

BSBI eNews – August 2018

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

Welcome to new County Recorders

I'm sure you'd like to join me in welcoming Alyson Freeman & Brian Laney who have been appointed joint County Recorders in VC32 Northants and Dave Barlow who becomes joint County Recorder for VC62 North-east Yorkshire. We wish them all success and happiness in their new roles!

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

BSBI Welsh Officer

Sadly, Paul Green decided to stand down from his role as Welsh Officer in June. As many of you know, Paul split himself between Wales and Ireland and despite his love of Wales and the Officer role, he decided that he'd rather base himself in one country for personal reasons. I'm sure everyone will appreciate this and would wish to join me in thanking Paul for his fantastic service as Welsh Officer over the years.

Related to this, I am pleased to tell you that BSBI has been successful in securing further funding from NRW that should allow us to recruit a new Welsh Officer until December 2019 at least. There are still a few hurdles to jump in regards to administration and there will be a period of time without an Officer in post but I'm hopeful that recruitment for a new Officer will start shortly. I will keep you posted.

Paul has very kindly offered to continue checking his BSBI email address (paul.green@bsbi.org) on a voluntary basis and will answer any urgent inquiries until a replacement is found. In the meantime, if you would like to forward this message to anyone who ought to see it, please do.

[Jane Houldsworth](#), BSBI Head of Operations

Atlas 2020 Progress

The good news is that 75 vice counties have each sent more than 500 records to the BSBI DDb for 2018. (And amazingly 27 of them have sent more than 5,000 records!) However, 75 Vice-counties have sent less than 500 records - or in some cases none at all!

Now I know I said data entry is best done little and often and that you should wait until the next wet day after fieldwork before entering your data. But just because it hasn't rained since April doesn't mean you should completely forget about data entry! Do try keep on top of record entry, and regularly submit the records to the DDb and validate them as soon as they arrive. All three operations are much better done 'little and often' and as soon as possible after your day in the field.

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

Deergrasses

The end of July and beginning of August is the perfect time to look for the three Deergrass taxa: *Trichophorum germanicum* (Common Deergrass), *T. cespitosum* (Northern Deergrass) and their hybrid *T. x foersteri* (Hybrid Deergrass). Take a look at the presentation on [Deergrass Id](#) that Jeremy Roberts and Andy Amphlett prepared for the [Scottish Recording Conference](#) in April and Jeremy's excellent one-sheet-of-A4 [Trichophorum field guide](#). (Worth printing and taking with you whenever you plan to visit potentially suitable habitat.)

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

Aquatics

Generally, aquatics are rather under-recorded for Atlas 2020, at least compared with the previous date-class which included the splendid Scottish Loch Survey¹. Now is a great time to look for aquatics in many lakes and ponds as water levels are low and they are more approachable. (Assuming there is any water left at all!)

There are some great resources to help you. There is Nick Stewart's online [Stonewort Key](#), the Stoneworts and Pondweeds [BSBI Handbooks](#) and the section on [Pondweeds](#) in the Plant Crib. The referees are always pleased to receive nicely presented and labelled specimens for expert determination or confirmation. BSBI members can find referees' contact details in the BSBI Yearbook.

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

Stoneworts

While on the subject of Stoneworts, did you know that we now have a webpage dedicated to Charophytes? Visit it here: [BSBI charophytes webpage](#), where you can also find resources to help you get started with recording charophytes, instructions for making your own grapnel and the very first issue of the new Charophytes newsletter! There have been a number of charophyte workshops and events in Ireland recently, not least the two two-day workshops held in Co. Westmeath earlier this year which were fully booked out, and so it seemed fitting for Ireland to take the lead on bringing some much-needed focus to this group. If you have any charophyte news, big or small, please send it to either of the newsletter editors – to [Aine O'Connor](#) or me!

