

From Jim McIntosh, Senior Country Officer, [jim.mcintosh@bsbi.org](mailto:jim.mcintosh@bsbi.org)

### Introducing the new BSBI Welsh Officer

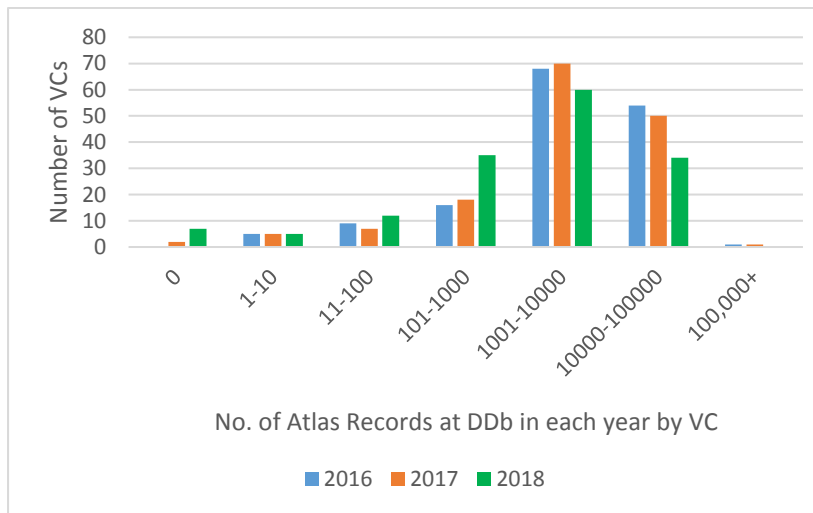
I am Barbara Brown, the new BSBI Welsh Officer. I succeed Polly Spencer Vellacott and Paul Green – though it will be hard to follow in their footsteps! I have lived in Wales, on and off, for over a decade now; first as an Information Officer at RSPB South Stack in 1998, followed by a stint at RSPB Ynys hir and then as Tutor / Senior Tutor for FSC Rhyd y creuau at Betws y Coed. It was great to come back to Wales as OPAL Community Scientist for South Wales where I helped a wide range of audiences learn more about the natural environment and take part in citizen science surveys on everything from Earthworms, Lichens and Tree Diseases.

Most recently I worked for the Radnorshire Wildlife Trust at Gilfach nature reserve where I trained up and worked with volunteer plant surveyors. I have also been an apprentice in Plantlife’s Cennad scheme which helped me learn a lot more about Lichen and biological recording in general.

I live in Rhayader, in central Wales, which is within easy reach of most of the Welsh County Recorders and I look forward to meeting you all soon.

[Barbara Brown](#), BSBI Welsh Officer

### Atlas 2020 Data Entry



So far 1.03 million 2018 records have been added to the BSBI DDb with tetrad or better resolution by 147 VCs. An amazing achievement! But of these, 24 VCs forwarded fewer than 100 records. And 7 have yet to forward *any*! So, it would be great if you’d make a real push to get your backlog of records digitised and sent through to the BSBI Database by the end of December if possible.

### Atlas 2020 Coverage Maps

Andy Amphlett has just refreshed the very popular tetrad/monad coverage maps by VC for GB and for Ireland, using the latest data available on the BSBI Distribution Database (DDb). The Maps are in the same Google Drive folders as previously – so if you have saved the address as a favourite just click on the link. Otherwise click [GB coverage maps](#) or [Irish Coverage maps](#). Thank you, Andy!

## Atlas 2020 Validation

If you are already fully up to date with your data entry – well done! You must **now** get on with data validation – especially if you have yet to make a start. We realise that this may be a bit daunting, so we have produced [simple validation guidance](#) – on the [Atlas 2020](#) page and Andy Amphlett has offered to help individual recorders get started. Please let me know if you'd like to take up his kind offer.

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

## Vice-County Annual Reports

Last year we published short annual reports for VCs in each of the four countries. They were published on the BSBI website and appeared in country newsletters. Take a look – [Ireland](#), [England](#), [Wales & Scotland](#). They are a fascinating account of botanical endeavour by BSBI County Recorders and members across the UK and Ireland. I think many recorders enjoyed drafting them – and saw it as a chance to take stock. So, let's repeat the exercise for 2018! I'll call for a *short* summary Annual Report for 2018 from all Recorders in next BSBI *eNews* – complete with guidance on the format, content and number of words – possibly using Survey Monkey to automate and help collate the responses (which is no mean task with up to 153 reports!)

