

BSBI eNews – October 2017

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

### BSBI Welsh Officer update.

It is with great sadness that I handed in my resignation as Welsh Officer, as I am relocating to Scotland with my family. It has been a privilege and an honour to work with so many botanists, mainly Welsh ones, for the last six years and I will miss Wales and Welsh friends and botanists. However, I am moving to Perthshire, and hope to become an active Scottish member of the BSBI. I am also willing to carry on a little work on a voluntary basis, especially if anyone needs help formatting a Rare Plant Register.

I am very glad to say that Paul Green is returning to Wales and will be taking over as Welsh Officer from mid-October. Welcome back Paul, and I know that Wales will be in safe hands!

[Polly Spencer-Vellacott](#), BSBI Welsh Officer

### Atlas 2020 Fund Appeal

If you are a [BSBI member](#), you will have spotted an Atlas 2020 Fund Appeal leaflet tucked inside the most recent issue of *BSBI News*, which was posted to all members earlier this week. The Appeal aims to raise funds towards the cost of producing the next Atlas so please feel free to pass the leaflet on to anybody you think may be interested in making a donation. More copies are available on request from me, [Jane Houldsworth](#), BSBI Head of Operations, or you can point people towards our new [Appeal Fund webpage](#), which has all my contact details. Potential donors can call me for a confidential chat and find out how they can help support [Atlas 2020](#). And if you have been out this year recording for Atlas 2020, can I take this opportunity to say a huge **thank you** for your amazing contribution.

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

### Atlas 2020 Data Entry

Andy Amphlett has very kindly agreed to refresh the very popular tetrad/monad coverage maps by VC, using the latest data available on the BSBI Distribution Database (DDb). This will probably happen by mid-November. I am sure I am not alone in putting off the task of digitising field data during the summer months, despite my best intentions at the start of the year, so I'll be setting aside a few days or evenings in October to make sure my data are incorporated in the forthcoming maps. It probably goes without saying (but I'll say it anyway) that the more of your 2017 field data is on our database by November, the clearer the task remaining for 2018 by Vice-County will be, and the more useful the maps will become for targeting squares, under-recorded species, etc. My father would often quote a Benjamin Franklin line to me when I was at school: "You may delay, but time will not, and lost time is never found again." I am clearly still getting to grips with this!

[Pete Stroh](#), BSBI Scientific Officer

## Keeping on top of validation

Of the 714,000 records for 2017 that have arrived at the DDb so far only 8% have been validated (mostly confirmed, but a few rejected or marked as needing confirmation). Validating records that you have just sent to the BSBI Database is highly recommended. The great advantage of doing so is that - even if you have a big validation backlog - it won't get any bigger! It also has the advantage that if queries arise, you are more likely to remember the answers. [Here](#) is some simple guidance on how to go about it (on just two sides of A4).

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

## Data Entry – Grid References

After recent articles in BSBI *eNews* on Validation I thought it would be worth reminding recorders of two simple steps which will make it easier. It is very easy to get grid references wrong and it is a lot of hassle to subsequently investigate and correct errors that validation identifies. So when entering records with detailed grid references, I now always check them first before creating a new site in MapMate by plotting them on 1:25,000 OS map of my VC. I use [Memory Map](#) but you could also use [Cucaera](#) or [Streetmap](#) with a 1:25,000 map or in Ireland, you could use [Ordnance Survey Ireland](#).

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

## Data Entry – Sites Data Entry

It is also a lot of hassle to find and correct sites that are accidentally allocated to the wrong VC – which is very easy to do when you use MapMate's quick method of creating a site by typing "site name@grid reference" in the Data Entry Site field within 2km of your vice-county boundary. So, it is *always* worth checking such sites are allocated correctly. To do so, click the word "Site" on the Data Entry window and then select "View this entry". There is a fuller discussion of both this and the above issue in last August's [BSBI eNews](#).

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

## Data Entry - omission

Omission is a hard error to spot. During the Scottish Computerisation Project, which digitised one million paper records, we found that omission was the most common type of data entry error. The digitiser would lose the place when entering records, and sometimes a duplicate might be entered, but more often a record would be completely omitted. It is worth totting up the number of records on your card or notebook and regularly comparing that with the number you have entered during each session. Use the F5 function key to list records for all valid fields of the Data Entry Window, with the Taxon field left blank. The total is given in the bottom left hand corner of the window listing the records.

