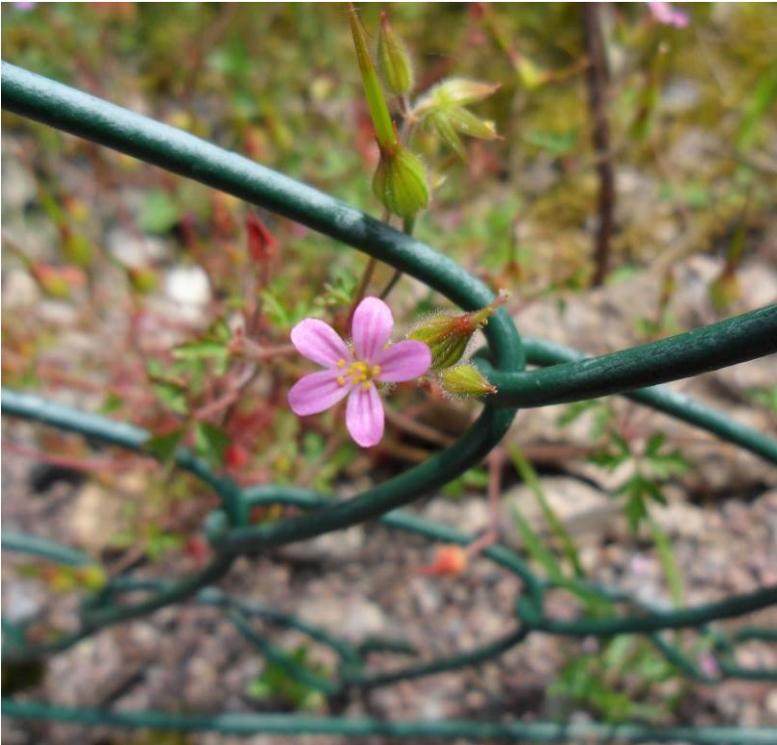




# Welsh Bulletin

**No. 95  
February 2015**



**Editors : Richard Pryce, Sally Whyman & Katherine Slade**

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**Front Cover Photo:** *Geranium purpureum* (Little-Robin), in Cardiff Bay, the first record for Glamorgan. Photo: Paul Green (see article, page 5).

**1:** *Atriplex portulacoides* on limestone cliff-top near Moelfre, Anglesey. Inset: General habitat view. *Atriplex* is just in front of Ivor's GPS. Photos: Ian Bonner (see article, page 24).

**2:** *Arabidopsis petraea* in Merioneth. Photos: Sarah Stille (see article, p31).

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Items for inclusion in the next Welsh Bulletin should be sent to Richard Pryce by **28th April 2015**: [Pryceeco@aol.co](mailto:Pryceeco@aol.co).

Back issues over one year old are uploaded to the website. [www.watsonia.org.uk/html/wales.html](http://www.watsonia.org.uk/html/wales.html). Most back issues are still available on request @ £2.50 per issue; please contact Sally Whyman or Katherine Slade. Cheques are payable to BSBI Wales. Future issues are available to BSBI members living outside of Wales by sending £2.50 in advance.

# **BSBI Welsh Officer Funding**

JANE HOULDSWORTH, *Head of Operations for BSBI*

Unfortunately in December we heard that our application to Natural Resources Wales (NRW) to continue our funding wasn't successful. Cuts in government funding have meant that NRW hasn't been able to give organisations such as ours the support they have in previous years. This is obviously hugely disappointing but BSBI is continuing to seek out any alternative sources of funding that may help the project continue. However, due to this uncertainty we have to start planning this year's activity as though the project, and therefore the Welsh officer post, will cease on 12<sup>th</sup> June. The field meetings and other events that would have been led by Welsh Officers after this date may no longer take place, although attempts are being made to find alternative arrangements. Information about these meetings and any alterations or cancelations can be found by contacting the Welsh Field Meetings Secretary - Sarah Stille (contact details on page 7).

Whilst we still have an Officer in post, we will concentrate on ensuring the project leaves as strong a legacy as possible, so work over the coming months will focus on supporting recording activity and helping to complete and update County Rare Plant Registers.

## **Statement by BSBI Committee for Wales**

The BSBI Committee for Wales endorses and wishes to underline Jane's comments on the regrettable decision by NRW not to extend its Strategic Partnership with BSBI in Wales. The Committee, of course, appreciates the financial constraints in which NRW finds itself but feel that the new body has lost sight of the level of reliance that CCW, in recent years, had placed on the contribution of non-governmental and voluntary bodies such as BSBI, in performing its EU and National wildlife conservation obligations.

BSBI has been an essential partner in recording plant species on SSSIs (Site Condition Monitoring) using its Threatened Plant Project methodology and has progressed the production of County Rare Plant Registers, both of these being major contributors to NRW's obligation which, of course, are also of benefit to BSBI. The employment of the BSBI Welsh Officer was an indispensable means by which CCW's, and latterly, NRW's targets were to be achieved.

The Welsh Officers have been able to mobilize and support the Welsh VC

Recorder network as well as the general membership towards these goals. They have been so successful to date that the Committee feels that the proposed termination of the post will be a great setback and that it is essential, even if only on a part time basis, to support the production of Atlas 2020, the maintenance of County Rare Plant Registers and the coordination of other BSBI activities in Wales. The Committee sincerely hopes that BSBI is successful in securing alternative funding to allow the continued employment of the Welsh Officer.

## Welsh Officer Update

PAUL GREEN, *c/o Dept. Natural Sciences, Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum Wales, Cardiff, CF10 3NP. paul.green@bsbi.org 02920 573152 / 07772 11113*

As I sit in front of my laptop in early December, one season has come to an end and the next feels like it has already started, as leaves of Lesser Celandine are showing and Winter Heliotrope has started flowering.

Since our last update in Welsh Bulletin No. 94, Polly has become a mum for the second time, Jay now has a brother “Robin”. Several members reported that they enjoyed giving Robin a cuddle at the AGM/Annual Exhibition Meeting at Leicester in November. I was not able to attend as I was recuperating from an operation I had in late October.

Wales has produced another three vice-county Rare Plant Registers (RPR) during 2014: Breconshire (v.c.42), Denbighshire (v.c.50) and Merionethshire (v.c.48). There are only two more vice-counties left to print their RPR (both are in draft form) in Wales. Once this is done, Wales will be the first country to achieve full coverage of RPRs for each vice-county. If you would like a free copy of these 3 RPRs please do contact me at the above address.

The field meetings arranged by the Welsh Officers during the summer were well attended:

- A very sunny day, on the 1<sup>st</sup> June to Cardiff Bay, produced many unusual alien species including *Crepis rubra*, a second record for Wales (see image 3, page 6). The highlight of the walk was *Geranium purpureum* (Little-Robin), a new county record and the 4<sup>th</sup> Welsh record (see front cover photo).
- I was not able to attend Pont ar Elan, on 22<sup>nd</sup> August, where a very successful day was had finding the target species *Hammarbya*

*paludosa* (Bog Orchid) after a good search.

