



2018 Scottish Vice-County Reports

Dumfriesshire (vc72) *Chris Miles*

Just over 5,700 records have been collected and submitted via MapMate in 2018. These fell in 97 monads (34 with more than 40 records), 70 tetrads and 26 hectads. Progress with Atlas coverage is pretty good. Only 5 hectads now have less than 70% of all taxa not refound since 2000 a fall from 11 last year. These will be a focus for the Dumfries Botany Group in 2019. Progress has been made with validation but there is a task to work through the remainder this winter/spring.

This year saw the setting up of a new Dumfries Botany Group. We met 9 times with up to 11 folk visiting a range of habitats and locations. Interesting species found on our meetings included *Imperatoria ostruthium* (Masterwort), *Lepidium didymum* (Lesser Swinecress) twice and *Bidens tripartita* (Trifid Bur-marigold) the first post 2000 record. I led a Plant Family workshop at the Barony College in June attended by 15 or so people. I attended the Wigtownshire BSBI recording week and helped digitise the records from this. Some significant finds, including *Hierochloa odorata* (Holy-grass) in the Black Esk valley were shown at the Annual General and Exhibition Meeting at Ormskirk.

Other highlights this year include a NCR for *Trichophorum caespitosum* s.s. (conf. J. Roberts), refinding *Hymenophyllum tunbrigense* (Tunbridge Filmy-fern) near Langholm after 56 years and *Erysimum cheiranthoides* (Treacle Mustard) near Lockerbie after 45 years.

Kirkcudbrightshire (vc73) *David Hawker*

Fewer monads were recorded this year, mainly in the VC's south & central parts. c.3500 records from many contributors were entered into MapMate, grateful thanks to all. Native taxa highlights were *Viola reichenbachiana* (Early Dog-violet, 3rd VC site), *Ophrys apifera* (Bee Orchid) and *Knautia arvensis* (Field Scabious) (both 2nd VC sites), 2 *Epilobium* hybrids (NCRs) with a third hybrid (2nd VC site), and *Lagarosiphon major* (Curly Waterweed, 2nd VC site, only previous record 1978); new sites/hectads for VC scarcities *Osmunda regalis* (Royal Fern), *Chaenorhinum minus* (Small Toad-flax), *Radiola linoides* (Allseed), *Centunculus minimus* (Chaffweed), *Scutellaria minor* (Lesser Skullcap), *Sanguisorba officinalis* (Great Burnet) and a large population of *Botrychium lunaria* (Moonwort) on a disused railbed. Non-native NCRs included *Petasites japonicus* (Giant Butterbur), *Acaena ovalifolia* (Two-spined Acaena) and *Ceratophyllum demersum* (Rigid Hornwort).

A successful joint VC72/73 Plant families workshop in May attracted 15 people, while 15 RSPB staff/volunteers attended a coastal species training day. The KBG held 11 field meetings between March-October, one to monitor the only two *Thelypteris palustris* (Marsh Fern) colonies in Scotland, submitting details to SNH to support their SCM. A rush training day attracted 11 local people. We surveyed a species-rich community buy-out site, and populations of several CRP species were monitored during the year including *Meum athamanticum* (Spignel) and *Pyrola minor* (Common Wintergreen). I gave two talks to local groups 2019 plans are to blitz the upland areas and survey the rarely visited westernmost sites. Complete coverage of the VC is unlikely.

Wigtownshire (vc74) *Jim McIntosh*

The Recording Week in June based at Lagafater Lodge near Stranraer, collected over 6,600 records in 54 monads in 40 tetrads in 21 hectads. These included 312 new hectad records, and 23 New County Records of mostly alien shrubs and trees but including a few natives such as *Avenula pratensis* (Meadow Oat-grass) at Culhorn Loch and *Carex elata x nigra = C. x turfosa* at Elrig Loch which is only the second record of this hybrid in Scotland. There were some particularly nice finds of *Corallorhiza trifida* (Coralroot Orchid), *Orobanche hederæ* (Ivy Broomrape) and *Utricularia stygia* (Nordic Bladderwort) - the latter unusually in flower. Thanks to all the Recording Week participants and to Marion Moir & Chris Miles for digitising the records. Record cards were also digitised for various sorties into Wigtownshire by neighbouring recorders Nick Stewart and David Hawker, resulting in a further 2,000 records (various years). There was a great contribution of rare records from the Mull of Galloway from Trevor Lording including an NCR of *Catapodium rigidum* (Fern-grass). While all this has gone a long way to plug gaps in Wigtownshire's coverage, there is still much to be done in the final Atlas 2020 field season. We would warmly welcome records from visiting botanists.

Ayrshire (vc75) Dave Lang

2018 saw the Ayrshire recording group continue its recording trips – informed more than ever before by the fantastic level of Atlas 2020 coverage analysis available through the BSBI Database. Though we had no BSBI-wide field meetings this year, we were helped from some novel sources, such as one member concentrating recording in the area around their home. This yielded numerous post-2000 firsts and confirmed *Vulpia myuros* (Rat's-tail Fescue) as a new addition to the County flora. We were also fortunate that the base for the Wigtownshire Recording Week was on the Ayrshire border – allowing for some additional recording in parts of our County that are furthest from where many of us live. This too yielded numerous records of notable taxa and added another first - *Apium nodiflorum* (Fool's Water-cress). A trip to Ailsa Craig was also organised where, though the hot summer scorching had led to a lower species count than we might have hoped for, we refound *Malva arborea* (Tree Mallow) in one of its two Ayrshire stations. Outwith the season we continued validating data on the DDb and will probably have largely completed this task by the time fieldwork begins again in earnest for 2019. A priority for the coming year will be to try to re-find all of Ayrshire's notable aquatic records from the 1996 Scottish Lochs Survey in order to avoid any appearance of a sharp decline in aquatic species across the County when the Atlas 2020 analysis is undertaken.

Renfrewshire (vc76) Keith Watson

The key achievement this year been the successful transfer of the BioBase database records to the BSBI DDb. This now holds a full set of the records used to generate the maps for the Flora of Renfrewshire, published in 2013. Additionally, some more recent records for VC76 (and a few other VCs) have also been transferred to the DDb. Actual fieldwork in Renfrewshire has been unfortunately limited but it is estimated that about 45000 post 2000 records are now in the database. Priority maps will be generated which will hopefully provide an incentive to target squares in the coming 2019 field season. Any local recorders who want to get out and enjoy the delights of Renfrewshire, please get in touch!

