

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

BSBI Atlas 2020 Progress

1.17 million records have been added to the BSBI Database (DDb) for 2015 – a truly amazing achievement. Thank you! However 15 Vice-counties have contributed no records and a further 18 have contributed fewer than 300. As I said back in April, there are many reasons for this - such as vacancies, recording program changes, digitisation backlogs or data jams. If there is anything simple you can do (like synching MapMate) – do it now – otherwise the top priority must be fieldwork. But try to digitise and synch records as soon as possible after fieldwork in future. It is far easier when fresh in your mind – and less daunting than big backlogs! The great advantage of keeping the DDb up to date is that you can use it to monitor progress and identify gaps in your Atlas 2020 coverage and list ‘missing taxa’ - as described below.

Generate Taxon Lists

You can generate a list of all the taxa recorded in a grid square - complete with the first and last record dates - very simply using the BSBI DataBase (DDb). In the [BSBI DDb](#) click *Tools* > [Grid Reference Lookup](#) and type the square reference and click *look-up grid reference*. Then click *View taxon list for...* Post 1999 records are in bold and pre 2000 in italics. You can copy and paste the entire list into Word and print. The full list could be used as a recording card. Or click *sort recent records separately* so that you can easily see which taxa have not been recorded post 1999 – and print them off for reference when recording.

Identify gaps in Atlas 2020 coverage

Tom Humphrey reports that the [My County](#) pages of the BSBI Database (DDb) have been updated with additional information to help plan which grid-squares to target for recording. Under the *Atlas 2020 survey* tab there is a table linking to species lists for each grid-square in your county along with summary totals of the taxa found or not re-found in each square since 2000. The report rates survey coverage of each hectad and tetrad, based on the proportion of species re-found and on targets for total number of species and number of well-surveyed tetrads per hectad. For more information about a grid-square’s rating, hover your mouse pointer over cells in the *well recorded* column!

For most counties it’s worth modifying the thresholds used, to suit local conditions. The target values can be changed using the form above the table. There is also an option to include or exclude newly found (post-2000) taxa when assessing recording coverage.

New Data Validation features on the BSBI DataBase

New links have been added to the *Data validation* tab to provide a quick way to find subsets of records that need to be positively confirmed or rejected. There is no need to review every record of common species in your county but it’s hoped that for Atlas2020, all records for rare plants will have been verified and also that suspect or surprising occurrences will have been individually checked.

Specimens

The Referee network is a great but rather underused resource. Recorders should take specimens if in any doubt and it is sustainable to do so (and you are not in a protected area – like an SSSI). Then send them to Referees. Follow the instructions in the Yearbook, and remember to note details on the Recording Card or notebook of the specimen, location (and grid reference), name of collector, date of collection, habit (e.g. whether spreading or tufted) and notes of features likely to be lost on pressing such as flower colour and include a copy with the specimen. It is always good to attempt identification yourself, as part of the learning process and seek confirmation but if you are unable don't let that you put you off asking for a determination. Include your email if you would like a quicker response and a stamped addressed envelope if you would like the specimen returned.

GPSs

As Scottish Officer, I'm often asked about buying and using GPSs. Despite GPSs being a fundamental tool of a recorders' trade, they are often poorly understood and seldom used to their full potential. With the advent of the field season, I thought it would be timely to publish some advice on them, which is based on years of running workshops and feedback from others. Take a look at [GPS Advice](#) on the [Resources](#) page of the website.

Ticks

Everyone going into the field should be aware of the danger of ticks! There is an excellent [leaflet](#) on www.lymediseaseaction.org.uk. Buy proper tick removal tools and keep them handy as it's important to remove ticks asap. Don't use tweezers or your finger nails as that increases the chance of Lyme disease – if you don't have the right tool to hand, then try [this technique](#) using a cotton bud.

BSBI Photographic Competition

Images from the BSBI Photographic Competition have adorned recent covers of BSBI News and the New Journal of Botany. Now summer is here, remember to take your camera in the field and look for photographs you might enter in the 2016 competition. There are just two simple and very broad categories in 2016: 1) Rare species and 2) Common species. Photographs should be taken in Britain or Ireland and be of flowering plants, conifers, ferns, horsetails, club-mosses or stoneworts. For full details see page 49 of BSBI News 132 or [here](#)!

Free Plant Images

On the subject of photographs, Stephen Bungard has kindly pointed out a very useful source of free plant images for PowerPoint and websites. Low resolution images are available freely as long as it's not-for-profit, you credit the photographer and drop the site an email. Higher resolution images can be supplied for publications on request. See <http://www.ecnc.org/publications/freenatureimages/>.

State of the World's Plants report

The first annual report on the State of the World's Plants was published by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew at their recent conference. It is available on the www.stateoftheworldsplants.com website, where you can also explore the accompanying interactive content.

Professor Kathy Willis, Director of Science, RBG Kew says "In this report we address thirteen questions about our current knowledge on the State of the World's Plants. Our main findings not only illustrate the incredible amount of information that is already available about the world's plants but also the significant knowledge gaps. By synthesising our current understanding of the State of the World's Plants, we hope that its findings will galvanise the international scientific, conservation, business and governmental communities to take positive action to work together to fill the knowledge gaps highlighted and expand international collaboration, partnerships and frameworks for plant conservation and use."

BSBI Website

Several people have mentioned that it is a little bit difficult (re-)finding the list of Recorders and the Members' area. So in addition to clicking *directly* on '[Local Botany](#)' on the homepage you will find a new link from the Quick Links list on the [homepage](#) and an extra bullet to the list on the [Contact Us](#) page to the list of Recorders.

We also have new green box at the bottom of the homepage that links directly to the [Members' page](#). As I said back in April if you add the [Members' page](#) to your Favourites Bar, and allow your browser to remember your logon details, it will be very simple to return to it in future. Please email njb@bsbi.org.uk if you have forgotten the password.

BSBI eNews

BSBI eNews is read by BSBI Recorders, Referees, Staff and Committee members. I'd be really pleased to have short contributions from anyone on topics of interest and relevance to fellow readers. It is generally published on the 1st of each month (except on bank holidays!) so contributions should ideally arrive around the 21st of the preceding month. Please send them to me, Jim McIntosh.

If you'd prefer not to receive the monthly eNews, or would like me to use an alternative or new email address, please let me know.