[Maria Long](#), Irish Officer

Arable Weeds

The latter half of summer is also a good time to record arable weed species (assuming they haven't been totally frazzled). I used to recommend folk look for swede (turnip in Scotland) fields but they are getting pretty rare themselves. So, instead, look in corners of potato fields that are too awkward for machine access, or along end-rigs and gaps in fields where the crops are being grown under plastic netting. In this current heat, arable weeds may be taking refuge and thriving *under* the plastic along with the crop. Where such fields don't exist or there is little tillage, you have to be very opportunistic; stop and record whenever you see disturbed weedy ground exposed by construction or road works!

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

¹ Incidentally detailed survey reports and sketch maps exist for many of the 3,000 lochs in Scotland and some for lakes in England and Wales and are available in the [Standing Waters Database](#).

Data Entry Spreadsheets

Last month I mentioned that Phill Brown, joint County Recorder for [Westmorland & Cumberland](#), had cunningly developed a new spreadsheet to speed up data entry from custom recording cards. The spreadsheet produces a list of records which can easily be checked and then converted to a format suitable for importing into MapMate by Recorders. I asked Recorders, who have local members that regularly contribute records on recording cards, or in spreadsheets, and who might like to try it out, to add their name to a poll. Unfortunately, the link was broken, but many of you got in touch directly. If anyone else who would like to have a copy of the spreadsheet for their VC – please drop me a line.

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

Meetings

We've just had a very successful Annual Summer Meeting (ASM) in the Isle of Man. The weather was generally kind, though the final morning was a bit damp as was our visit to The Curraghs, but it was pleasantly cool compared to England. We visited lots of sites and tetrads, saw many interesting plants (including the Isle of Man Cabbage), with evening talks and id sessions thrown in for good measure. It will take a while to compile the full details, though you can get a feel for it from [BSBI News & Views](#). The 2019 ASM will be from July 13 to 19 and will be based at the Malham Tarn FSC centre.

And, of course, there are still lots of national and local field meetings around the country that you can attend this year – details on the [field meetings](#) page and in the [BSBI meetings diary](#).

Here is a shortlist of the major forthcoming meetings: (Click the links for further details.)

| Meeting | Date(s) | Venue | Comments |
|--|---------------|--|---|
| Welsh AGM | 17-19 August | Aberystwyth | Booking deadline extended to 15 th August. |
| Recorders' Conference | 12-14 October | FSC Preston Montford, Shrewsbury | Book now! |
| Scottish Botanists' Conference (new name for Scottish Annual Meeting) | 3 November | RBG Edinburgh | Online booking soon. Flyer with September BSBI News. |
| Annual Exhibition Meeting | 17 November | Edge Hill University, Ormskirk (just north of Liverpool) | Online booking soon. Flyer with September BSBI News |

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer & [Jonathan Shanklin](#), Honorary Field Meetings Secretary

Snippets:

Twig Key: Reminder that if you want to order a copy of [John Poland's Twig Key](#), you need to do so before the end of August. John will be leading a field trip at this year's [Recorders' Conference](#) to road-test the key so you might want to book for that as well!

BSBI on Instagram

BSBI now has an [Instagram account](#) where we can share our most attractive plant images. We hope that it will help us reach new audiences. You can access the Instagram page via the icon in the header of every BSBI webpage. You can also view the images uploaded so far via the Instagram feed on the [News page](#).

So, if you take any particularly good plant photographs this year, you have several options:

- You can enter them into the [BSBI Photographic Competition](#) – click to see this year's themes.
- You can [send them to me](#) for publication on the BSBI website.
- You can share them during [Wild Flower Hour](#) on Twitter every Sunday night 8-9pm.
- And you now have the option to share them via our Instagram gallery. Just email them to the BSBI Comms Team (that's me and volunteers Ciara and Ellen) at our new Gmail address here: commsteam@bsbi.org. We'll upload them with a note about where they were spotted and credit them to you (or you can remain anonymous if you prefer).