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

## Exporting records from the DDb to MapMate

We would like recorders to see the DDb as their main database and MapMate as just a way to get records into it, but if, like many people, you prefer to use MapMate to create maps, you may come

across records on the Ddb that you would like to include but which are missing from your MapMate. It is now possible to export these records to MapMate. This is a two-stage process. You must first tell the DDb which records you want to export and then create an export file. As usual, you should back up your MapMate before starting this process.

To select records for export, carry out a DDb search in the normal way. When you look at the results table, you can either select individual records (by clicking the left-hand box) or scroll down to the bottom and select all. Then you would change the “selected records action” to “add to mapmate”, and click “apply change to selected records”, followed by “add records” (you might need to enter your cuk if asked). You can do this as many times as you like for different records before proceeding to the next stage.

You could select all records (for your county, or for a selected date-class) but it would be better to be more selective and choose only the particular records of interest (e.g. those that provide a new tetrad record), so as to avoid cluttering your copy of MapMate with loads of duplicates.

When you are ready to create an export sync file, you need to go to “search history” and then “mapmate”. You will then see details of records previously added to MapMate, and you can click to generate a sync file. This may take some time – don’t give up! When a sync file has been created it should look like “apjtoxyz.sqz” and you should save it in your My MapMate/ Data/ Cache/ Download file. Then you can open your MapMate and open the replicator and sync as usual. Do not send a return sync file. These records should be “archived”, which means they will not be sync’ed to any partners. They will also not be editable, so any edits should be made as appropriate on the DDb or by the original MapMate owners.

[Polly Spencer-Vellacott](#), BSBI Welsh Officer

### ***Utricularia intermedia* agg.**

After a very nice chat with John Day recently, who many of you will know, not least in his capacity as BSBI referee for *Utricularia*, I thought I would briefly mention the recording of the *Utricularia intermedia* segregates (*U. intermedia* s.s., *U. stygia*, *U. ochroleuca*). *U. stygia* is the common species in Scotland, north-west England, and western Ireland. *U. intermedia* s.s. and *U. ochroleuca* are both rare. The former can be relatively straightforward to identify if the quadrifid hairs are examined - two pointing straight up, two pointing straight down – although make sure to always look c. mid-trap and take a consensus view as there will be variation. The latter can be difficult to tell apart from *U. stygia*. If in any doubt, then the default record should be *U. intermedia* agg. There is a small scattering of post-1999 records on the DDb for *U. ochroleuca*, considerably more for *U. intermedia* s.s. John would be very pleased to receive preserved specimens for examination if you think that you have found either species in your VC.

[Pete Stroh](#), BSBI Scientific Officer

### **Frog Rush (*Juncus ranarius*) as a roadside halophyte**

This summer there have been a flurry of records of *Juncus ranarius* from roadsides in North Scotland, in Moray, Banff and Skye, many confirmed by Mike Wilcox. This may be a widely scattered but overlooked roadside halophyte. Stephen Bungard has some info on his [blog](#). It’s still worth looking out for. It likes bareish, sometimes muddy, areas at the edge of roads. Most records are from beside A roads, but I have found it twice by minor roads. It is morphologically rather variable, but the inner tepal character (blunt-ish, sometimes with nerve extending as a short mucro) is a good one. Plants

are often brownish or green in *J. bufonius*, and usually have fruiting inflorescences clustered in twos or threes. The seed surface ornamentation differs between *J. ranarius* and *J. bufonius* but requires mature seeds and minimum x30 magnification. Mike is happy to check specimens.

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

### BSBI Scottish Annual Meeting

This year the Scottish Annual Meeting will be held on the 4<sup>th</sup> November at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh. As I mentioned last month, our guest speaker is well-known nature writer Michael Scott, who will give an illustrated talk on *Mountain Flowers*.

Look out for the flyer that was included with your September *BSBI News*, which should have arrived this week. It gives details of all the talks and the Identification mini-workshops on offer – for which you will need to book early to secure your preferred choices, as all workshops have limited capacity.

However, please [book online](#) as that makes it much easier to deal with your bookings efficiently. Everyone in Britain & Ireland with an interest in botany is very welcome!

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

### BSBI Annual Exhibition Meeting

Bookings are now open for the BSBI Annual Exhibition Meeting which will be held on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November at the Natural History Museum, London. BSBI members will have received a flyer inside their copy of *BSBI News* but the AEM is also open to non-members. More info [here](#) and please use the [online booking facility](#) if you can – it is very quick and easy to use and saves a lot of time at this end, but we are still accepting postal bookings for any member who prefers to book that way. A reminder that spaces on the behind-the-scenes tours of the Sloane Herbarium are limited and are available on a first come, first served, basis so do get your request in quickly!

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

### BSBI Photographic Competition 2017



Remember to take your camera when you are out and about this autumn and use it to take photographs that you could enter in the 2017 BSBI Photographic Competition. It has two categories: 1) Plants in the Landscape and 2) Archaeophytes. The competition entries will be displayed and judged at the Scottish Annual Meeting and also displayed at the Annual Exhibition Meeting at the NHM. [More...](#)

Autumn Lady's-tresses (*Spiranthes spiralis*) Isle of Scilly, by Jon Dunn. One of last year's entries.

[Jim McIntosh](#), BSBI Scottish Officer

### Training the Trainers

Are you involved in botanical training? We're not just talking here about university lecturers, but about leading wildflower walks or passing on ID tips to beginner botanists in your vice-county. If you have never attended one of BSBI's celebrated Training the Trainers days, why not check out what's on offer at this year's event? It takes place on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October at The Gateway in Shrewsbury

and the £15 registration fee includes a buffet lunch, tea and coffee, and all the workshops and hand-outs including the *Training the Botanical Trainers Handbook*. Please book by Friday 6<sup>th</sup> October. [More.](#)  
[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer  
Sarah Whild, BSBI Training & Education Committee

### Threatened Plants in Britain and Ireland

A big “thanks” to the 800+ recorders who contributed to BSBI’s [Threatened Plants Project](#) which ran from 2008 to 2013! If you were one of them, you will be delighted to hear that the data have all now been analysed by [BSBI’s Science Team](#) and the results have been published in ‘[Threatened Plants in Britain and Ireland](#)’. There is a flyer for this new [BSBI publication](#) inside the latest issue of *BSBI News* and members can benefit from a special pre-publication offer which will save them £5 on the usual price. Non-members can either [join now](#) and benefit from the special offer or wait until November when you will be able to buy the book at the full price of £15 (plus postage and packing). Head over [here](#) to find out more about the book or [here](#) to read an exclusive interview with lead author Kevin Walker, BSBI Head of Science. And if you come to the [BSBI Exhibition Meeting](#) at the Natural History Museum in November, you will be able to hear Kevin talking about the new book and there will be copies on sale at Summerfield Books’ pop-up bookshop.

[Louise Marsh](#), BSBI Communications Officer

### BSBI News & Views

On the News & Views blog in September: two plants refound which were thought extinct: [Leek-coloured Hawkweed in Derbyshire](#) and [Loddon Pondweed in the Thames in Oxfordshire](#); [orchid hunter Leif Bersweden](#) tells us about his new book which chronicles his attempts to see and photograph every British wild orchid over the course of one summer; we wish the Somerset Rare Plants Group a very [Happy 20<sup>th</sup> Birthday](#) and tell you how you can gate-crash their birthday party! From Ireland, we report on an [urban wildflower walk in Galway](#) and a very successful [Irish Autumn Meeting](#), held in Dublin. You can read about the [hunt for Least Water-lily](#) at its last remaining site in England which required the help of the local diving club; [Ted Lousley was remembered](#) at an event in London and there is a [second report from the inaugural Grassland Conservation Conference](#), this time focusing on the various fieldtrips; there is an alert about [five new Species Accounts](#) from the BSBI Science Team; we tell you a bit more about the [speakers](#) at this year’s [BSBI Annual Exhibition Meeting](#) (see above) and [how to book for the Training the Trainers event](#) (see above). You can also read interviews with the authors of two new BSBI publications – with [Kevin Walker](#), lead author of *Threatened Plants in Britain and Ireland* (see above) and with [David Pearman](#) about his new book, *The Discovery of the Native Flora of Britain and Ireland*.

[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 click on the links at the bottom of the email if you wish to unsubscribe or amend your email or forward it to anyone else who might be interested.

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