- Seven species of Duckweeds were seen on the walk at Barecroft Common. *Lemna turionifera* (Red Duckweed) was seen in two reens.
- The meeting at Newport to look at *Atriplex* was cancelled as I should have been in hospital, but my appointment was deferred to October at the last minute.

The 2014 survey season took me to all the Welsh vice-counties. It is the first time I have done any botany in Denbighshire and Flintshire. The weather seemed to be exceptionally kind with no wet days in the field. Our four target species to survey produced very little results, none of the sites we searched for *Antennaria dioica* (Mountain Everlasting) and *Pseudorchis albida* (Small-white Orchid) were productive. Only one site for each of *Hammarbya paludosa* (Bog Orchid) and *Trollius europaeus* (Globeflower) produced a result.

Since I first put this note together, I have had to amend it and include the following: As many of you will be aware, there has been a setback as the post of BSBI Welsh Officer comes to an end on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2015. Unfortunately, BSBI was unsuccessful with their grant bids with Natural Resources Wales. As we were not informed until just before Christmas it was too late to make changes to the workshops / field meetings organised by the Welsh Officer across Wales, as the BSBI Yearbook 2015 had already gone to the printers.

Two workshops are cancelled: *Epilobium* in Radnorshire on 25-26 July, and Roses on the Great Orme on 11-12 August. The *Atriplex* workshop on 11-13 September may proceed with no firm decision likely until April, please send expressions of interest to Ivor Rees (contact details on p8). For meetings where it says contact BSBI Welsh Officer please now contact the Welsh Field Meetings Secretary: Sarah Stille (contact details on p7).

I'm sure I can speak on behalf of Polly in saying that we both have very much enjoyed our time working for the BSBI in Wales and both will miss the job as BSBI Welsh Officers very much.



**Image 3:** *Crepis rubra*, an unusual non-native species in Cardiff Bay and a second record for Wales. Photo: Paul Green.

# BSBI Field Meetings Wales - 2015

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Many thanks to everyone who has offered to lead field meetings in 2015.  
Please keep your ideas coming - meetings do not need to be led by vice county  
recorders, though it is a good idea to talk to your local recorder first. We will  
need a whole new lot for 2016!

T = TRAINING MEETING at differing levels

R = RECORDING MEETING

G= GENERAL INTEREST

## 12 February

*Euphrasia* workshop  
National Museum Cardiff,  
Glamorgan, v.c.41 [T]  
Leader: Chris Metherall (and Sarah  
Stille as contact)

## 18 March

Search for *Chrysosplenium*  
*alternifolium*  
Glamorgan, v.c.41 [R]  
Leader: Julian Woodman (and  
Sarah Stille as contact)

## 18-19 April

Teifi marshes and Atlas recording  
Cardiganshire, v.c.46 [R]  
Leader: Steve Chambers (and  
Sarah Stille as contact)

## 14 May

*Tuberaria guttata* and search for  
*Trifolium occidentale*  
Caernarvonshire, v.c.49 [R]  
Leader: Wendy McCarthy (and  
Sarah Stille as contact)

## 16-17 May

*Fumaria* training and *F.purpurea*  
search + coastal visit  
Flintshire, v.c.51 [T/R]  
Leader: Emily Meilleur (and Sarah  
Stille as contact)

## 20-21 June

Bloreng and Gilwern Hill  
Recording  
Monmouth, v.c.35 etc [R/G]  
Leaders: Steph Tyler, Elsa Wood &  
John Crellin

## 20-27 June

Glynhir recording week  
Carmarthenshire, v.c.44 [R/G]  
Leaders: Richard & Kath Pryce

## 6 July

Introduction to wild flowers for  
beginners  
Glamorgan, v.c.41  
Leaders: Julian Woodman, Rose  
Revera and Colin Cheeseman [T]

**10-12 July**

Welsh AGM - to include recording and survey events. See separate flyer.

Merioneth, v.c.48 [T/R/G]

Leader: Sarah Stille

**13-16 July**

Recording meeting based at Northop College

Flintshire, v.c.51 [R]

Leader: Emily Meilleur (and Sarah Stille as contact)

**17-19 July**

*Rubus* workshop in the field -

Northop College

Flintshire, v.c.51 [T]

Leaders: Emily Meilleur and David Earl

**21-25 July**

Caerdeen recording days

Merioneth, v.c.48 [R]

Leaders: Sarah Stille and Annie Seddon

**25-26 July**

CANCELLED

(*Epilobium* workshop Radnorshire)

**28-30 July**

Atlas recording

Denbighshire, v.c.50 [R]

Leader: Delyth Williams

**11-12 August**

CANCELLED

(Roses workshop, Great Orme)

**26-27 August**

*Hammarbya* search and recording day

Breconshire, v.c.42 [R]

Leader: John Crellin (and Sarah Stille as contact)

**11-13 September**

*Atriplex* workshop [T/G]

Caernarvonshire/Anglesey  
v.c.49/52

Leader: Ivor Rees

(Carreg y Gad, Ffordd Penmynydd  
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# Minutes of the 2014

## BSBI Wales Annual General Meeting

The 52<sup>nd</sup> AGM of BSBI Wales, held at The Royal George Hotel, Tintern, Monmouthshire on Thursday 19th June 2014 at 9:45am.

1. **Welcome:** The Chair, Delyth Williams, welcomed all assembled to The Royal George Hotel, firstly in Welsh and then in English.

There were 18 members present who were resident in Wales and eligible to vote, including the Chair and Secretary.

Welsh members in attendance: Anne Coker, Stephen Coker, Heather Colls, John Crellin, Sue Furber, Paul Green, Andy Jones, John Palmer, Margaret Perring, Mike Porter, Kath Pryce, Richard Pryce, Polly Spencer-Vellacott, Sarah Stille, Stephanie Tyler, Delyth Williams, Elsa Wood, Julian Woodman.

Non-Welsh members in attendance: Bob Hodgson, Graeme Kay, Clive Lovatt, Liz McDonnell, Mike Ogden, Martin Rand, Vanessa Williams.

Visitors: Veronica Bird.

2. **Apologies for Absence:** Ian Bonner, Pippa Bonner, Steve Chambers, Arthur Chater, Paul Day, Liz Dean, Natasha De Vere, Stephen Evans, Ann Evans, Jane Houldsworth, Katherine Slade, Sue Spencer, Kate Thorne, Sally Whyman, Ray Woods.