Lanarkshire (vc77) Michael Philip

There are now 53 people in our network, many of whom have been active in fieldwork, photography or sending in records. We held 33 field outings in 2018, recording 949 species in 515 monads. 11,668 records were added to the database, including 352 new hectad records and 52 new vice-county records. The latter, somewhat surprising, statistic does include many escaped plants in the back lanes of Glasgow and a number of less common variants, e.g. the 'white forms' of *Geranium robertianum* (Herb Robert), *Epilobium hirsutum* (Great Willowherb), *Lunaria annua* (Honesty), *Chamerion*

angustifolium (Rosebay) and *Campanula trachelium* and 'flore pleno' forms of *Saponaria officinalis* (Soapwort) and *Tanacetum parthenium* (Feverfew). However, there was particular excitement about finding only the 4th Scottish location of *Plantago afra* (Glandular Plantain). This was on a quayside near the Glasgow Science Centre and is the first record of the species in the west of Scotland. Another nice NCR was *Dactylorhiza purpurella* var. *cambrensis*, recorded in a muddy pond margin during very low water levels at Lochend Loch. And we are pleased to report that Scotland's only recorded colony of *Hordelymus europaeus* (Wood Barley) has slightly grown in extent since previously visited in 1999. There is a good prospect of our entire vice-county meeting the notional data targets for Atlas 2020 (i.e. every hectad with 5 'good' tetrads and 75% of our all-time species list found or re-found this century). All that's needed is a determined and well-focused team effort right through 2019. All help is very welcome!

Peeblesshire (vc78) Luke Gaskell

It has been another productive year with 4235 new records at monad or better resolution and 30 monads surveyed. These records are now in the DDb. Most of Peeblesshire is reasonably well covered with about 45,000 post 2000 records and 11,000 in previous date classes. This year I have been concentrating on the more remote uplands in the south of the county.

Some plants have been flourishing. *Saussurea alpina* (Alpine Saw-wort) was re-found at the three sites visited though it's disappointing that some new "natives" *Betula nana* (dwarf birch) and *Salix lapponum* (Downy Willow) had been planted on one of these craigs. *Hypericum humifusum* (Trailing St John's-wort) has now been recorded at six sites, up from one pre 2000 record. 2017's wet summer may have contributed to its spread. *Armeria maritima* (Thrift), a new halophyte for Peeblesshire was growing on a wet verge on the A72 together with abundant *Triglochin palustris* (Marsh Arrowgrass) [sadly not *T. maritima*]. Nearby *Allium carinatum* (Keeled Garlic) was spreading along a dry bank. This is a second vc record and while this alien garlic is not uncommon in the warmer districts to the east and west its only previous station was at Peebles. Another attractive new garden escape was *Symphytum grandiflorum* (Creeping Comfrey) which as its name suggests was covering quite a bit of ground in mature broad-leaved woodland.

This season I hope to further explore the uplands and validate some old records, for example *Carex vaginata* (Sheathed Sedge) for which I have no records in this date class. All help would be appreciated.

Selkirk and Roxburgh (vcc79/80) Rod Corner and Jeff Waddell

Rod is making progress with his Flora. He attends meetings of TWIC for the botanical assessments of Wildlife Sites and checks the validity of the records they hold. He was able to help with Pete Stroh's verification queries of rare and threatened plants. The arrival of BSBI Conifer referee Matt Parratt to the area has given a welcome boost to the recording of non-native trees and shrubs with several species of interest found on trips to Cavers House and Floors Castle, both in Roxburghshire, e.g. *Juglans regia* (Walnut) and *Tropaeolum speciosum* (Flame Nasturtium) at Cavers. A very productive Selkirkshire conifer recording trip to Bowhill in December led by Matt with Jeff and Sarah Sanders recorded 30 species of conifer including several new county and country records, e.g. *Wollemia nobilis* (Wollemi Pine), many not in the MapMate taxon dictionary!

1,150 records were collected from Selkirkshire in 2018 with contributions from Jeff, Sarah Eno, Luke Gaskell, Rod Corner & Faith Anstey. The botany group, comprising Jeff, Matt, Roger Holme and Stuart MacPherson visited the Eldinhope Burn, finding a new colony of *Rubus saxatilis* (Stone Bramble) and updating *Mycelis muralis* (Wall Lettuce), with three sites in the county and last recorded here in 1976. Other significant records included new sites for *Antennaria dioica* (Catsfoot) and *Eriophorum latifolium*

(Broad-leaved Cotton-grass) from the Scabcleuch Burn by Jeff; *Listera ovata* (Twayblade) & *Sanguisorba officinalis* (Great Burnet) from Dunhog Moss by Sarah Eno; *Ononis repens* (Rest-harrow) from Murray's Cauld by Rod; *Echium vulgare* (Viper's Bugloss), *Onopordum acanthium* (Cotton Thistle) and *Isatis tinctoria* (Woad) from Philiphaugh by Luke and *Hymenophyllum wilsonii* (Wilson's Filmyfern) from Kirkhope Linns also by Luke. The last species hasn't been recorded from Selkirkshire for 20 years.

Approximately 6,000 records were collected from Roxburghshire this year, 2,175 of these were made during the three-day field meeting based at Kelso in July. Jeff hosted trips with his local botany group, covering about 15 tetrads during the year. Tetrads with no or few records and promising habitat are targeted, and this turns up lots of new all-time and post-2000 hectad records. For example: *Dactylorhiza incarnata* (Early Marsh-orchid) at Threepwood; *Cicuta virosa* (Cowbane) at Hog Ground Loch Oxnam; *Equisetum hyemale* (Dutch Rush) at Wauchope Forest; *Trollius europaeus* (Globeflower) at Southdean and *Datura stramonium* (Thorn-apple) at Lempitlaw. Jeff also refound a lost colony of *Gagea lutea* (Yellow Star-of-Bethlehem) on Kelso Anna, last seen there in 1996. A late season trip to Essenside Loch by Jeff and Matt literally got a good haul of aquatic plants with *Chara aspera*, *Potamogeton lucens* (Shining Pondweed) and *P. praelongus* (Long-stalked Pondweed). Two new populations of *Scabiosa columbaria* (Small Scabious) were found at Cavers Knowe by Jeff, Matt and Laura Copley. Luke also made a significant contribution of 550 records including the infrequent hybrid *Carex x involuta* at Muirhouselaw Tile Works and *Lactuca virosa* (Great Lettuce) at Charlesfield. Luke also got a good range of arable weeds and introductions at Leaderfoot in *Fumaria bastardi* (tall Ramping Fumitory), *Setaria viridis* (Green Bristle-grass) and *Silene noctiflora* (Night-flowering Catchfly). Rod refound *Calamagrostis canescens* (Purple Small-reed) at Linton Loch and recorded *Berberis buxifolia* (Box-leaved Barberry), established at Wolfelee. Michael Braithwaite made the NCR of *Ligularia dentata* (Leopardplant) in Jedburgh.

