

BSBI eNews – April 2018

From Jim McIntosh, Senior Country Officer, jim.mcintosh@bsbi.org

Vice-County Annual Reports

Thank you very much to everyone who completed a VC Annual Report for 2017. The collated reports are fascinating to read – it is great to hear about the diversity of botanical endeavour taking place across the British Isles. Take a look: the [English](#) and [Welsh](#) reports were collated thanks to Mary Dean and Paul Green and have just been uploaded to the [England](#) and [Wales](#) BSBI pages respectively. The Scottish & Irish reports will shortly appear on the [Scotland](#) and [Ireland](#) pages.

Heartfelt thanks are due to all Recorders and members for your magnificent contribution to the BSBI.
[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

Trichophorum x foersteri & *Juncus compressus*

After last month's piece on *Trichophorum*, I had a note from Mike Wilcox, saying that the hybrid does indeed occur on the Isle of Man (despite no record of it on the DDb). He goes on "It was first collected there by B.A. Tregale from the track leading up Snaefell in c. 2011 and found again in a different location in 2013". Specimens from both sites were determined by Mike who goes on to say, "*T. cespitosum* is yet to be found or maybe/probably extinct there. It would be worth looking at other sites on the Isle of Man with *Trichophorum* at least for the hybrid and this year's Annual Summer Meeting would be a good chance to look and collect vouchers."

He also adds, following the article on *Juncus compressus*: "I would be happy to look at vouchers of *Juncus compressus*. Any claim of it being on saltmarshes is not true in my opinion. When *gerardii* is fruiting it superficially looks like *compressus* but the anther/filament and seed size are diagnostic. Both can be inland of course."

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

Invasive plant species

The European Union has placed some of the worst offenders a list of [invasive alien species of concern](#) but which ones do the government agencies really need to know about?

- [Gunnera tinctoria](#) (Giant-rhubarb),
- [Hydrocotyle ranunculoides](#) (Floating Pennywort),
- [Ludwigia grandiflora](#) (Water-primrose),
- [Lysichiton americanus](#) (American Skunk-cabbage),
- [Myriophyllum aquaticum](#) (Parrot's-feather) and
- [Myriophyllum heterophyllum](#) (Various-leaved Water-milfoil).

There are species alerts for Water-primrose and Various-leaved Water-milfoil. Please report sightings urgently, so that they can be eradicated quickly.

In Scotland, Floating Pennywort and Parrot's-feather are being eradicated, thanks to BSBI records, and we plan to tackle Giant-rhubarb in the future and your records of American Skunk-cabbage may help protect vulnerable habitats from invasion.



American Skunk-cabbage, West Loch Tarbet. © David Knott

Records of other [high-impact alien plants](#) will help with Water Framework Directive monitoring. Not all sightings will be priorities for control but your records will help to build our knowledge and to prioritise future action. [More...](#)

[Stan Whitaker](#), [Scottish Natural Heritage](#) – Wildlife Management and INNS Team

Atlas 2020 Data Entry

With the recording season upon us, now would be the ideal time to get into the habit of keeping on top of record entry, regularly submitting those records to the DDb and validating them as soon as they arrive. Here are [six useful tips for MapMate users](#).

[Andy Amphlett](#)

Atlas 2020 Validation

Tom Humphrey has added a new 'Do not map' validation option to the DDb. This option was created to deal with records of plants that are probably cultivated in a non-wild situation, e.g. within a garden, and that should not be included on maps intended to show the wild distribution. The default is 'include on maps'. This option will probably only be used occasionally by Recorders but is a useful addition to the validation options. [More...](#)

[Andy Amphlett](#)

Field Meetings

March has seen lots of snow, though still rather less than I experienced during my summer in Antarctica. It has meant that spring is rather delayed and early field meetings are finding little in flower. Locally we have been able to start using the Viola Handbook to check varieties of *V. odorata*. The late spring does however give a good chance to practice vegetative identification, look carefully at winter twigs, and perhaps start that dead plant key.

If you would like your local meetings to be included in the [BSBI meetings diary](#) just send me a copy of your meetings list and I'll do the rest. The meetings are marked G, R, S and T for General, Recording, Specialist and Training respectively. I can usually work out which to allocate correctly, but it might be better if you tell me!

The guidance to [leaders](#) and [participants](#) at field meetings has recently been updated and is available on the [meetings page](#). The updated guidance to leaders now has a clickable index which should help.

[Jonathan Shanklin](#), Honorary Field Meetings Secretary

Annual Summer Meeting

We've already had a dozen bookings for this year's [Annual Summer Meeting](#) in the Isle of Man. It should be a great opportunity to share experiences with the bryologists as well as contributing to the study of the IoM flora. I'm already starting to plan the 2019 ASM, which will be in England, so watch this space for news.

[Jonathan Shanklin](#), Honorary Field Meetings Secretary

Scottish Recording Weeks

There are still a few spaces on the Argyll week (9-16 June), the Wigtownshire week (23-30 June) and possibly also on the Westerness week (8-15 July) – all aimed at plugging Atlas 2020 gaps in under-recorded area. As well as recording, a huge amount of mutual learning at all levels goes on during these recording weeks. No amount of money could possibly pay for courses that provide the same amount of training - and fun! For more details see the [Scottish Field Meeting programme](#). Drop me an email if you are interested.

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

Scottish Conference

We are planning two one-day BSBI [Scottish Recording Conferences](#). One on [Saturday 14 April at Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh](#) and another on [Saturday the 28 April at Strathpeffer Community Centre](#). The same programme will be repeated (more or less) so folk can choose whichever is more convenient. Or you are very welcome to come to both. We'd particularly welcome our friends from outside Scotland.

The aim of the Conference is to help Recorders and members with Atlas 2020 and give them a chance to meet up and discuss common interests. After an update on Atlas 2020, and a session on making the most of the final field seasons there will be a chance for Recorders to report on what they have been doing, followed by a session on validation. After lunch there are two practical mini-workshops on identifying Bladderworts & Deergresses followed by a short discussion on post Atlas projects and a general Q&A session. So it should be a lively and enjoyable day! Book now by clicking the links.

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

Recorders' Conference

In a change to the date originally advertised, the next Recorders' Conference in England will be over the weekend of 12th-14th October at FSC Preston Montford, Shrewsbury. If you haven't noted the dates in your diary – please do it now. A flyer will appear in the April issue of *BSBI News* and keep an eye on the [Recorders' Conference](#) page for updates.

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

Irish Conference

The Irish BSBI Conference took place at the National Botanic Gardens in Dublin on Sat 24th March. It was a great success, with a range of talks and workshops. Seventy people attended, with a very high number of VCRs enticed particularly by contributions by Mike Porter on Viola. Mike gave a wonderful opening talk, introducing attendees to many of the Viola species they are likely to come across, and indeed a few to look out for too! This was followed up in the afternoon by two herbarium-based workshops on Viola.

We had talks too on local groups, on Ellen Hutchins – Ireland's first (and very remarkable) female botanist, on sand dune ecology, and on a range of topics as part of the flash talk session. There were workshops for beginners/improvers on horsetails, on the DDb for the recorders, and a guided tour of the magnificent Great Palm House by Gardens Director Matthew Jebb. It was a packed schedule!

We had hoped that people would take the opportunity nonetheless to catch up, chat about progress and ideas and issues, to meet new people, etc. – and if the deafening cacophony at coffee times was anything to go by, then this was definitely achieved! Thanks to all who contributed and made it a most enjoyable day. Check out [#IrishBSBIConference](#) on Twitter to see fantastic photos and feedback, and, in a few days, for copies of many of the presentations/workshops, visit the [BSBI Irish Conference](#) page.

[Maria Long](#), BSBI Irish Officer

Snippets:

Updated Atlas 2020 coverage maps: Andy recently updated the tetrad scale VC coverage maps and the Country Officers sent Recorders a link to them. If you bookmark the link you will be able to return to it at any time easily and see future updates whenever they are available. We hope the updated maps will be useful for planning your final two Atlas 2020 field seasons.

[Cucaera Online maps](#): have just been updated and now include geological information as well as VC boundaries. They can be viewed against 1:50,000, 1:25,000 or old OS maps for the whole of GB and the Isle of Man. If you search for a particular grid reference, it will return nearest placename, postcode, altitude, geology – as well as the Vice-County. Add a bookmark to your bookmark bar by clicking the star in the top right-hand corner of your browser.

Recording Cards: Remember, if you need recording cards printed out, please get in touch with our colleagues at CEH who would be happy to help. Please contact brc@ceh.ac.uk rather than any named contacts.

BSBI Viola Handbook: Remember that Summerfield Books will be offering a further discount of 15% on the price of the [BSBI Viola Handbook](#) throughout April and May.

On the News & Views blog in March

[Two posts](#) about the [BSBI Irish Spring Conference](#) and one about the [BSBI Summer Meeting](#); a note about how BSBI trustee Sandy Knapp helped [celebrate the Linnean Society's first female fellows](#) as Sandy prepares to become President of the Linnean in May; a repeat [request from Tomos Jones](#) for County Recorders to contribute to his survey of garden plants which might become more invasive under climate change – please do participate in Tomos' survey if you haven't already; a note about the [forthcoming 2nd edition of Ted Pratt's 'Wild Flowers of the Isle of Purbeck, Brownsea and Sandbanks](#) (BSBI members will enjoy a special discounted offer so watch out for a flyer in the April issue of BSBI News); some information about a [botanical art class and behind-the-scenes tour](#) at the Linnean Society; and an [expanded version of Stan Whitaker's note](#) (see above) about invasive alien plants. Still to come in March: juniper and Byron's Gin.

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

New on the BSBI website in March

As well as the collated reports from County Recorders (see above), the [BSBI Scotland](#) page has been updated to include details on a range of workshops and conferences coming up this year and an annual report for 2017 from the Scottish Officer Jim McIntosh. We're also delighted to hear that the BSBI bid for funding to SNH has been successful so Jim's post is secured for at least another year – hurrah!

A number of county webpages have also been updated with details of delights planned for this year, local newsletters and resources including: Cumbria, Merioneth, Flintshire, Devon, South Lincs., Cheshire, Kent, Glamorgan, Easter Ross, Somerset, Lancashire, Staffordshire, Co. Antrim, Co. Down and Surrey. Use the links on the [Local Botany page](#) or the interactive map on the homepage to click through to the county page.

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

BSBI eNews

The current and recent back issues of BSBI *eNews* are available on the [Publications](#) page of the BSBI website. An email with a link to BSBI *eNews* is circulated to BSBI Recorders, Referees, staff and committee members. Please let me know if you wish to unsubscribe or amend your email. I'd welcome short contributions from anyone on topics of interest and relevance to fellow readers. BSBI *eNews* is generally published on the 1st of each month (unless it happens to be a bank holiday!) so contributions should ideally reach me by the 21st of the preceding month. I'd also be pleased to have feedback on any of the articles appearing in BSBI *eNews*.

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer