

Plants in Vice-County 104: A Review of July – December 2020

It was not possible to hold Skye Botany Group meetings this year. Despite the restrictions caused by the coronavirus pandemic, nearly 2,500 plant records were made in VC104 in the second half of 2020, including six plants new to the vice-county:

- *Acer saccharinum* (Silver Maple) planted on Raasay
- *Lepidium didymum* (Lesser Swine-cress) at Harlosh, Skye
- *Persicaria wallichii* (Himalayan Knotweed) escaping from a garden at Stein, Skye
- *Poterium sanguisorba subsp. balearicum* (Fodder Burnet) at Edinbane, Skye
- *Solanum nigrum* (Black Nightshade) at Cleadale, Eigg
- *Tropaeolum speciosum* (Flame Nasturtium) at Lyndale, Skye

More *Hieracium* specimens were taken on Skye and Raasay for expert determination taking the total number of specimens for the year to sixty. In addition to the eight species recorded up to 1st July, David McCosh determined the following:

H. cyclicum (Round-leaved Hawkweed), *H. dasythrix* (Dense-haired Hawkweed), *H. duriceps* (Hard-headed Hawkweed), *H. oxybeles* (Pointed-leaved Hawkweed) and one that could only be recorded as *H. exotericum* agg. flowering in abundance in October. *H. dasythrix*, found on Glamaig, has only one previous record in the vice-county (in 1973) and *H. cyclicum* from Leathad Beithe (Talisker) has five earlier records, one in 2002, the rest considerably earlier.

A *Philadelphus* (Mock-orange) at Budhmoor, Skye is pretty hairy on the underside of the leaves suggesting that it is one of the hybrid groups - full identification will have to wait until there are flowers next year. Similarly, a small tree that looks like a *Prunus* at Gedintailor, Skye will have to wait for flowers for full identification.

Ulex gallii (Western Gorse) was found at two new sites on the Harlosh peninsula. This is a pretty rare plant on Skye, but this year some older known sites were also re-found.

Linaria repens (Pale or Striped Toadflax) near Glasnakille on Skye was only the third site in the vice-county. It has been known in Portree for getting on for 50 years and there is a single 1978 record from Kyleakin.

First hectad records for native species with limited occurrence locally included *Koeleria macrantha* (Crested Hair-grass) in NG35, *Salix purpurea* (Purple Willow), *Zostera marina* (Eelgrass) in NG24 and *Veronica scutellata* (Marsh Speedwell) in NG42.

Thanks are due to everyone who has contributed to these records.

Stephen J Bungard
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