Jeff has begun planning for a 2019 BSBI Atlas recording meeting, based in Hawick and is likely to undertake an increased amount of recording next year as he is due a four-week RSPB sabbatical in 2019, which will likely be botanical recording based. If anyone would like to borrow Jeff for a week or four to do botanical recording in your county get in touch!

East Lothian (vc82) Helen Jackson

Tremendous thanks to Jim McIntosh and Marion Moir for organising, respectively a three-day recording meeting based in Haddington in June and follow-up recording, also for digitising and MapMating the resulting records and many more. At least 33 tetrads were visited and 18,000 records added to the DDb from these and other sources. Many thanks to everyone who came to record or contributed records in other ways. I was pleased to meet some of you in Haddington and at the Scottish Botanists' Conference and at the BSBI Christmas lunch. NCRs include *Chenopodium murale* (Nettle-leaved Goosefoot), *Spirodela polyrhiza* (Greater Duckweed) and the first confirmed record of *Crepis vesicaria* (Beaked Hawk's-beard) from the meeting; *Malus sylvestris x pumila* (Crab Apple x Apple) and *Rubus tricolor* (Chinese Bramble) from earlier data. Meanwhile I am continuing to sort out and feed in the backlog of paper records and generally trying to catch up with what still needs to be done.

Midlothian (vc83) Barbara Sumner.

8204 records were added to MapMate, gathered from 189 monads in 15 hectads. Grateful thanks to the 29 individual recorders (6 of whom recorded monads) and 4 groups, and to the determiners. Remaining gaps in monad-recording are mostly in the uplands. Rarities remain to be re-found. Difficult species require attention. Volunteer help will be much appreciated. Validation is proceeding slowly.

A highlight of 2018 was a New Record for Scotland. *Lotus dorycnium*, formerly *Dorycnium pentaphyllum* was recorded by Richard Milne on 17th July in waste ground near the River Almond at Newbridge, and determined by David Pearman (see photo in the 2019 Scottish Newsletter). Nine other NCRs were found elsewhere. A rarity not seen in VC 83 since pre-1934, *Lithospermum officinale* (Common Gromwell), was found near Loanhead Farm east of Pathhead by Marion Moir. Another rarity, *Plantago media* (Hoary Plantain) was re-found at Carrington, its long-known churchyard site (1987 and earlier). The other long-known site, around the lime kiln near Newtongrange, is now a private zoo. No *P. media* plants were found there in 2018, but two new sites were found near Ratho by David Merrick.

I helped at Faith Anstey's grass ID class at the Holyrood Park Education Centre (BSS event), and led a plant ID walk for students in Roslin Glen Country Park (RSPB event). I also joint-led a recording walk at North Berwick with John Grace (BSS Urban Flora project). Representing the BSBI I attended steering group meetings for Local Biodiversity Sites, and for the Edinburgh LBAP. Conferences attended were BSBI and TWIC events.

West Lothian (vc84) Jay McKinnon

I was appointed VCR for West Lothian in October 2017 following the retirement of Jackie Muscott. Thanks to local recorders and largely to Jackie and her excellent work over many years, West Lothian is already rather well recorded. Nevertheless, there are a few gaps which I plan to fill in 2019, targeting seven tetrads and 21 monads in six of the nine hectads which the VC overlaps. Notable recent finds include *Barbarea verna* (American wintercress), *Rorippa amphibia* (Great Yellow-cress), *Trifolium aureum* (Large Trefoil) and *Campanula lactiflora* (Milky Bellflower) (all 1st VC records), found on Pumpherstons Bing by David Merrick in 2015-17 but only newly added to the DDb. David also recorded *Potentilla indica* (Yellow-flowered Strawberry, new to the VC) at Kirkliston.

Together with Hannah Humphreys, a student at Edinburgh Napier University, I have started a local botany group, The Foliage Fraternity. The group is aimed particularly at beginners and improvers, especially those who are new to recording and may never have been on a BSBI excursion before. We would also warmly welcome any experienced botanists who are happy to help beginners and don't mind a slow pace with lots of keying things out. So far, the group has 29 members and have met twice. Contact us by email to thefoliagefraternity@outlook.com. I also contribute to The Wildlife Information Centre recording excursions, Local Biodiversity Steering Groups for VC84 and neighbouring counties and to the Botanical Society of Scotland committee.

Fife (vc85) Sandy Edwards

About 12 tetrads and 50 or so monads were recorded in 2018. This was about 2,700 records but a lot more were uploaded to the DDb from other people or older records, about 4,500. Still a few gaps in West Fife, but a 4 days BSBI field meeting is planned for June 5th - 9th based near Dunfermline in 2019. Also, this year's recording, with the help of a few other people, will concentrate on the tetrads with few records. The records are always entered soon after recording and then validated about a week later on the DDb. Most of the post 2000 entries have been validated except for the hectad in the NE of Fife. The photos of rare plants are updated on [Fife Flickr](#). There were a few outings with various groups, the two biggest were Cullaloe and Morton Lochs at Tentsmuir. Other outings included two in winter with a group who wanted to practise using the Vegetative Key. Emails and newsletters are sent to a group of about 15 people who are interested in outings in vc85, recording and learning; I am sent either individual records of interest or the occasional voucher specimen from a few people and also questions on [Fife Facebook](#).

The most interesting new records this year were *Bidens cernua* (Bur-marigold) at Morton Lochs, *Conyza canadensis* (Canadian Fleabane) at the Park & Ride at Inverkeithing and *Galinsoga quadriradiata* (Shaggy-soldier) from an allotment at Inverkeithing (see [abstracts](#)). A second record of *Cryptogramma crispa* (Parsley Fern) was found in the Lomonds by the Dundee Naturalists. Also new sites for *Apium inundatum* (Lesser Marshwort) and *Juncus balticus* (Baltic Rush) were recorded.