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

## Historic plant records

How many pre-2000 plant records exist on paper, but were never submitted to Atlas 2000 and are not in the BSBI database (Ddb)? Especially for vice-counties that submitted records to Atlas 2000 as Master Cards, or have not made a concerted effort to digitise the backlog, the number may be substantial. While VCRs should prioritise new fieldwork and entering, submitting and validating post 1999 records, IF you are up to date with these tasks, maybe take a look at those older records? The next Atlas, like the second, will analyse change in distribution, and change cannot be analysed without the old records to make comparisons against.

A summary of recent work to digitise the backlog of vc96 records is available [here](#).

[Andy Amphlett](#), BSBI Recorder for Banffshire

## New Year Plant Hunt

We hope that you will participate in our eighth New Year Plant Hunt which will take place between Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> December 2018 and Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> January 2019. Last year, almost 1,000 botanists across Britain and Ireland recorded 532 taxa in bloom so it will be interesting to see what we find this year. We will once again be using our New Year Plant Hunt on-line recording form, developed for us by BSBI Database Officer Tom Humphrey working with colleagues at the Biological Records Centre. Records, once verified, will appear on our [New Year Plant Hunt website](#), where there is an interactive map. You will also be able to follow 2019 results as they come in each day via [BSBI News & Views](#), [Facebook](#), our new [Instagram account](#) and this New Year Plant Hunt feed from [Twitter](#).

For more details on how to take part this year, or to see the results from previous years' New Year Plant Hunts, click [here](#). There is also an events page so if you know of, or are leading, a New Year Plant Hunt in your vice-county, please [email the New Year Plant Hunt Team](#) asap with details so we can add your event.

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

## Focus on herbaria

How frequently do you use your local herbarium? I'm keen to encourage the use of herbaria and flag how important they are for active recorders, whether expert botanists or those just starting out recording for [Atlas 2020](#). I've set up a new webpage with [resources for herbarium users](#), including a [list](#) showing contact details. Please take a look and get back to me via the address below with any corrections to the list or if you'd just like to share your thoughts about herbaria. Let's use them so we don't lose them!

[Chris Metherell](#), BSBI President

## BSBI Annual Exhibition Meeting

In a break from tradition, this year's Annual Exhibition Meeting (AEM) moved northwards! It was held on 17<sup>th</sup> November at Edge Hill University in Lancashire and proved a great success. 134 visitors came along, many of whom were students at Edge Hill University and/ or attending a BSBI event for the first time. They were able to enjoy a record 43 exhibits, eight speakers and five behind-the-scenes tours of EHU's Tech Hub, led by staff and students.

All the speakers' presentations can be downloaded from the [Annual Exhibition Meeting](#) page and during December we hope to upload electronic versions of as many as possible of the exhibits. You can read about the AEM on the News & Views blog and to find out what some of the visitors to the Meeting had to say about the event, and to see photos from the day, click [here](#).

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

## BSBI Annual General Meeting

We set aside an hour during the AEM for BSBI's AGM, during which members were invited to vote on the election of Max Brown, who becomes our youngest ever Council member, and a new President-elect. I'm delighted to tell you that as of November 2019, BSBI will – for only the second time in its 182-year history - have a female President when Lynne Farrell takes over the presidency from Chris Metherell. Congratulations Lynne! Short biographies of both Max and Lynne are available [here](#).

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

## BSBI Scottish Botanists' Conference

We have a tremendous number at this year's Scottish meeting at RBGE. 175 - the biggest number of botanists to EVER meet up in Scotland! We might have had more but closed bookings early for fear of the venue not being able to cope. Apologies to those who were unable to book. If you missed it – the presentations and exhibition abstracts are already on the [Scottish Botanists' Conference](#) webpage and we will shortly upload images of many of the exhibits and posters – to create a virtual exhibition. I would particularly recommend checking out Prof Richard Ennos's talk entitled "[When will we ever learn? - A History of Tree Disease](#)".

The highlight of the day for many were the mini-workshops. 140 botanists participated in seven mini-workshops – each run twice and each attended by twenty – a logistical nightmare but probably one of the biggest mass training events held in the BSBI! The workshops included Introductions to Conifers, Horsetails, Grasses, The Vegetative Key, The BSBI Database and separating English, Sessile

and hybrid Oaks. The most popular workshop was looking at Species Pairs in the herbarium. To find out what Conference participants had to say and to see photos from the day, click [here](#).