3. **Minutes of 2013 AGM:** Minutes of the 51<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting held at the Bulkeley Hotel, Beaumaris, Anglesey on Friday 14th June 2013 were distributed at the 2014 AGM and will be printed in Welsh Bulletin No.94. The meeting agreed that the minutes were a true record and they were proposed by Mike Porter, seconded by Andy Jones and signed by the Chair. Due to the summer Bulletin not appearing in time for the AGM it was agreed that, in future, the AGM minutes would appear in the winter bulletin.

4. **Matters Arising:** There were no matters arising.

5. **Chairman's Statement:** Delyth Williams thanked all involved in the organisation of the 2014 AGM, including leaders of field meetings. Elsa Wood and Stephanie Tyler had organised an excellent meeting, with good weather, and led meetings with Elsa also providing accommodation and breakfast to some. The Chair then welcomed Steve Chambers as VCR for Cardiganshire as Arthur Chater had decided to step down after 37 years and

Kath Pryce as Joint Recorder for Carmarthenshire. She also told the meeting that guidelines to ensure adequate coverage in the run up to Atlas 2020 were now available and hoped that the general membership would become involved in recording and not just the VCRs. Related to this, she mentioned a forthcoming meeting which is to address sharing good practice in working with local flora groups in Wales. Delyth thanked both Welsh Officers, Polly Spencer-Vellacott and Paul Green who currently shared the job and wished Polly well as she is about to depart on maternity leave; Paul will provide cover by working full time in her absence. She also thanked all those who served on the Committee for Wales and, in particular, Richard Pryce who was stepping down as Secretary after more years than he could remember - to general applause.

**6. Hon. Secretary's Report:** Richard Pryce began by thanking Delyth for her good wishes and continued by thanking Elsa, Steph, the Hotel and all the membership for making this another very successful Welsh AGM. He expressed some concern at the increasing workloads of VCRs and described the detailed recording carried out in his Vice-county of Carmarthenshire but asked how to encourage the general membership to become more involved, admitting that some vice-counties are more successful than others in this.

Richard then described the declining importance attached to the Welsh National Herbarium at Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum Wales by various governing bodies where there are now no botanists in post with the expertise to carry-out critical determinations as Tim Rich had done before his job was cut. However, Richard was pleased to be able to tell the meeting that both Katherine Slade and Sally Whyman have retained jobs at NMW as Botany Curators. He also drew attention to herbaria@home as an excellent initiative for which additional funding is being sought to enable the website to be maintained.

Richard then explained the delay in producing Welsh Bulletin 94, partly due to some necessary late amendments to *Welsh Plant Records* and Katherine and Sally being over-stretched at NMW, whom he profusely thanked for their persistence and enthusiasm in its production and distribution. The aim is now to begin Bulletin distribution in July. He thanked Stephen Coker (and Anne Coker for her tolerance) for his work in producing *Welsh Plant Records*. The secretary appealed for those who had generously provided exhibits to produce abstracts for inclusion in the AGM Report for the Bulletin. He also drew attention to the Welsh Bulletin Subject Index covering the years 2005 to 2014, produced by Katherine Slade, which is posted on the Welsh pages of the BSBI website. Richard then echoed Delyth's thanks for the work done by the Welsh

Officers, in supporting the VCRs and thanked Andy Jones for his invaluable assistance in the procurement of funding from CCW. He also thanked Sarah Stille for assembling the Welsh Field Meetings programme. Finally, he thanked Delyth for her four years of excellent work as Chair before welcoming Julian Woodman who will take-over the role for the forthcoming four years.

**7. Hon. Treasurer's Report:** The Treasurer presented the accounts for 2013 which are reproduced below.

<b>2013 Accounts 1 January 2013 to 31 December 2013</b>				
<i>Receipts</i>			<i>Payments</i>	
Welsh Bull. Subs.	128.00		Printing Welsh Bull. no.89	249.90
AGM	587.75		Postage Welsh Bull. no.89	70.27
Welsh Bull. costs from BSBI	506.90		AW Print Welsh Bull. no.90	371.00
John Topp drinks	224.80		Postage Welsh Bull. no.90	135.90
Sale of cards and books	135.00		WB expenses	7.00
			Hire of Committee room	50.00
			AGM costs [including payments to hotel of money received in error]	297.75
			John Topp drinks	224.80
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,582.45</b>			<b>1,406.62</b>
Receipts less payments	175.83			
Brought forward from 31/12/2011	<b>672.01</b>			
<b>Balance at bank</b>	<b>847.84</b>			

There were several queries from the floor which led to some discussion. Clive Lovatt (BSBI Admin Officer) suggested that thinking of the Welsh accounts as a "petty cash" element of the main BSBI accounts might aid understanding. However, the Chair emphasized that the John Topp drinks legacy should always be accounted for separately and clearly. The accounts were then adopted unanimously.

## **8. BSBI Welsh Officer's Report**

Paul Green said that he would work full time for about 12 months to cover Polly's maternity leave. The Welsh Officers reported that they had spoken to all the VCRs and visited many, giving help with the use of the Distributional Database (DDb), planning for Atlas 2020, Rare Plant Registers (RPRs), etc. Polly Spencer-Vellacott said that 11 out of the 13 Welsh vice-counties had now produced RPRs and that printed copies were on display with the other exhibits. Andy Jones said that when the final two RPRs were completed, Wales would be the first country to have complete coverage and that Ministers should be told this. The Welsh Officers had also been involved in the monitoring rare and scarce plants and had set up training courses including a *Taraxacum* Workshop at Treborth Botanic Garden, winter tree recognition and a *Rubus* workshop. Paul asked members to suggest useful courses for the future which was followed by a response from the floor for a *Euphrasia* workshop. He also said that a basic identification course was being proposed in association with Plantlife. He reported that he now had a room of his own at NMW, rather than just a desk and that photos of BSBI activities were on the web. Polly added that she could be contacted by phone until she starts her maternity leave and the number is on the website.

## **9. Election of Officers and Members to the Committee for Wales**

Delyth Williams stood down as Chair and Julian Woodman succeeded her, relinquishing his former post as Vice-chair. He will also be the Welsh representative on BSBI Council for the time being. This meant that a new Vice-chair was required and Stephanie Tyler, who had previously indicated she was willing to stand, was proposed by Andy Jones and seconded by Sarah Stille and was elected unanimously.

Sarah Stille agreed to continue as Welsh Meetings Secretary.

Liz Dean has agreed to continue as the Welsh Treasurer.

Richard Pryce had expressed a wish to stand down as Welsh Secretary after many years of service and Elsa Wood had previously agreed to be nominated

to stand in his place. She was proposed by Sarah Stille and seconded by John Crellin and was elected unanimously.

The following members retire from the Committee in 2014 and have agreed to stand for re-election: Ian Bonner, Natasha De Vere, Julian Woodman. Their re-election was approved by those present.