Stirlingshire (vc86) Philip Sansum

6500 records of about 600 species have been made and digitised for 2018 and a small amount of survey work remains to be processed at the time of writing. 15 of the county's 10km squares received some recording effort and the number of tetrads with acceptable levels of recording for the Atlas 2020 project rose by a further 13. This was good progress but slightly shy of our target and leaves a considerable challenge for the final season. Plans are underway to mobilise a local recording group to help address this in 2019.

A rainy recording weekend based at Drymen in the west of the county in August 2018 was attended by 12 people and produced several interesting records including the first of *Tofieldia pusilla* (Scottish Asphodel) known to us since 1877 and a number of upland sedges with restricted distributions in the county. Elsewhere an extensive survey of the Castle Mound in Stirling was organised by Roy Sexton in partnership with the SWT and BSS, and local BSBI members Jill Williams and Rick Goater undertook useful monad-based surveys in the east of the county. Natalie Harmsworth kindly contributed records from TWIC summer excursions to Kippen Common and Killlearn Glen.

Matt Harding was appointed joint VCR and is continuing to generate much-needed records for Atlas 2020. He has begun work drafting an RPR for vc86 and we hope to progress this project rapidly once recording for Atlas 2020 has come to an end.

West Perth (vc87) Jane Jones and Liz Lavery

In 2018 we and others have collected over 8,000 records for VC87. Parts of the VC still needing attention are the extreme west and east of the VC, parts of the Ochils and the mountainous area surrounding Balquhadder Glen. We held two meets with PSNS, one at Doune Ponds and the second at Braco. In May Liz and Brian Ballinger led an 'Urban Flora' meet to Menstrie village. Liz helped SNH with the Chris Packham Bioblitz at Flanders Moss in July. Also, in July there was a BSS Alpine Meeting to Stob A' Choin, Balquhadder, two groups tackled different areas of the cliffs and found a good selection of rare plants typical of such habitats. A joint outing was also held with the Woodland Trust in August when we explored some cliffs in a remote part of the Trust's estate which without transport would have been difficult to do in a day. A small party went on an expedition to hunt for *Saxifraga hirculus* (Marsh Saxifrage) to Maddy Moss walking in from Glen Sherrup. Several interesting flushes were discovered with *Ranunculus hederaceus* (Ivy-leaved Crowfoot) and *Sedum villosum* (Hairy Stonecrop). But we found no sign of Marsh Saxifrage, last recorded from here in the 1850s. Some work has been done on a checklist for Perthshire. Interesting finds in 2018 included: *Phalaris aquatica* (Bulbous Canary-grass), *Potamogeton crispus* (Curled Pondweed), *Nitella flexilis* s. l. (Smooth Stonewort), *Hymenophyllum wilsonii* (Wilson's Filmy Fern), *Persicaria runcinata* and *Ranunculus lingua* (Greater Spearwort). Finally, for *Carex x subgracilis* (*C. acuta x acutiformis*) see [abstracts](#).

Mid-Perth (vc88) Alistair Godfrey and Jim McIntosh

Just short of 9,000 records were made in VC88 in 2018 including 118 new hectad records and four new county records. Only seven out of a total of 55 hectads now have fewer than the target number

of five tetrads per full hectad surveyed. A highlight for the recorders was a week spent in a remote self-catering cottage in upper Glen Lyon, with Tim Rich and John Holland and Dan Watson joining us on excursions. Over the week we collected a total of 2,700 records from 21 tetrads in 5 hectads - many of which had been very poorly recorded previously. We explored high corries and some summit ridges on Stuchd an Lochain, Meall Ghaordaidh, Meall Buidhe & Beinn Heasgarnich and obtained many quality records from these areas. Most notable finds were 11 populations of *Bartsia alpina* (Bartsia) and 4 populations each of *Hammarbya paludosa* (Bog Orchid), *Juncus alpinoarticulatus* (Alpine Rush) and *Dryas octopetala* (Mountain Avens). The hydro-electric dam Lochan an Damh provided many surprises including *Leontodon saxatilis* (Lesser Hawkbit) & *Potentilla anglica* (Trailing Tormentil). See the full report in the Scottish Newsletter. Neale Taylor also made a very valuable contribution of records, many of which were new hectad records of arctic-alpines. We have begun an exercise to revisit populations of Agrimony that have been variously identified in the past, to collect specimens and get them refereed. But one of the main targets in 2019 will be the under-recorded hectads around Loch Rannoch. It would also be great to focus on aquatics which are generally under-recorded. We would warmly welcome help from any local or visiting botanists.

East Perth (vc89) Martin Robinson

4,932 records were made in 2018, well up on 2017. The records were made in 64 monads within 35 tetrads. The low water levels in the summer were a great boon, making it much easier to reach some excellent limestone crags in upper Glen Tilt. In this area, over several days, new sites were added for *Alchemilla glomerulans* (Clustered Lady's-mantle) and *A. wichurae* (Rock Lady's-mantle), *Carex rupestris* (Rock Sedge) and *C. vaginata* (Sheathed Sedge), *Coeloglossum viride* (Frog Orchid), *Dryas octopetala* (Mountain Avens), *Equisetum pratense* (Shady Horsetail) and *Juncus alpinoarticulatus* (Alpine Rush). Another highlight was following up an unrecorded burn on Dalnamein in the forest of Atholl and finding two extensive colonies of *Drosera anglica* (Great Sundew), which is rare as far east as this. At the top of the burn was *Carex limosa* (Bog-sedge), also quite rare in the vc. A new colony of 30 spikes of *Pseudorchis albida* (Small-white Orchid) was found within 1.25 km of my house by the estate owner, who had attended my orchid course at Kindrogan. No new native species were added to the VC list in 2018, though confirmation of a new VC record from 2017 was made: *Fumaria reuteri* (Martin's Ramping-fumitory) in Strathmore. The next edition of the Rare Plant Register should appear later in winter 2018/19, including 31 new records from 2018 and a large number updated.