Next year's Scottish Botanists' Conference will be on 2<sup>nd</sup> November at RBGE.

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

### **Field Meetings**

The programme of field meetings is slowly coming together and details have been uploaded to the [Meetings](#) webpage. A big thank you to all those who have made offers so far – our members do value and appreciate these opportunities to go out with expert botanists. To guarantee getting meetings into the Yearbook I will need details of any that you are still planning within the next week – for example, consider turning one of your local meetings into a national meeting. It will always be possible to add late arrivals onto the webpage, which is becoming the main source of reference for many botanists.

Trevor James is compiling all the field meeting reports from this year (and previous years if they haven't been published) for the Yearbook. If you have held a meeting this year and haven't yet sent in a report, please send it to Trevor, with a copy to me, as soon as possible. I will chase late submissions soon!

[Jonathan Shanklin](#), Hon. Field Meetings Secretary

### **BSBI Yearbook**

Council decided at their November meeting that less formal names in the Yearbook might encourage less experienced members to make contact with those listed. The change won't happen overnight, nor will we make any change unless you tell us your preference. As an example, I would prefer to be listed as Jonathan Shanklin with my v.c.29 hat on rather than as Mr J D Shanklin. I have volunteered to collate requests, though to reduce the number of emails flying around it seems sensible to carry out some of the collation in groups, for example the standing committee secretaries will ask for their committee member preferences and the Country Officers will ask their County Recorders. The deadline for the Yearbook is however fast approaching, so if you want to ensure a change goes into the 2019 Yearbook please let us know soon!

[Jonathan Shanklin](#), Hon. Field Meetings Secretary

### **Identiplant**

If you know of any beginner botanists who are keen to improve their ID skills, why not direct them towards [Identiplant](#), the online ID course supported by BSBI's [Training](#) Team? Applications open on 1st December and spaces fill up very quickly. Any botanist who feels they have the time and the skills to be an Identiplant tutor in 2019 should take a look at the website and contact course co-ordinator [Brenda Harold](#) asap.

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

### **Twig Key: update**

After many unavoidable delays, John Poland tells us that his *Field Key to Winter Twigs* has at last been printed and bound. Copies are due to reach Gwyn Ellis on 30<sup>th</sup> November and he'll be sending them

out during the first week in December. We've tried to keep you updated on progress via the [Twig Key webpage](#) but we'd like to thank you all for your patience during the past few months.

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

### **New Flora of the British Isles**

Quick reminder - the pre-publication offer for the fourth edition of the New Flora (saving £8) will expire at the end of January. Would-be purchasers who have lost the flyer which accompanied the September BSBI News should visit the website [www.clivestace.com](http://www.clivestace.com).

[Clive Stace](#)

### **New on the website in November**

- The [Scottish Botanists' Conference webpage](#) has been updated and you can now download pdfs of the various talks, as well as abstracts of the exhibits (see above).
- The [Exhibition Meeting webpage](#) is also being updated with pdfs of the various talks (above).
- The [Training page](#) has been updated with details of all the various grants now available via the Wild Flower Society.
- A new [Herbaria webpage](#) has been created (see above).
- County pages for Montgomeryshire, Glamorgan, Kirkcudbrightshire and Leicestershire have been updated with progress reports on local recording and / or summaries of this year's field meetings. Head over to the [Local Botany page](#) to find links to all county webpages.
- New membership forms have been prepared and uploaded to the [Subscriptions webpage](#). Did you know that BSBI now has 2,948 members? If you know anybody who you think would benefit from BSBI membership, please send them [this link](#) and maybe we can leap the '3000 barrier' before the end of the year!
- On the password-protected Governance page, BSBI members can now see minutes of the most recent meetings of BSBI Council, the BSBI Board of Trustees and the Committee for Ireland.

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

### **On the News & Views blog in November**

We reported on the unveiling of a [blue plaque to botanist Agnes Arber](#) – many thanks to Roy Vickery who represented BSBI at this event; we pointed out a [botanical anachronism](#) and asked if you have spotted any similar televisual howlers; we [welcomed BSBI's new Welsh Officer](#) (see above); we told you [about the QGIS plug-in](#) and invited you to join in a consultation about it; this month's blogpost about Byron's Gin looked at [aspen in poetry and in folklore](#); and we reported on the [Scottish Botanists' Conference](#).

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

### **BSBI eNews**

BSBI eNews is aimed at all BSBI recorders, referees and members involved with recording. 267 BSBI members have now opted in to receive this monthly news email. 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