Paul Day stands down as NRW observer as he has retired from NRW. Andy Jones will act as NRW observer in the short term but it was suggested that Peter Jones be asked to carry out this role in future.

Richard Pryce, before standing down, then asked for any further nominations from the floor but none were forthcoming.

The Committee for Wales now comprises:

Chairman:	Julian Woodman
Vice Chairman:	Stephanie Tyler
Secretary:	Elsa Wood
Treasurer:	Liz Dean
Bulletin Editors:	Richard Pryce, Sally Whyman and Katherine Slade
Meetings Secretary:	Sarah Stille
Minutes Secretary:	Kath Pryce
Committee Members:	Ian Bonner, Steve Chambers, Arthur Chater, John Crellin, Natasha De Vere, Liz Dean, Trevor Dines, Stephen Evans, Andy Jones, Peter Jones, Richard Pryce, Sue Spencer, Kate Thorne, Delyth Williams and Ray Woods
BSBI Welsh Officers:	Polly Spencer-Vellacott and Paul Green
NRW Observer:	Andy Jones
Plantlife Representative:	Colin Cheeseman

Julian Woodman then thanked Delyth and Richard for their support and mentioned the "brave new world" of BSBI but said that it remained essentially

a voluntary organisation. He also thanked Elsa Wood and Steph Tyler for arranging this excellent Welsh AGM.

### **10. Any Other Business:**

1. The date and venue for the 2015 Welsh AGM has not been finally decided but is likely to be at Plas Tan-y-Bwlch in July. Details will appear on the website as soon as a decision is made.
2. The meeting was told that Arthur Chater has stood down as vice county recorder for Cardiganshire and that Steve Chambers will now be full time Recorder for v.c.46.
3. Elsa Wood thanked the Welsh Officers, voluntary officers and members of the committee and finally reminded everyone that at dinner this evening a free drink would be provided courtesy of Cdr John Topp's legacy.

The meeting closed at 10.20am.

## Exhibits at the 2014 Exhibition Meeting

### **Exhibit: *Fumaria purpurea* from around Wales 2014 by Paul R. Green**

Live specimens were on view from Monmouthshire. Photos of sites and plants were on display from around Wales. A dot map showed where sites were found in 2014.

### **Exhibit: BSBI field meetings photos by Paul R. Green**

A mixture of plants seen with members enjoying themselves were on display from meetings held at Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum Wales, in Cardiff Bay and at the *Taraxacum* workshop based at Treborth Botanic Garden.

### **Exhibit: Monmouthshire Meadows Group (MMG) by Stephanie Tyler**

MMG formed in 2003 because of a concern by several local people in the Trellech area over lack of management of many small, once species-rich fields and their reversion to brambles, bracken and scrub.

The Group aims to help local people with anything from half an acre or more to tens of acres of grassland, manage their fields more effectively to maintain and increase the rich variety of plants and other wildlife in these meadows and pastures. It also provides a survey of any new members' land, offers advice on management, and puts people in touch with local contractors and graziers.

Two Exmoor ponies are kept which are taken wherever required for conservation grazing and some machinery is available to cut small areas.

After ten years of existence, the Group produced a book to celebrate its successes. This book was available at the display; it includes accounts by many members from those with mini-meadows in their gardens to those with larger areas of land. These accounts detail the problems faced by landowners but also the pride people have in their flower-rich grasslands and their joy of discovering new species appearing in their meadows.

Follow the Monmouthshire Meadow Group on Twitter: @MonMeadows

## **53rd BSBI Welsh AGM & Field meeting & 33<sup>rd</sup> Exhibition Meeting**

Friday 10th – Sunday 12th July 2015

based at: Plas Tan y Bwlch, Maentwrog,  
Blaenau Ffestiniog, Merioneth v.c.48

We would like to welcome the BSBI to Plas Tan y Bwlch, an Environmental Studies Centre of the Snowdonia National Park Authority which “occupies a superb position overlooking...the River Dwyryd in the heart of the National Park”. It is well-equipped for conferences and provides all facilities, exhibition space and comfortable accommodation – including full board - for £173.40 [en-suite] or £156.40 [standard, with shared bathroom].

The theme of the weekend is “Peatlands”, and will include workshops and talks as well as a choice of excursions to places of interest in the area such as Arthog Bog with its scarce relic lowland mire, and the Migneint, a vast SSSI of upland blanket bog. Visits to other habitats will be offered and there will be the opportunity to record unvisited tetrads for Atlas 2020. The Welsh AGM will be held on Saturday morning, 11<sup>th</sup> July.

The conference will begin from 1.30 onwards on Friday with registration and the setting up of exhibits and there will be workshops and guided walks in the grounds until supper. There will be field excursions on Saturday and Sunday and talks on both evenings to include subjects around the main theme.

Opportunities to book for this event will be circulated in 2015, and are available via the BSBI website: <http://www.bsbi.org.uk/wales.html>

SARAH STILLE

# 2015 BSBI Welsh AGM. Provisional Programme

SARAH STILLE, 38 Foregate, Fulwood, Preston, PR2 8LA. Tel. 01772  
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## Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July

- 1.00 pm Welcome & registration at Plas Tan y Bwlch; setting up of exhibits
- 3.00 pm Afternoon tea, workshops and guided walks in the grounds
- 6.30 pm Evening meal
- 8.00 pm Short talks: “A short tour of Merioneth”; Peatland restoration; The work of the Welsh Officers

## Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> July

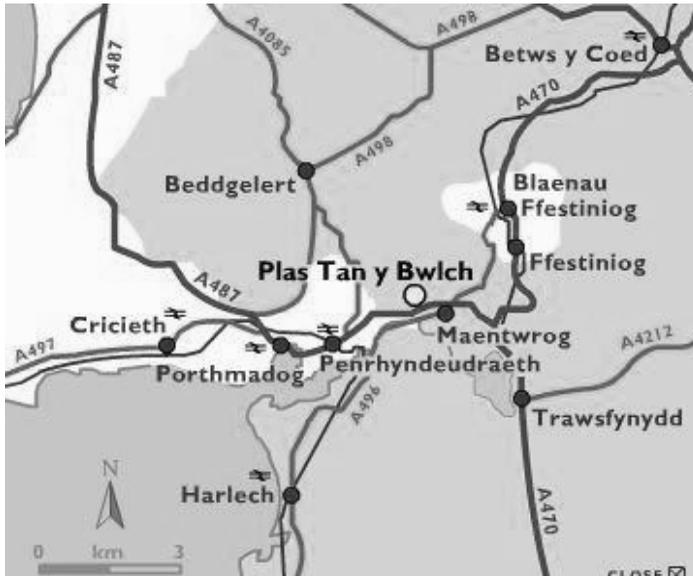
- 8.15- 8.45am Breakfast (collect pre-ordered packed lunch)
- 8.45 am Welsh Committee meeting
- 9.30 am Welsh AGM
- 10.15 am Leave for field trips
- 4.00 pm Return to base. Tea and view exhibits
- 6.30 pm Evening meal
- 8.00 pm Keynote address by Peter Jones, Peatland Ecologist, Natural Resources Wales

## Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July

- 8.15-8.45 am Breakfast, clear rooms & collect packed lunch
- 9.30 am Leave for excursions
- 4.00 pm approx end of AGM

## Location

Plas Tan y Bwlch is located approximately 6 miles east of the coastal town of Porthmadog on the A487 set amongst high mountains and wildlife rich woodlands.



## Booking and Accommodation

Rooms at Plas Tan y Bwlch are ensuite or standard (with a shared bathroom) for a package price of £173.40 or £156.40 respectively. This also includes:

- Friday: Afternoon tea/coffee & biscuits & evening meal
- Saturday: Breakfast, packed lunch, afternoon tea/coffee & evening meal
- Sunday: Breakfast & packed lunch
- Plus all the facilities of the Centre, exhibition and meetings rooms, drying room etc

Alternatively, it is possible to book single nights:

- single night's dinner, bed and breakfast [ensuite] £86.70
- single night's dinner, bed and breakfast [standard] £78.20

[for a shared room deduct £8.00 pppn from these prices]

For non-residents:

- Evening meal on Friday £15.95
- Evening meal on Saturday £15.95
- packed lunch on Saturday £5.50
- packed lunch on Sunday £5.50
- tea/coffee and biscuits on Friday £1.85
- tea/coffee and biscuits on Saturday £1.85

Conference fee [payable by all delegates] £10.00

## **James Iliff, 4<sup>th</sup> January 1923 to 11<sup>th</sup> July 2014**

RICHARD PRYCE, *Trevethin, School Rd, Pwll, Llanelli, Carmr, SA15 4AL.*  
(*Pryceeco@aol.com*)

It is with great sadness that I have to report the passing of James Iliff on 11th July 2014. He and his wife Mary lived in Cilycwm, Carmarthenshire and were major contributors of botanical records to the county flora recording scheme from the early 1980s until recent years. James had a particular interest in clubmosses and following his close study of them on Mynydd Mallaen, published a paper on his and Mary's findings (Iliff, 1991). One of James' most noteworthy contributions was the discovery in 1983 of the hybrid cinquefoil *Potentilla x italica* (*P. erecta* x *P. reptans*), a taxon new to science as a wild plant although it had previously been created in the lab. He wrote a short piece for BSBI News (Iliff, 2008) entitled "*Maddening Mimics*" highlighting several confusing species pairs but he had little problem in separating the South American prickly pears, another passion of his. His research culminated in an authoritative account of them in 2002, in volume 6 of *Succulent Plant Research* (in fact, volume 8, published in 2014, is dedicated to James' in memory of his contribution to this subject).

James brought his musical talent to our annual botanical recording weeks at Glynhir by giving impromptu recitals on the piano and in latter years, he had had several of his compositions recorded onto CD. His painting was another but lesser known talent. He was always good company and I value and look back with affection to the times when we had the opportunity to accompany him and Mary searching for clubmosses on the moors. He was a very accomplished botanist, often critically questioning the botanical authorities,

and I pay tribute to his and Mary's invaluable contribution to the study of the Carmarthenshire flora.

James and Mary were always together and our hearts go out to Mary in her loss. He will also be sorely missed among his botanical friends and Carmarthenshire botany will probably never again see such a prolific and enthusiastic supporter.

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A fuller tribute appears in the BSBI Yearbook for 2015.

## Anglesey Plants and the Flora Group in 2014

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Before the first indoor meeting at Treborth Botanic Garden in March, Pat Denne used the 9597 records added in 2013 to update the map showing the total taxa recorded in each of the 800 monads. Andrew Dixon made an electronic version of it available for subsequent reference. At the meeting, it was again agreed to concentrate effort on collecting monad data toward the Atlas 2020, a future county flora and keeping the Rare Plant Register up to date. Barry Wrightson kindly agreed to take over the circulation of information about recording days and the coordination of bookings.

Over the weekend of 26-27<sup>th</sup> April Professor John Richards and Dr Tim Rich led a *Taraxacum* workshop at Treborth, which included field visits to parts of Anglesey and Caernarfonshire. Some 39 taxa were noted on Anglesey, of which 26 were new vice county records and will be published in *Plant Records* in due course.

This illustrates the need for targeted recording of difficult taxa to back up basic monad coverage in the run-up to Atlas 2020. *Atriplex* species (Oraches) on coastal strandlines come into this category. They featured in the 2013 Report and Paul Green came up in early September to assist and make collections. Based on further work this year, it appears that as well as six species, the Anglesey coast may have a complex of four different hybrids. Material is now with the BSBI Referee for the genus.

*Atriplex portulacoides* (Sea-purslane) is one that is easy to spot. It is now common in many salt marshes, with post-2000 records from 50 monads. This has not always been the case: Hugh Davies (1813) listed only four localities and J.E. Griffith (1895) described the plant as “very rare and local”, giving only two localities. Sea-purslane has clearly undergone a dramatic spread around the Anglesey coast since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Interestingly a couple of these early records appear to be from atypical rock habitats and a separate note in this *Bulletin* (page 24) explores this further.

Paul Green stayed on after the *Taraxacum* workshop to accept the challenge of re-finding one of the two species of filmy fern on Holyhead Mountain (last recorded in 1984). Paul was successful and found a small clump of *Hymenophyllum wilsonii* (Wilson's Filmy-fern) amongst boulder scree at SH219.830. Of equal interest, Paul also re-found *Fumaria purpurea* (Purple Ramping-fumitory) on a roadside bank in Menai Bridge, SH553.722, and on the bank of the B4419, near Foel Farm (Sea Zoo), SH475.650. It had been thought to be 'possibly extinct' with the last cluster of records from the early 1930s and a single record from Red Wharf Bay in 1967.

In April, Andy Jones found a new population of the Nationally Scarce *Thelypteris palustris* (Marsh Fern) in a boggy hollow near Mynachdy, SH299.919.

A small group visited Cadnant, near Menai Bridge, on 15<sup>th</sup> May concentrating on the grassland and woodland west of the Cadnant Dingle SSSI, but John Bratton visited the Dingle and confirmed *Crepis paludosa* (Marsh Hawk's-beard) still by the Afon Cadnant, SH55.73, its only Anglesey locality.

A day recording “empty” monads south west of Amlwch in May produced the eighth recent record of *Galium album* (Hedge Bedstraw) from a road verge. This is its most frequent habitat on the island and it is difficult to know if it is a true native on Anglesey. The day also strengthened the view that *Ranunculus bulbosus* (Bulbous Buttercup) is quite widespread along road verges, as well as on base-rich semi-natural grassland, but it is only conspicuous for quite a short period of the year.

On 17<sup>th</sup> May the Flora Group met at the Pen-lôn end of Newborough to admire the luxuriant display of *Menyanthes trifoliata* (Bogbean) and other wetland plants adjacent to Llyn Rhos-ddu and then (following up knowledge from the dandelion workshop) went to see *Taraxacum palustre* (Marsh Dandelion) in several of the dune slacks.

Some of the Group went to Newborough again in August, this time crossing to the tidal flats to the far extremity at Abermenai Point. *Limonium binervosum*

aggregate (Rock Sea-lavender) was found at a new location. As usual, there were good shows of *Eryngium maritimum* (Sea Holly) and the diminutive *Centaureum pulchellum* (Lesser Centaury) was found in at least two locations. After the storms of last winter *Cakile maritima* (Sea Rocket) has been especially widespread here and around the west coast of Anglesey in 2014.

In late May and late July, the Group revisited Parciau Home Farm to update the records last made in 1999. A good list was compiled for SH49.84, including a number of species not seen in 1999 such as *Euonymus europaeus* (Spindle) and *Geranium sanguineum* (Bloody Cranesbill). However, we were disappointed not to re-find some of the scarcer plants of the limestone outcrops, including *Arabis hirsuta* (Hairy Rock-cress) and *Elymus caninus* (Bearded Couch).

*Pyrola rotundifolia* (Round-leaved Wintergreen) is a well-known feature of dune slacks and damp hollows at Newborough and Aberffraw, but another wintergreen, *Pyrola minor* (Common Wintergreen) has also been found in Newborough Forest. In 1984, Mr & Mrs Davidson recorded it at two locations in SH41.66. Searches in June 2014 failed to re-find it there, the forest floor being now densely covered in scrub and tall herbs. However Common Wintergreen had also been found more recently near the western edge of the Forest, and here at SH388.651 Jane and Ivor Rees and I enjoyed the spectacle of well over 300 flower spikes in a rather open situation under the Corsican Pines (see photo). It is thought that Common Wintergreen was probably introduced along with the trees in the 1950s. We went on to see the Nationally Vulnerable *Hypochaeris glabra* (Smooth Cat's-ear) which was locally frequent nearby in open sand at the junction of two forest tracks at SH387.651. The maintenance of these open habitats is very important for the Cat's-ear and several other Newborough specialities. Further west in the open dunes there was a stunning display of *Anacamptis pyramidalis* (Pyramidal Orchid), with frequent *Ophrys apifera* (Bee Orchid).

In June, *Allium sativum* (Garlic) was spotted on the coast and on roadsides near Trearddur Bay, SH243.793. The plants appeared to be well established and this is the first record of it growing wild in Anglesey. The coiled flower stalks are characteristic of var. *ophioscorodon* (see article on page 26 for further details). Paul Green, who is the BSBI Referee for *Allium*, was taken to see the Anglesey population of *Allium ampeloprasum* (Wild Leek) (see image 7 on inside back cover). This, the only site, is on a road bank at Ty Mawr, SH218.816, near South Stack, the plant has been known here since 1970 and this year 80 flower heads were counted in July.

In July, Cath Shellswell of Plantlife carried out arable plant surveys of 14 fields on a number of farms in NW Anglesey and kindly sent a copy of her survey results. *Spergula arvensis* (Corn Spurrey) and *Stachys arvensis* (Field Woundwort), listed respectively as Near Threatened and Vulnerable on the Welsh Red List, occurred in all the surveyed fields. The highlight was finding *Kickxia elatine* (Sharp-leaved Fluellen) and *Misopates orontium* (Weasel's-snout) in a field in SH28.76, both of which are very scarce on Anglesey.

*Calamagrostis epigejos* (Wood Small-reed) seems to be becoming more widely recorded with sightings in August and October from just west of Point Lynas, SH476.930 and from the Rhoscolyn area, SH277.759 and SH282.749. There are now twelve post-2000 records, almost all from around the coast, and in several cases, it is forming patches extending over several square metres.

In August, Richard Lansdown paid another visit to the RSPB's Malltraeth Marsh reserve and discovered the very attractive rayed form of Nodding Bur-marigold *Bidens cernua* var. *radiata* (see image 4 below) which was locally frequent along ditches near the Tai'r-gors office. This variety was first listed



**Image 4:** *Bidens cernua* var. *radiata* (Nodding Bur-marigold). Photo: Ian Bonner

by Hugh Davies (1813) as being 'very rare' with a single locality. There was a second record from Anglesey by N.D. Simpson in 1926 and two records from Denbighshire in 1970 & 2012. Otherwise, these are the only records from Wales.

*Lactuca serriola* (Prickly Lettuce) was first recorded in 2005 near Valley, SH28.78. The expected rush of further records has not yet been noted, but in August Richard Birch found a second site at Holyhead Railway Station, SH248.820.

A further walk by Holyhead station in October produced two more interesting plants from almost the same locality, *Erigeron acris* (Blue Fleabane) and *Erodium moschatum* (Musk Stork's-bill). Several plants of both species were found between the railway and the walkway, SH2489.8224. There are plenty of Blue Fleabane records from the sand dunes at Newborough and Aberffraw and a scatter from the limestone at Penmon, but this is the first from such a ruderal habitat. For the Musk Stork's-bill, this is the first record since 1992, when it was found by R.H. Roberts and Mattie Davies on a rock at Tywyn Trewan.

**Correction:** The note in the 2013 Anglesey Plants Report (*BSBI Welsh Bulletin No.93, page 18*) about the Menai Strait Whitebeam having been discovered on Church Island is now incorrect. Following a site visit by Dr. Tim Rich in 2014, he has re-determined the specimens as *Sorbus aria* (L.) Crantz. So the un-named Menai Strait Whitebeam is still only known from Nantporth, on the Caernarfonshire side of the Strait.

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## ***Atriplex portulacoides* (Sea-purslane) in atypical rock cliff habitats in Anglesey (v.c. 52)**

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*Atriplex portulacoides* (Sea-purslane), though normally regarded as a salt-marsh species, does also occur on rocks and cliffs in a few places. Akeroyd & Preston (1984) assembled records of scattered rock colonies from all round Britain, Ireland and the Channel Islands, from literature searches and enquiries to vice-county recorders. A later short note covered some additional records (Akeroyd & Preston 1987). Two locations in Anglesey (vc.52) were mentioned in the above papers. We tried to check whether *A. portulacoides* still occurred at these rock locations and in the course found others.