Angus (vc90) Robin Payne, Theo Loizou and Mark Tulley

Despite the fine weather, all three Angus Recorders were occupied with other activities and only a modest amount of recording was accomplished. Some new partners were pressed into helping with recording and several 'blank' tetrads were filled including areas of grouse moor which, unsurprisingly, proved to have very few species of vascular plants away from wetlands and watercourses. One highlight of the coverage of grouse moors was the discovery of several new populations of *Betula nana* (dwarf birch) in areas of blanket bog. Ash dieback appears to be on the increase in Angus. More recording is planned for the coming year. Little validation of DDb records has been undertaken. Reports by other botanists were gratefully received and entered. In addition, we were delighted to receive a bundle of record cards from late 2000's and these have now swelled the numbers on the DDb.

Kincardine/North Aberdeenshire (vcc91/3) David Welch & David Elston

It has been a welcome development for an elderly recorder (DW) to be joined by a younger fitter one (DE), so the heavy workload can be shared, some hard-to-reach places can be visited, and the accumulated knowledge on rich sites can be securely passed on. Tetrad recording was again a high

priority this year, but we also directed attention to hectads in which a sizeable proportion of the species observed before 2000 had not since been recorded. At least 70% of the tetrads in most hectads in our vcc now have some post-2009 records, and 180 tetrads have 100+ recent records, the average for these tetrads being c. 150 species. Much validation was done. Hectads very lacking in recent records were mostly in the central Buchan lowlands of vc 93, but one part-hectad in vc 91 had no recent records and contained Mount Battock, the highest peak in vc 91. So, DE made the long trek to its summit at 778m and was rewarded by finding *Cornus suecica* (Dwarf Cornel), an NCR. Elsewhere, DE found for vc91 a second colony of *Astragalus glycyphyllos* (Wild Liquorice) in a rather inaccessible bay north of Tod Head, a second colony of *Melica uniflora* (Wood Melick) in a gorge near Clattering Brig, and *Ceratophyllum demersum* (Rigid Hornwort) in Loirston Loch, an NCR. DW made two NCRs in vc 91, *Trifolium incarnatum* (Crimson Clover) in farmland and *Allium sphaerocephalon* (Round-headed Leek) in a farm storage area, and added a second record for vc 93 of *Gaultheria shallon* (Shallon) from woodland north of Cuminestown.

Monitoring *Saxifraga hirculus* (Marsh Saxifrage) flowering at a Cabrach site was a major task that DE took over this year. The count was similar to the two previous ones by DW and somewhat greater than when the system of marker pegs was set up 20 years ago. Another pleasing handing-on was DE's recording of *Salix herbacea* (Dwarf Willow) on Oxen Craig, a colony first found by DW in 1982 and its furthest east in Scotland. The usual one-day SWT field meeting returned to Maryculter in 2018, and checked that the long-known colony of *Paris quadrifolia* (Herb Paris) was still flourishing despite the construction very close-by of the Aberdeen by-pass. We also visited the grounds around the former RC seminary at Blairs, checking on hedgerow plantings that included *Euonymus europaeus* (Spindle) and a tall exotic juniper, possibly *Juniperus rigida* (Temple Juniper). Refereeing duties for DW on *Myosotis* (Forget-me-nots) were rather less than normal this year, but instead he gave long distance help on *Rubus fruticosus* (Brambles) to the group that Angus Hannah has set up.

South Aberdeenshire (vc92) Ian Francis

A small number of botanists continued to visit mainly blank and under-recorded areas during 2018, and some 3,500 records were captured and uploaded to the DDb. Several rare and notable species were found, with a number of new hectad records. Overall atlas coverage for VC92 is quite comprehensive, though the number of records for some taxonomic groups remains low, and some strategic gaps persist in the west, in the heart of the highest mountains of the Cairngorms National Park. These will be tackled in 2019.

Banffshire (vc94) Andy Amphlett

I collected 8284 records in 2018, but as in recent years, most (95%) were from outwith vc94 (mainly vc96). However, six NCRs were made (five by Ian Green), including two aliens new to Scotland: *Cynoglossum amabile* (Chinese Hound's-tongue) and *Gypsophila elegans* (Annual Baby's-breath). *Frankenia laevis* (Sea-heath) was found as a naturalised garden escape on the coast. A new location for *Agrimonia procera* (Fragrant Agrimony), found by David Elston, was one of the best of the other finds. Digitisation and validation of records is complete for post 1999 records, and only a handful of pre-2000 records are still to be checked. I plan to carry out some gap-filling in 2019. A paper (re. *Solidago sempervirens* (Salt-marsh Goldenrod)) and a short note (re. stem stomata in *Juncus balticus* (Baltic Rush)) were published in BSBI News. A paper on inland records of *J. balticus* was submitted. VC tetrad coverage maps for GB & Ireland were updated several times, a presentation on record validation was given at one of the Scottish VCR workshops, and an ID guide to subspecies of *Puccinellia distans* (Reflexed Saltmarsh-grass) was produced (available via the BSBI website). I assisted VCRs for vc92 and vc108 in getting their records to the DDb. I have given notice that I wish to stand down as VCR for vc94. While the vc is fairly well recorded for Atlas 2020, more could be done. As a medium

sized vc, with all records entered and almost all validated, it would be an enjoyable and varied vc for someone to take on.

Moray (vc95) Ian Green

2018 was another good year in vc95 with 22,621 records made. I had hoped to get all tetrads visited but didn't manage this, hopefully will do this in 2019. Most records were made at monad level or better, but a few were made at tetrad level. Working on a flora of vc95, this seemed to make recorders more willing to go out and do recording, which was very pleasing. I only managed to organise two local botany walks in 2018 in vc95.

West Inverness (vc97) Ian Strachan

2018 was a remarkable year for Westernness with 23,800 records made, by far the highest total ever. About one third of these were collected during the very successful BSBI recording week at Kingie Lodge in July (see 2019 Yearbook), another third by the VCRs and the remainder by various other recorders, to whom we are very grateful. These records have filled some important gaps for Atlas 2020, notably in the north of the VC from Knoydart to Glen Garry, as well as places such as Glen Righ, Blarmafoldach, Ben Alder, Ardnamurchan, Ardgour and the Great Glen. Particular effort has been directed towards recording aquatics, but more remains to be done.

Amongst many notable achievements were 2,900 records made by Marion Moir from 30 monads along the north side of Loch Leven, and 2,000 records by IS from a neglected hectad, NG70 in western Knoydart, during a week based at Airor. A bramble workshop held in Ballachulish by Angus Hannah also produced useful records for VC97. In June IS ran a wildflower meadows day with the Lochaber Biodiversity Group, including a visit to the stunning orchid-rich grasslands in Glen Roy. Highlights of the year's activities and finds were exhibited at the SBC in November (see SBC [abstracts](#)). A draft checklist for Westernness has been almost completed, including national and VC status for each species. About half the 2018 records are now in the DDb (mostly validated) with the rest to be done before the 2019 field season.

Dunbartonshire (vc99) Pamela Murdoch

The year began with a record sent in to me for *Saxifraga tridactylites* (Rue-leaved Saxifrage) a new vc record. Further patches were found in an adjoining square. There were records for *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* (Bearberry) and *Lysimachia ciliata* (Fringed Loosestrife) both only the 2nd vc record and *Mimulus moschatus* (Musk) and *Hammarbya paludosa* (Bog Orchid) were found, both with very few post-2000 records. Priority was given to recording for Atlas 2020. As vc 99 is one of the smallest vc areas my brief is to record a minimum of two monads per tetrad. Last year 10 new tetrads were tackled, leaving only four tetrads in the southern half of the vc with no records at all. It should be possible to deal with these this coming season. 42 additional new monads were recorded to give better coverage overall and to ensure records for two or three monads per tetrad in the botanically richer areas which happen to be in the wider Glasgow conurbation. Progress in the more mountainous northern half of the vc is slower but further efforts this year should make a noticeable difference. Any help would be appreciated. Thanks to all who sent in records, including, for the far NE of the vc, the best set of alpine records for the vc, ever, and much needed records for the some of the Luss Hills. Alison Rutherford contributed about 1000 detailed records for urban areas along the railway from Helensburgh to Glasgow and there were records from a Bioblitz overlap with vc77 in Glasgow. Outings with Glasgow NHS and Glasgow Botany Group were productive and enjoyable.

Clyde Isles (vc100) Angus Hannah

2018 being the last fieldwork season for my Bute Flora I concentrated on filling gaps. In May I looked for *Erythrosperma* dandelions, finding three species at six sites. In June Claudia Ferguson-Smyth and Sally Pollock visited Bute for a week to record aquatics. We refound all but one of the 13 previously recorded pondweeds as well as other interesting water-plants such as *Elatine hexandra* (Six-stamened Waterwort). Later I turned my attention to oaks. Following and then modifying methods described in literature, I recorded 150 trees from 50 sites on Bute, finding 30% robur, 20% petraea and 50% intermediates (see the 2019 Scottish Newsletter). This led to a workshop at the Scottish Botanical Conference. I ran a recording week in June at Carrick Castle in vc98 with a dozen botanists, and eight more attending for a day at least. We made about 5000 records for a much-neglected corner of Argyll. In August, I led a bramble weekend at Glencoe with Marion Moir, making records for vcc98 and 97. I spent occasional days in vc75 (including a visit to Ailsa Craig) and vc77, and taught three courses at Millport. Bute Flora work occupied the remaining time. Significant finds included *Erophila majuscula* (Hairy Whitlowgrass), a new vc record, *Viola canina* (Heath Violet) and *Carex muricata* ssp. *pairae* (Prickly Sedge), both first Bute records for over 40 years. Since October I have been fully occupied preparing the Flora text for the printer. Publication is expected shortly.

Kintyre (vc101) David and Pat Batty

Continued progress was made on hectad coverage and several hectads need little further work with only one requiring more extensive survey. For the rest certain areas, habitats and species will be targeted in 2019 to fill in gaps. We have inputted all the 2018 records and have started to validate some rare and anomalous records in the database. We gratefully received help from Inverness Botany Group on their visit to Knapdale and continued help from the Kintyre Botany Group. We finally obtained details of the record of *Hierochloa odorata* (Holy-grass) from Sanda in 2012, an NCR. Another NCR was the hybrid sedge *Carex x sooi* (*C. acutiformis* x *C. riparia*) from the banks of the Crinan Canal, identified by Mike Porter. Other notables were *Galium album* (Hedge Bedstraw) not seen since 1970 and *Cirsium heterophyllum* (Melancoly Thistle) not seen since 1996. Several alien species were NCRs this year, e.g. *Scrophularia auriculata* (Water Figwort) growing extensively on the Breakerie Water in Kintyre and *Malus pumila* (Apple) as a single tree at Carsaig.

South Ebudes (vc102) Malcolm Ogilvie

Visiting botanists again contributed good numbers of records for all three main islands and some of the smaller ones. Simon Smart visited Scarba off the northern tip of Jura, and Garbh Eileach and Rubha Fiola. rarely-visited small islands at the entrance to the Firth of Lorn. *Neottia cordata* (Lesser Twayblade) was recorded new for Scarba, while on Rubha Fiola the infrequent sedge *Carex canescens* (White Sedge) was found. A visit to Jura in September with Oli Pescott focused on montane species associated with the Paps of Jura. Large populations of *Carex bigelowii* (Stiff Sedge), *Alchemilla alpina* (Alpine Lady's-mantle) and *Saxifraga stellaris* (Starry Saxifrage) were all confirmed as still extant. Oli also did more work on Islay, and Jeff Waddell contributed records from some of Islay's less well-covered tetrads. For the fifth year running, five botanists visited Colonsay, finding 489 taxa and collecting 2,300 records. Highlights included a new location for *Hammarbya paludosa* (Bog Orchid), and new locations for *Drosera anglica* (Great Sundew), including one for its hybrid with *rotundifolia*, the first record since 1930. Perhaps the best find of the five years was a population of *Cirsium dissectum* (Meadow Thistle), the most northerly record for the species globally. We were also told about a patch (1 x 1m) of *Crithmum maritimum* (Rock Samphire), found by Sophie Furze growing on coastal rocks. This very uncommon species for the island had not been seen here for at least 50 years. My orchid monitoring on Islay revealed better results than in 2017 for both Butterfly Orchids, and *Cephalanthera longifolia* (Narrow-leaved Helleborine) reappeared after being absent last year, while

66 flowering spikes of *Epipactis palustris* (Marsh Helleborine) at their main site were a delight to see. Digitisation of records is almost up-to-date. Validation is ongoing.