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

New on the BSBI website in June and July

- The 2018 issue of Irish Botanical News is now available to download from the [Ireland page](#). Many thanks to editor Paul Green for another excellent issue.
- There is a new county page for [Kirkcudbrightshire](#) with contact details for County Recorder David Hawker, reports on local group meetings, an account of several centuries of plant recording in the VC and a description of the diverse habitats of Kirkcudbrightshire.
- County webpages updated in June and July to include forthcoming field meetings, local newsletters and/or local botany blogs: Merionethshire, North Ebudes, Lanarkshire, Antrim, Flintshire, Suffolk, South-east Yorkshire and North-east Yorkshire. Use the links on the [Local Botany](#) page or the interactive map on the homepage to click through to the county page.
- The [Local Botany page](#) has been updated with details of the newly appointed County Recorders and county pages (see above).
- The [News page](#) and [Science page](#) are updated weekly with links to items of interest, such as the latest scientific paper co-authored by Kevin Walker: published in *Nature* this week, it explains how the 'Extinction risk from climate change is reduced by microclimatic buffering'.
- There are new details on the [Publications page](#) of how to advertise in, or insert a flyer into, BSBI News: it gives advertising rates, deadlines and tells you who can advertise free of charge.

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

On the News & Views blog in June and July

June: A note about the [NBN Awards for Biological Recording](#) – you could nominate a botanist who has made an outstanding contribution; a note about the [charophyte workshops in Ireland](#); BSBI was mentioned in both The Times of London and the Irish Times on the same day but for quite different reasons – find out why [here](#); a report on the very successful [national launch of the new Eyebright Handbook](#) - from the Natural History Museum to herbaria across the country (and a Hebridean island!); Leicestershire botanists were granted special access to [record for Atlas 2020 at British Gypsum's works](#); we hear how world-famous neurologist Dr Oliver Sacks was [also a keen botanist](#); Mike Wilcox puts out a [call for your Mallows](#) and the monthly post about ingredients in Byron's Gin focuses on [Lady's bedstraw](#).

July: We hear how a [BSBI training grant helped botanist Falgunee](#) identify difficult higher plants; we find out what happened when [Ireland's Rough Crew visited Dursey Island](#) and how BSBI's orchid referees [took to a tandem](#) to reach *Dactylorhizas* in the west of Ireland; there's a [report from Kevin Walker](#), David Pearman & co, recording on Colonsay towards a new Flora; we feature [daily reports](#) from the week-long BSBI Summer Meeting on the Isle of Man; you can find out what happened when [BSBI's President met one of Britain's most famous wildlife ambassadors](#) while teaching botany; and we explain how recent awards for Byron's Gin could lead to [more botanists receiving BSBI training grants](#).

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

Personal Data - Reminder

If you keep a mailing list of local botanists, or if you ever have under-18s attending meetings you run, here's some important information for you:

- BSBI now has a [Personal Data Policy](#) and a [Safeguarding Policy](#). You should download both from the [Governance page](#) on the website and read them!
- GDPR applies to charities as well as commercial companies so don't forget to check that people are happy to receive emails from you. If you are holding people's email addresses for a specific event, rather than an ongoing mailing list, don't forget that you have to delete that information within 6 months of the event taking place.
- And please remember to always use the Bcc option – even if people have agreed to be on your mailing list so you can keep them updated about botany in their area, they may not want everybody else on your mailing list to see their address! So please always use the "Bcc" option.

[Jane Houldsworth](#), BSBI Head of Operations

BSBI eNews

BSBI eNews is aimed at all BSBI recorders, referees and members involved with recording. 232 of the 306 regular BSBI eNews recipients have now opted in to continue to receive their monthly news email. This includes many who took the opportunity to update their email addresses. Thank you very much indeed. Remember you can update your contact details or unsubscribe at any time.

If you are reading this online, or perhaps because it was forwarded to you, and are one of the County Recorders or Referees who did not sign up - you can do so via a link on the [BSBI Publications](#) page at any time.

I'd welcome short contributions from anyone on topics of interest to fellow readers. BSBI eNews is generally published on the 1st of each month so contributions should reach me by the 21st of the preceding month. I'd also be pleased to have feedback on any of the articles in BSBI eNews.

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer