



Recorder eNewsletter

for the botanical recording community

April 2025

Recruitment for a part-time Training Officer in Northern Ireland

Our DAERA-funded Botanical Skills Project is recruiting for a part-time (3 days a week) Training Officer to join the project and help deliver botanical training for a variety of skill levels to a range of audiences; VCRs and recorders, organisations in Northern Ireland, and the public. Please share the [job advert](#) with anyone who might be interested.

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

Identification Webinar Series on Difficult Plants

We're excited to announce a [new series of identification webinars](#) covering some of our more tricky plant groups. Join us for the opportunity to learn from national experts in three online Zoom sessions. These webinars are perfect for anyone looking to refine their botanical skills, from county recorders to those just beginning their plant identification journey.

The webinars are free, but if you'd like to make a donation towards the BSBI's work then the option to do so is available on the booking pages.

- Mulleins (*Verbascum*) of Britain and Ireland with Mike Crewe
 - Tue 22 Apr 2025 7:30 PM - 8:30 PM via Zoom - [Booking Link](#)
- Mints (*Mentha*) of Britain and Ireland with Ambroise Baker
 - Wed 7 May 2025 7:30 PM - 8:30 PM via Zoom - [Booking Link](#)
- Broomrapes (*Orobanche* & *Phelipanche*) of Britain and Ireland with Chris Thorogood
 - Tue 10 Jun 2025 7:30 PM - 8:30 PM via Zoom - [Booking Link](#)

Huge thanks are due to all three experts for agreeing to present. Please make the most of their time and come along. We're keen to organise more webinars, so if anyone would be interested in presenting a webinar on a group of plants or another subject then please contact me to discuss.

[Sam Thomas](#), BSBI England Officer

BSBI Irish Spring Conference

The always enjoyable [Irish Spring Conference](#) is on Saturday, 5 April 2025, at the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin. Learn how to make best use of the BSBI DDb and Recording App, hear from the authors of two gorgeous new books, see what lovely plants you missed at last year's Annual Summer Meeting in Guernsey, and find out about our exciting new recording project for the upcoming season, all in the excellent company of other botanists from across Ireland!

There will also be a 'Botanical Books Bring-and-Buy' stall, with proceeds going to BSBI, so if you have botany books you're no longer using, pencil in a price and bring them along (as well as some cash to buy something else instead!).

In addition, the author of the sumptuous new [Flora of County Monaghan](#) will be bringing some copies to sell (as well as sharing tips on writing your own Flora!), so if you haven't got yours yet, here is your chance (cash or Revolut please).

Hoping to see lots of you there!

[Bridget Keehan](#), BSBI Ireland Officer

This year: a new recording project for Ireland!

After the recording marathon that was [Atlas 2020](#), it's been nice to enjoy a more relaxed approach to recording, but if you're in Ireland and would like to get your teeth into something new, this year you can take part in our new 'Upland Recording Project', which seeks to re-find certain key species in sites where they have not been seen since 2000.

The project will be launched at the Spring Conference and details will be put up on the website in due course. In the meantime, if you'd like to sign up or find out more, please do get in touch.

[Bridget Keehan](#), BSBI Ireland Officer

iRecord training & verifier sign-up

A Zoom training session on iRecord verification will be taking place on **Thursday 17 Apr at 19:30**. [Tickets and further information are available here](#). The session will cover how to verify plant records on the iRecord website. It is aimed at county recorders (VCRs), current iRecord verifiers and those thinking of starting to verify data on iRecord.

If you're a VCR or part of a VCR team and don't already have iRecord verification permission for your county then please get in touch with your relevant Country Officer prior to the

event so that we can set you up with verification permission. If you are requesting verification permission, then please let your Country Officer know if you already have an iRecord account and, if so, the email address and username you use for that account. If you don't have an account, then please [sign up for one](#) and let us know the email and username that you used.

[Sam Thomas](#), BSBI England Officer

Insurance for BSBI activities

BSBI takes out public and employer's liability insurance which provides cover for BSBI and our activity leaders for claims that might arise from our recording activities and events. Here is a summary of the cover we have in place:

- Employer's Liability - UK £10M / Ireland €13M
- Public Liability - UK £10M / Ireland €6.5M
- Professional Indemnity - £0.5M

More information about what is and is not covered under these policies is [available \(members' area\)](#). Use of vehicles is not covered under BSBI's insurance policies. Check your car insurance policy covers you for driving for BSBI activities.

If you have questions about BSBI's Insurance cover or need evidence of cover for activities, please send me an email.

[Julia Hanmer](#), BSBI CEO

British & Irish Botany 7.1 published

The latest issue of our online Open Access scientific journal has been published, and contains six papers, two of which are likely to be of particular interest to botanical recorders: a consideration of [how limestone pavements have 'fallen through the cracks' in British conservation](#); and a paper on the [spread of *Crassula helmsii* in Ireland](#). Also in this issue: [new combinations in *Sorbus*](#); an [endemic Hawkweed](#); and two papers on historic botany: the [first \(C^{15th}\) British records of *Oxalis corniculata*](#), and the [life of pioneering C^{19th} botanist Charlotte Grace O'Brien](#) by her great-grandniece, a longstanding County Recorder.

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

Four upcoming events in Northern Ireland

Teesdalia nudicaulis and winter annuals recording, Portstewart, Co. Derry Sunday 30 March
Sunday 30th - We will be investigating the dunes of Portstewart Strand and along the banks of the River Bann.

[Sunday 30th - Book Now!](#)

NPMS plot set-up training events. Led by Ciaran Flynn - classroom based in the morning, field based in the afternoon:

Kilbroney Forest Park, Rostrevor - Sunday 30 March - 10.30am to 4.30pm - TBC

Email [Jen Farrar](#) to register

YMCA Belfast and Lagan Meadows - Thursday 24 April - 10.30am to 4.30pm

These training events will be specifically covering how to go about determining where to set-up your plots within your NPMS square, recording and how to submit your records, maps and photographs.

Email [Jen Farrar](#) to register

NPMS Habitat training event. Led by Ciaran Flynn – This event will be fully field based.

Roe Valley Country Park - Saturday 26 April - 10.30am to 4.30pm – TBC

An opportunity to gain habitat training, woodland plant ID skills and advice regarding setting up woodland and linear plots.

Email [Jen Farrar](#) to register

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

BSBI Event Guidance update

Each year we review our [guidance given to participants](#) at BSBI meetings and to the people who [lead and organise them](#). The 2025 review made a few updates to all the documents, which are on the [Field Meetings and Indoor Events page](#).

In the Guidance there is now a bullet point list as a quick look to organising a meeting. There are expanded sections on insurance and expenses. In general, all meetings should aim to break even, so you may need to have a registration fee if you have significant costs. If a meeting requires specific consideration of safeguarding a risk assessment is needed in advance and feedback afterwards. There are lots of other minor amendments, but as it is a big document I don't recommend reading it in one go – just dip in when you need to. If you find anything that isn't clear, or think that you need further information, do let me know.

Only minor updates have been made to [Safety in the field](#), which is more targeted at those who carry out fieldwork during their employment, but which contains useful hints and tips for anyone who is out and about recording plants.

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

Accessing data from the Recording App

To streamline access to records and surveys from the Recording App, a new [My App Records](#) search page has been added to the DDb, providing access to only one's own app data. The page is available to all users of the Recording App, even if they don't otherwise have access to the wider DDb.

With increasing use of the app, County Records may find it worthwhile checking periodically for new data for their county. We've added some guidance notes for VCRs, to help with [validating and transferring Recording App data](#).

[Tom Humphrey](#), BSBI Database Officer

County Recorder Resources page

Do you ever find yourself *knowing* that a document or resource exists, but can't remember exactly where on the BSBI website it is? You're not alone!

To try and help with this we have created a new [county recorder resources page](#). Here we have tried to aggregate and organise the key support materials and guidance vital to the VCR role, but we might have missed something. If you have an idea of a resource to add to this page, please let me know.

Hopefully, between this page and the [documentation website](#) you should be able to find everything that you need.

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

Welsh language publications

A number of BSBI publications are now available in Welsh, thanks to funding from the Nature Networks Programme, delivered by the Heritage Fund, on behalf of the Welsh Government. Thanks also to help from Sarah Woods and translator Haf Roberts.

- So You Want to Know Your Plants ([Felly rydych chi eisiau adnabod eich planhigion?](#))
- Botanical Skills Ladder ([Ystol sgiliau botanegol](#))
- BSBI Code of Conduct ([Cod Ymddygiad](#))

They can also be accessed from the [Welsh pages of the website](#).

[Alastair Hotchkiss](#), BSBI Wales Officer

County Membership Lists

If, as a VCR, 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

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