Mid Ebudes (vc103) Lynne Farrell

Several visits were made to Mull and the smaller islands off the coast including Iona, Treshnish Isles and Little Colonsay. Altogether 34 tetrads were updated from pre-2000, but there are still 14 to update in 2019. This will then give total tetrad coverage for Mull, Coll and Tiree and the islands- something I am aiming to complete. The last visit was in October and on a cold, frosty morning but nevertheless I recorded 138 taxa in 3.5 hours that day. A few more sites for *Hymenophyllum wilsonii* (Wilson's Filmy-fern) have been found on Iona and the locals are reconsidering whether they will erect some wind turbines there, following views and advice from myself, NTS, visitors and island inhabitants. Joyce Watson, amateur botanist who lives on Iona has just sent me a copy of her booklet Wild Flowers of Iona (some of the more common species) in memory of Jean Millar, former resident and local botanist. Joyce has helped with recording and is able to distinguish many more species following my working with her over the past few years. On Tiree, John Bowler RSPB representative, has sent his more interesting records for 2018. All tetrads well-recorded. David Pearman paid his annual visit to Coll and has sent through some notable records. All the tetrads are now well-recorded.

NPMS and Ash Splash was not undertaken this year as recording for Atlas 2020 was the priority. But both Ash splash plots were briefly investigated and no trace of ash disease found, thank goodness. Advice was provided to Mull rangers on machair grazing and recording at Calgary Bay. After many years of trying to reduce the level of sheep grazing and sand erosion by increasing numbers of visitors, this has now been achieved resulting in blooming machair which everyone has enjoyed. The resurfaced path out from Tobermory to the Lighthouse was walked and, although some of the *Epipactis helleborine* (Broad-leaved Helleborine) sites had gone under the new walking surface, at least 16 plants were still growing, some flowering and some vegetative. It is hoped that more will be found in future, and perhaps even at a few new spots as the soil was moved around. This is the best population of this rare species on Mull. A visit to a tetrad on the Ross on one of the hottest days in June, saw some of us paddling in Loch Assapol, then discovering another lochan nearby which did not appear on the OS map! There we discovered a strong population of *Carex paniculata* (Tussock Sedge) growing round the margins. The largest population of *Platanthera chlorantha* (Greater Butterfly-orchid) was counted at Pennyghael: slightly fewer this year but still over 1000 flowering plants in one meadow. Another population near Kintra, towards Fionnphort, was counted for the first time, with 31 flowering plants. The local owners run the organic nursery and are interested in managing the site to encourage the floral richness. Records have been received from quite a few visitors, including for *Hieracia* and other critical groups. Altogether another successful year, some good records found and updated, and help from other BSBI members much appreciated.

North Ebudes (vc104) Stephen Bungard

Over 12,500 records were made in VC104 in 2018 including 203 new hectad records, although a few of these are the result of subspecies or aggregate recording. Only five tetrads with >5% land now have zero post-1999 records; nine more have 1 to 49 such records and a further 28 have 50 to 79. (There are 709 tetrads in VC104.) All recent records are digitised; validation of outliers in the BSBI Database has been attempted but for many old records their status must remain uncertain. Skye Botany Group met four times with most meetings aimed at re-finding old records. A talk was given to the Skye Gardening Society entitled "Where do Plants Belong?" For the first year in many, the vice-county recorder achieved a whole season without falling off a cliff or into a loch.

Ten additions were made to the vice-county list, all garden escapes/throw-outs or planted trees. *Hieracium ascendentidens* (Harris Hawkweed) was recorded for only the second time in the VC. *Leycesteria formosa* (Himalayan Honeysuckle or Pheasant Berry) was found spreading near Raasay House. This is new to Raasay in the wild and seems to be increasing rapidly on Skye (and the adjacent Scottish mainland). *Acaena inermis* (Spineless Acaena) continues to spread on Skye with a new site found on the Quiraing path. Determination of further *Arctium* specimens as *A. minus* subsp. *pubens* (Lesser Burdock) suggests that this is the common taxon in the vice-county, though more work is needed.

Wester Ross (vc105) Duncan Donald

It is unfortunate that so much recording activity is needed for the Atlas when other aspects of my life are making even greater demands. My retirement from my day job, planned for mid-2019, will come too late to allow me significant time to catch up on the 120 or so sites I've already identified as 'high priority', but I'll continue to work away at these over the next few years with a revised Flora in mind (ideally, by 2029 – 100 years after Druce published the last one). Meanwhile, I should be happy to pass on suggestions to visiting field botanists who anticipate having the opportunity, while hereabouts, to venture 'off the beaten track' (sometimes by a long way!).

My personal highlights in 2018 have been an NCR for *Melica uniflora* (Wood Melick); a new site for locally-rare *Polystichum setiferum* (Soft Shield-fern); re-recording *Dactylorhiza traunsteinerioides* (Narrow-leaved Marsh-orchid) from a site not recently reported; and recording *Asplenium septentrionale* (Forked Spleenwort) in a new hectad as well as re-finding it at two historical sites. I am also very grateful to Mary Macdonald for re-reporting it from a third one. As ever, the 'day trip' by Inverness Botany Group enabled us to tackle a poorly-recorded area: this time, at Inverlael. My sincere gratitude as well to other recorders who submitted valuable findings after their visits: notably, Diana Gilbert, Rose Kirk, Ian and Marion Moir, and Dan Watson.

Easter Ross (vc106) Brian Ballinger

Recording has continued and we have some recent records for all tetrads mainly located in the vice-county, but species numbers are still low in some places. We are also a bit short on species refinds in some hectads, and this will receive attention in 2019. Once more I am very grateful for all the support I have received over what is often very difficult terrain. Digitisation is nearly up to date and verification is well advanced. Together with Mary Dean I held a joint field meeting with the Botanical Society of Scotland at Strathpeffer, partly devoted to urban recording but also venturing elsewhere. There were also joint events with the Inverness Botany Group. More joint meetings are planned for 2019. Among useful finds Peter Wortham found a new site for *Alopecurus magellanicus* (Alpine Foxtail) at Furan Riabachan, the fourth recent record for VC106. There was also a fourth site for *Hammarbya paludosa* (Bog Orchid) at Moine Mor. *Pilularia globulifera* (Pillwort) was found at another location in the Kyle of Sutherland nearer to the sea than previously. Terry Easter recorded *Pimpinella saxifraga* (Burnet saxifrage) by Geanies, the first recent record for the vice-county. There were 3 new locations for *Sibbaldia procumbens* (Sibbaldia) found by Peter Wortham and Diana Gilbert.

East Sutherland (vc107) Mick Crawley

The only remaining gaps are in very barren and unrewarding areas. The interesting areas (including all the summits) are complete. The data for 2018 are awaiting loading to the DDb. Atlas 2020 validation is complete to date. The 2019 version of the Flora of East Sutherland using Stace 4 names and order is nearing completion. It will be free from the web site soon. *Myosurus minimus* (Mousetail), new to Scotland in 2016 continues to increase in abundance at Lairg Auction Mart.

West Sutherland (vc108) Please see [abstracts](#) for details of activities and new finds in this vc.

Caithness (vc109) *Francis and Margaret Higgins*

Between May and September 2018, we covered 46 monads (16 hectads) and MapMated 4,101 records. In June, John Crossley, the Orkney VCR, spent a long day out with Francis, going as far west as our County Border – previously very under-recorded. On The Child's Seat (Suidh' an Fhir-bhig) they found good patches of *Arctostaphylos alpinus* (Alpine Bearberry), that monad never before recorded. John later visited Stroma and sent us his recording cards. We've found *Artemisia vulgaris* (Mugwort) growing beside Wick River – never found there, though recorded elsewhere in Caithness. With the invaluable help of the County Butterfly Recorder we have found some new species to us, and, mysteriously, *Goodyera repens* (Creeping Lady's-tresses) growing in the middle of the Flow Country – no trees anywhere! We spent a day with two SNH girls surveying the very rare *Calamagrostis scotica* (Scottish Small-reed). They sent their findings to the BSBI but it was interesting for us to see a plant that only grows in one place in the whole world, and in our County! We spent another useful day with Ian Evans in West Sutherland near our western border; later, Ian, in turn, recorded a couple of our monads for us. We were told that *Polypogon viridis* (Water Bent) grows on Whaligoe Steps; we MapMated it under Dr Tim Harrison's name, who found it – and it turns out to be an NCR.

Outer Hebrides (vc110) *Paul Smith*

The main recording activity was three-weeks of targeted recording on North Uist and Benbecula, when several visitors joined the VCR. Three days were spent with Outer Hebrides Biological Recording trips to islands and islets on the east coast, covering several previously unrecorded tetrads and helping with plant id. Diligent observation by visiting botanists resulted in good records for *Anthemis cotula* (Stinking Chamomile) in several places and a NCR for *Epilobium pedunculare* (Rockery Willowherb) on Beinn Mhor, S Uist. Atlas recording filled in several under-recorded tetrads, and refound a number of species with only pre-2000 records. Other visitors have been good at sending on records, and these have been very useful in ongoing recording activity for a new flora. The Dutch Mires Group visited and did a good job with aquatics, and the Floodplain Meadows Partnership visited the Uists and passed on many records. Around 4000 records were added in 2018. A big thank you to all those who have contributed.

Orkney (vc111) *John Crossley*

Good progress again this year and the colours on those alarming maps on the BSBI database showing extent and depth of recording in the VC have mostly changed colour. Most hectads have a re-find rate of at least 70% and tetrad coverage is good if not complete. More effort is now directed at poorly recorded than unrecorded tetrads, and at re-finding rarities. The total number of records for the year was 2,500. New taxa for the year numbered 23, which sounds impressive, but nearly all were either aliens, some new but others only being now recorded, or taxa now identified to subspecies level, e.g. *Sparganium erectum* ssp. *oocarpum* (Branched Bur-reed). Among the latter an interesting one was *Ranunculus acris* ssp. *borealis* (Meadow Buttercup), a distinctive plant in exposed coastal grassland. Efforts to tackle Eyebrights continue to pay off, with sites for *Euphrasia frigida* (Upland Eyebright) and *E. ostenfeldii* (Ostenfeld's Eyebright), the latter in some quantity, both elusive species in this VC for many years. And where there are *Euphrasias* there are of course hybrids, in this case *E. ostenfeldii* x *micrantha* and *E. ostenfeldii* x *frigida*. Thanks to Chris Metherell for sorting these out. It was also particularly pleasing to get a firm identification for the first time of *Utricularia australis* (Bladderwort), only possible with a plant in flower; I am sure I have not seen one in flower before.

We had four meetings of the local flora group, three of these on weekday evenings to allow people to come after work. These were popular, drawing people who had not attended previous weekend events - what better way to spend two or three hours on a summer evening after a day in an office. The primary focus of these outings was not on recording, but a good many records were made all the same; an arable weeds-themed event in late summer proved rewarding, turning up three species of Fumitory including *Fumaria purpurea* (Purple Ramping-fumitory) and a second VC record for *Erysimum cheiranthoides* (Treacle-mustard). All records for the year have been entered on MapMate and I am close to up-to-date with validating records on DDb.

Shetland (vc112) Paul Harvey

An Atlas 2020 recording event was held in July and five keen souls set off to record a suite of squares that had yet to be covered. As might be expected these were in some of the less interesting parts of the islands so yielded no exciting discoveries but much fun was had by all and the team will meet up again in 2019. An introduction to wild flowers course aimed at beginners also managed to cover a square for the Atlas and this enabled participants to get a taste of systematic recording.

Other fieldwork focused heavily on visiting all of Shetland's relict tree sites – this involved rowing out to island holms and scrambling up and down rock-faces. Shetland's few remaining trees hang on in the few places out of reach of sheep. It was pleasing to report that the handful of *Betula pubescens* (Birch) *Populus tremula* (Aspen) and *Sorbus aucuparia* (Rowan) present in the islands continue to flourish and that our single remaining specimens of *Malus sylvestris* (Apple) and *Salix lapponum* (Woolly Willow) are still fighting fit. We include *Osmunda regalis* (Royal Fern) as a token tree here and its cover seems to be increasing on those few holms where it still occurs. On a sadder note one of only two of our remaining *Corylus avellana* (Hazel) has finally succumbed.

Several new sites for *Ophioglossum azoricum* (Small Adder's-tongue), some numbering several hundred were located and two large plants of *Arctium nemorosum* (Wood Burdock) appeared in new locations in the south of Mainland. Like several of our arable weeds this species is close to extinction in the islands. The most exciting new find and only new species for the VC in 2018 was a small colony of *Dactylorhiza traunsteinerioides* in the north Mainland.