The earliest Anglesey records of Sea-purslane in a rock habitat were given by Revd. Hugh Davies (1813) who noted it on “high rocks in Bodowen Park” and “near Holyhead”. J.E. Griffith (1895) describes the plant as “very rare and local” and gives one of two locations as “near South Stack, Holyhead”. During monitoring work on the Bodorgan Estate in 2006 with permission from Meyrick Estates, *A. portulacoides* was found by Ian Bonner on rock in the Bodowen area in SH36.65 & 37.65

Roberts (1982) gives a location for Sea-purslane from Pen-Las Rock, a partly vegetated inaccessible sea stack about 0.9km south of South Stack, Holyhead. This record was not listed by Akeroyd and Preston (1984 & 1987), perhaps because the patch must have been seen from rather a long distance. However, it was recorded here again on the basis of binocular viewing by Nigel Brown and Trevor Dines in 1999. On 21<sup>st</sup> May 2014, a telescope was used to scan the north side of Pen-Las Rock and it was seen again. When shown a photograph of the rock Nigel Brown indicated that he had seen it on the same part of the stack. In 2014, the patch appeared to extend for about 5m along the edge of a sloping rock. Interpolated from map features the estimated grid reference was SH2085.8165.

In 1985 R.H. (Dick) Roberts, former Recorder for v.c.52, found Sea-purslane on top of a cliff on the east coast of Anglesey between Moelfre and Porth Forllwyd and in 1986 Chris Preston re-visited the spot, recording two plants on the edge of a limestone platform, giving a six figure grid reference in Akeroyd & Preston (1987). We went to the same grid reference 28 years later on 14<sup>th</sup> May 2014 and located a single inconspicuous small *A. portulacoides*

plant close to the edge of the same limestone platform at SH5066.8716 (see image 1 on the inside front cover).

At Porth Terfyn in 2013, a southwest facing cove on the rocky coast between Aberffraw and Porth Cwyfan, *A. portulacoides* was noticed on top of a rock ridge by Ivor and Jane Rees. Having scrambled to the site on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2014, two patches were noted on top of separate steep sided rocks. The larger patch, at SH3434.6775 was about 2 x 1.5m and the other at SH3433.6778 was 0.4m across. The only co-occurring plant on top of these particular rocks was *Beta vulgaris* ssp. *maritima*.

In addition to the above, we are aware of three locations, Traeth Bychan, Benllech and Cae Aur, Brynsiencyn, where *A. portulacoides* was on limestone quarry rubble on the seashore. The two surviving patches in 2014 were both below high water spring tide levels, in sheltered locations and may be regarded more as in quasi-saltmarsh than rock living.

The rock platform at the Moelfre site has a near vertical rock face about 3-4m high on the seaward side. The presence of sand and shell fragments in crevices indicates that splash from storm waves hitting the face must sometimes come onto the platform. Similarly, at Porth Terfyn fragments of flotsam show that storm wave splash throws things on top of the rocks to about 3m above the extreme high tide level. On rocky coasts and under storm conditions seeds of *A. portulacoides* may be deposited well above high water by wave splash or possibly through entrainment in foam. Very occasionally, these may lodge in crevices giving rise to plants that persist in an atypical habitat.

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# *Allium sativum* (Garlic) growing wild in Anglesey

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*Allium sativum* var *ophioscorodon* (Garlic) has been found, apparently well naturalised, at Porth y Pwll, on the outskirts of Trearddur Bay, Anglesey (v.c. 52). Our attention was initially drawn to them by the coiling of the flower stalks (see image 5 below), a habit characteristic of var. *ophioscorodon* (Rocamboles or Serpent Garlic). When first noticed on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014 all the flower stalks were coiled, by 21<sup>st</sup> July they had partly straightened but even on 3<sup>rd</sup> September some dry stalks still showed evidence of coiling and the ripe heads hung down showing small numbers of relatively large bulbils. Paul Green (BSBI *Allium* Referee) confirmed the identification from photographs, followed by a visit to the site, comparing them with some in his garden originating from wild ones sent to him from Co. Mayo (v.c.H27).

The Anglesey *A. sativum* location is adjacent to a small sandy cove (SH2437.7938), where one patch is amongst brambles on a slope above the beach. More extensive patches are along both sides of the coast road towards Porth y Post at SH2438.7949, with others along an unmade lane going inland from the road. Although the BSBI database (at July 2014) showed a thin scatter of inland records, persistence in the wild in Britain and Ireland seems to be limited to a very few, mainly western, coastal localities. This is the first record of it naturalized in Anglesey, though the extent strongly suggests it has been established here for some years, origin unknown. Spread along the road

may have been assisted by verge mowing scattering the bulbils. The only other Welsh location where *A. sativum* is known to grow wild is near the lifeboat station at Porth Dinllaen, Caernarvonshire (v.c.49). Wendy McCarthy advised that it has been known there since 1982, but had not noticed coiled flower stalks. Elsewhere, the BSBI database shows a pronounced cluster of tetrads with *A. sativum* on the west coast of Ireland in Co. Sligo (v.c.H28).



**Image 5:** *Allium sativum* var. *ophioscorodon* near Trearddur Bay, 2014. Photo: Ivor Rees.

# Ytbyesen y Mor/the Sea Pea (*Lathyrus japonicus*) in Pembrokeshire 2010-2014

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During a visit to Ceibwr, in North Pembrokeshire, Sue Phillips found a plant of Ytbyesen y Mor or the Sea Pea (*Lathyrus japonicus*) on the beach on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2010 (see images 8 on inside back cover; 9 and 10 on back cover). She was attending a walk by the Cardigan U3A Natural History Group. This plant was believed to be extinct in Wales, so when the author was informed of the find he was more than a little surprised.

Stephen and Ann Evans joined Sue a few days later to examine the non-flowering plant. It had two living stems and two dead stems. The longest stem was 15cm in length and the overall spread of the plant was 25cm. The leaves had single tendrils and the leaves and upper stems were distinctly hairy.

It was growing at SN11046 45659 on level, mixed, shingle and coarse sand at the top of the beach at about Extreme Spring Tide Level. The plant was 4.5m from the toe of the vegetated slumped glacial material that defined the upper limits of the beach in the narrow stream fed and cliff-girt bay. The beach was vegetated to about 6m seawards of the plant. Species growing within 25cm of the Sea Pea were *Hypochaeris radicata*, *Lepidium heterophyllum*, *Lotus corniculatus*, *Plantago lanceolata*, *Polygonum arenastrum* and *Tripleurospermum maritimum*. Others within one metre were *Dactylis glomerata*, *Eupatorium cannabinum*, *Festuca rubra*, *Honckenya peploides*, *Lolium perenne*, *Potentilla anserina*, *Rubus fruticosus*, *Rumex acetosa*, *Taraxacum* agg. and *Trifolium repens*. Vegetation cover was about 20%. Six of these species are known to be associates of *L. japonicus* in the British Isles (Randall, 1977). Elsewhere on the shingle at Ceibwr grow another eight species of plant from Randall's list of 40 British associates.

