

Welcome to the fourth newsletter for those interested in plants and botanical recording in South Aberdeenshire. They are produced occasionally, to stimulate botanical work and seek help for BSBI recording projects. Please contact me (address below) with queries and especially any plant records!

### **Plant recording in South Aberdeenshire during 2016**

As before, the priority is to gain records for the next **UK plant atlas 2020**, covering the period 2000-2019. I would still very much appreciate your help in this as there are still many areas which require exploration. The map overleaf shows where we are with coverage to the end of 2015. There has been some good recent recording progress, helped by the BSBI field meeting held near Ballater last August, but the remaining gaps are clear and your help in filling them is needed! Please get in touch and plan some nice days out this year!



Fen with much Valerian *Valeriana officinalis* near Millbank, July 2015

### **Recording strategy**

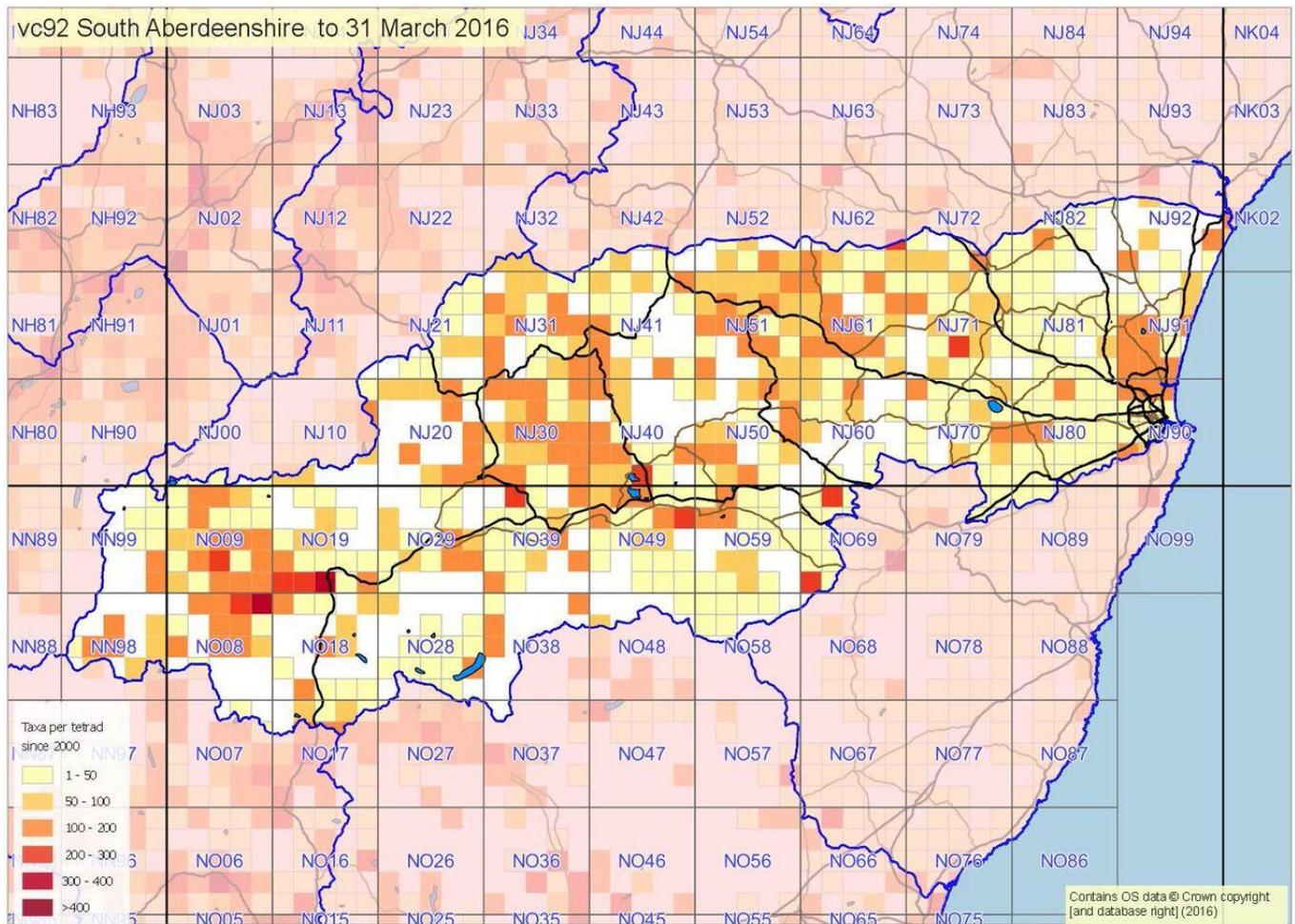
The planned recording strategy remains as before. It will not be possible to visit all tetrads in the vice-county before 2020, and certainly not every 1x1km square (monad). But it would be very nice to receive records at a detailed level from within every hectad covered by VC92. In addition, we need to ensure a good spread of records across other hectads. So by 2019, I would like to achieve the following:

1. Detailed recording visits to at least five 1x1km squares within every 10km sq. containing more than 20 1x1km squares (there are 36 of them), a total of 175 monads over 6 years to 2019.
2. At least one detailed visit to one monad in each of the peripheral 10km squares with fewer than 20 1x1km squares - a further 14.

