of the best temperate rainforests in the North of Ireland where both Tunbridge and Wilson's Filmy-ferns, *Hymenophyllum tunbrigense* and *H. wilsonii* can be found, along with Hay-scented Buckler-fern, *Dryopteris aemula*, Shade Horsetail, *Equisetum pratense*, and One-sided Wintergreen *Orthilia secunda*. [Book here](#).

[Jen Farrar](#), BSBI Northern Ireland Botanical Skills Officer

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 on the password-protected [members' area](#) of the BSBI website.

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

Scottish Botanists' Conference 2024

The 2024 Scottish Botanists' Conference will be held at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh on Saturday 2 November - all are welcome, please save the date! Look out for more information and updates on booking [here](#). If you or your organisation are interested in displaying a poster or similar exhibit, please get in touch!

[Matt Harding](#), BSBI Scotland Officer

Training For Trainers - Saturday 5 October

Thinking about using your botanical skills to help inspire others? BSBI is holding a free 'Training For Trainers' workshop at Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh on Saturday 5 October, rearranged from the original advertised date of 23 March. This is a new one-day workshop for anyone helping to deliver botanical training to others. This could be running or assisting with a beginners' or specialist workshop, leading a field meeting at local or national level, giving a talk to non-botanists, acting as an Identiplant tutor, and so on. Please email [Faith Anstey](mailto:Faith.Anstey@bsbi.org) to find out more.

[Matt Harding](#), BSBI Scotland Officer

Flagging a DDb record for verification

One option available to County Recorders when handling records on the DDb is to flag them as 'Needs verification'. This option **highlights the record in yellow** and should be used to mark it as needing to be checked where there is some doubt about, or inconsistency in, the record that might be resolvable by future investigation. Such records do not appear on the online BSBI distribution maps but are returned by DDb queries. Ideally, this is a temporary classification, with records later being accepted (or corrected), marked as doubtful, or rejected if in error.

You can mark a record as 'Needs verification' by selecting the 'needs checking' option from the 'mark validation state as' drop-down menu at the base of the DDb search page. To search for all records in your vice-county that have been flagged as such, use [this search](#) and change the vice-county from Stirlingshire to your own.

[Matt Harding](#), BSBI Scotland Officer

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 Manager