I will take stock of this at the end of the year to see which are the priorities for targeting in the remaining three years of the atlas. My recommendations for targeting recording this year are given overleaf.



Twinflower, Bunzeach Forest, July 2013



The map shows the numbers of species recorded in each 2x2km tetrad as at 31 March 2016, so covers to the end of the 2015 season. The map was kindly produced by Andy Amphlett.

**Any white (blank) tetrad is a priority for recording in 2016! Paler colours will be targeted later.**

However, within each 2x2km tetrad I would prefer to receive records based on a 1x1km square within it, rather than just for the whole tetrad. Of course, records specifically from a more precise location (e.g. 6-figure grid reference or GPS reference) are very welcome too.

Within a 1x1km square, try and record at points in the vicinity of six-figure grid refs in varying habitats, to help make up a composite list for the square whilst also recording fairly close to known points. If you find interesting species or habitats, please use a GPS to record these accurately and note any details.



Marsh Foxtail *Alopecurus geniculatus*, Sauchen, June 2015

## 2015 update

Good progress was made with the atlas this year. Just over 12,000 records from 2015 were added to the central BSBI database, plus several thousand earlier records, bringing the total in the database for South Aberdeenshire for the atlas period to over 50,000. Their spread shows some clearly under-recorded areas in terms of any level of coverage, and the concentrations of intensive recording are also clear. I hope that field work for 2016 will target the less recorded areas.

A weekend field meeting was held in the Ballater area in August which attracted 22 participants. In total, almost 2,000 records of 380 taxa were accumulated during the weekend from 19 monads (1x1km square), all areas with no or very few post-2000 records. This represents a major addition to coverage in mid-Deeside and also contributes towards the ongoing accumulation of records for the Cairngorms National Park co-ordinated by Andy Amphlett. Highlights included several scarce or rare plants in the vice-county, such as *Drosera anglica* (Great Sundew), *Hammarbya paludosa* (Bog Orchid) (found at two sites), *Linnaea borealis* (Twinflower), *Lobelia dortmanna* (Water Lobelia), *Lycopodium annotinum* (Interrupted Clubmoss), *Orthilia secunda* (Serrated Wintergreen) and *Pimpinella saxifraga* (Burnett-saxifrage).



Water Crowfoot *Ranunculus* subg. *Batrachium*, River Dee, Braemar, Susan Bowden, August 2015. Aquatic plants are all poorly recorded in South Aberdeenshire – I would encourage anyone to have a try!



Purple Saxifrage *Saxifraga oppositifolia*, Glen Feardar, June 2015. A new, relatively low-altitude site was found this year by Ann Miles.



2015 saw a renewed initiative by Aberdeenshire Council to improve knowledge of the status of alien invasive species such as Giant Hogweed *Heracleum mantegazzianum*, here by the River Don at Inverurie, July 2015. All records are welcome!



Bog Orchid *Hammarbya paludosa*, Glen Muick, August 2015. A very nice find on the BSBI field meeting!



Lesser Twayblade *Listera cordata*, Glen Muick, August 2015.



Cloudberry *Rubus chamaemorus*



Richard Marriott photographing Bog Orchids.

### How to submit records in 2016

To help with field recording and submission, a customised recording card is available on the BSBI website at: <http://www.bsbi.org.uk/VC92.pdf>. I am happy to receive these and will enter the data. Another useful way is to send me an Excel spreadsheet (or similar). Please make sure there is one species per row, and the columns include date, location, grid ref and comments as a minimum. Andy Amphlett has developed an Excel spreadsheet which automatically checks species names and formats records accordingly. This can be downloaded from the BSBI website – please contact me for details. Otherwise, any emails with records would be fine. I receive so few that converting these into a more useable format will not be a chore. My main aim is to make sending in records as easy as possible!

Many thanks to all below for their records and help in 2015 (with sincere apologies for any omissions): Andy Amphlett, Faith Anstey, Rod Begbie, Susan Bowden, Stephen Bungard, Kathy Dale, Bob Daly, David Elston, Kathy Fallowfield, Zoe Gardner, Ian Green, Quentin Groom, Ian Hill, Eric Jensen, Glyn Jones, Richard Marriott, Jill Matthews, Jay MacKinnon, Jim McIntosh, Colin McClean, Eric & Aileen Meek, Ann Miles, Gordon Miller, Marion Moir, Louise Page, Robin Payne, Nicky Penford, David Plant, Ceri Poole, Helen Proctor, Stephanie Proven, Shaila Rao, Catriona Reid, Paul Ross, Mike Smedley, Lydia Thompson, Mark Tulley, Adam Watson, David Welch, Hazel Witte, Lewis York.