A small part of a stem was sent to David Pearman and its determination as *L. japonicus* was confirmed by David on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2010.

The hairy nature of the plant maybe suggests that it is subsp. *japonicus*, which grows on the coast of North America from Newfoundland south to New Jersey. It is tentatively concluded that a seed of *L. japonicus* might possibly, have travelled to Ceibwr from North America via the Labrador Current and

the North Atlantic Drift and thence into the Irish Sea. Its ca. 4mm diameter seeds can stay afloat in salt water for as long as seven years (Nelson, 2000).

An alternative, but equally speculative, origin could have been from another drift seed immigrant that had grown into a fruiting plant, elsewhere on the west coast of Britain and Ireland. The upper part of the beach at Ceibwr is much more vegetated than it used to be. This is because there was a flooding episode following a localised cloud burst event in the vicinity of Cemaes Head on 9<sup>th</sup> June 1993. This mobilised huge quantities of fluvial shingle and stone and deposited them on the beach where they were redistributed by the sea to the top of the beach. As a result, there was a greater accumulation of beach material at and above High Water and hence a greater area for plants, including plants of drift seed origin, to grow and survive winter storms.

The plant has been visited twice each year in the hope of seeing it in flower, but its stems have been trampled and damaged by holidaymakers and barbecue activities each year. The stems die back in the autumn. Despite the exceptionally severe winter storms in early 2014, which reduced the amount of upper shingle and shingle vegetation at Ceibwr, it still had a healthy shoot of 40cm in length and a second of 23cm on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October 2014. Presumably, it has developed a good sized tap root since 2010. Sea Pea tap roots can be up to 2m long (Nelson 2000). There had been five stems in June 2013 spread over an area of 56cm x 18 cm but none were as large as one of the two 2014 stems.

This exciting find by Sue Phillips was the first record for Pembrokeshire and the Ceibwr plant is currently the only extant in situ plant in Wales.

Arthur Chater has described the discovery and growing on of *L. japonicus* drift seeds from Ynys-las, in the far north of Ceredigion in 1997 (Chater 1998). In the Flora of Cardiganshire, (Chater 2010) he mentions that one of the seeds that was grown on by Steve Chambers, flowered and set seed annually (it was clearly self-compatible) between 1999 and 2008 (see image 6 of the specimen in Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum Wales, page 30). It turned out to be subsp. *maritimus*, the European subspecies rather than the North American one. He concludes that the matter of the origin of the Ynys-las drift seeds remains unresolved. Steve Chambers (2014, personal communication) comments that the plant is still flowering each year in a large pot in his garden and is now 18 years old. All the leaves and stems are completely glabrous except for the young calyces. These have a few very sparse hairs at their base and at the edge of their calyx teeth and at the top of the pedicel when the flowers are in bud, but are completely glabrous as soon as the flowers open fully.

A previous Welsh record of the plant was from east Glamorgan on shingle at The Leys, Aberthaw where a non-flowering specimen, subspecies undetermined, was collected by Miss Eleanor Vachell in 1933 and is now in the herbarium of Amgueddfa Cymru (Wade *et al.* 1994). The plant is nearly hairless, but has hairs on axillary leaf buds and the bases of leaflets (Kath Slade, personal communication), see image 11 and 12, back cover. *Lathyrus japonicus* also once grew in Caernarvonshire where a single plant, probably only one or two years old, was found by Miss Ann Conolly on a sandy drift line at Solfach, Bardsey in 1978. It had disappeared by 1979 (Jones 1988). It was also once at Cricceith where there was a record from ca. 1966 (Ellis 1983).

If the Ceibwr plant survives to flower and set seed this might enable us to confirm that it is indeed subsp. *japonicus*, originally from North America. Charles Nelson, in his most informative BSBI Handbook No 10 '*Sea Beans and Nickar Nuts – A Handbook of exotic seeds and fruits stranded on beaches in north-western Europe*' argues that the seeds stranded on Atlantic beaches in Ireland and Britain have been transported from North America. He goes on to suggest that the occasional plants reported from southern and western Ireland and elsewhere along the western coasts of Britain are almost certainly from the same source rather than from the populations in eastern and southern Britain.

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**Image 6:** Specimen in Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum Wales of *Lathyrus japonicus* ssp. *maritimus* cultivated from seed originally collected from the strandline at Ynyslas, Cardiganshire in 1997 by A.O.Chater and grown by S.P.Chambers in 1999. Photo: Helen Cleal (see article page 27).

Welsh Flora Barcoding  
Project NMW474

FE 81-51-4

NMW. V2000-014-1



**HERBARIUM, NATIONAL MUSEUM OF WALES (NMW)**  
FLORA OF *Cardigan* v.c.46

*Lathyrus japonicus* Willd.

Locality - seed collected from strandline at Ynyslas  
9/3/1997 A.O.Chater, cultivated by S.P.Chambers since 1997  
and flowered in 1999; see letter  
- note seed set from single plant

Collector S. P. Chambers

Map/Grid Ref.

22/605.928 (see Welsh  
Bulletin 63)

Date 1999

Reg. No.

NMW. V. 2000. 014. 1

# Merioneth v.c.48 – report from the Vice-county Recorder

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2014 began with intensive work on the Rare Plant Register [RPR]. Polly Spencer-Vellacott's help was invaluable not just in formatting it, but in correcting the many errors found even after intensive editing! It was posted on the BSBI website (<http://bsbi.org.uk/MerionethshireRPR2014.pdf>) on 15<sup>th</sup> May just before she went off on maternity leave. However, just when it was finally ready for printing, we discovered that there was no map – and Polly wasn't there! With Martin Rand's help at long distance, I managed to produce a suitable one from the Mapmate software just in time for distribution.

I moved to Preston in December 2013. This was my first season as an absentee Vice-county Recorder, but I am delighted to report that an increased number of plant records, over 8000, have again been added to the database. The weather has been fine, but the increase can partly be accounted for by Clive Lovatt and Liz McDonnell's efforts. While we others at Caerdeon were recording in the Merioneth hills, bogs and valleys, they were plodding around the urban areas, as Liz put it, "peering into the weedy pavements, gutters, sports grounds and car parks and mingling with holiday-makers along the promenade" making a fantastic 1300 records in 4 days!

I am very grateful to everyone else who came to Caerdeon, too. It is becoming a great occasion, especially for generating records – a thoroughly enjoyable few days with people joining this year from as far afield as Hampshire, Leicester and Wester Ross. The rooms are rather basic but adequate, and so is the food, but it has a great atmosphere, the pleasure of total immersion in botany with fellow enthusiasts, and of course the wine we enjoy at dinner helps!

Merioneth Naturalists had a successful programme with almost all our days rain-free, although looking through our programme it seems that we didn't find many of our target plants. We had a great day on Ynys Giffan though, with our best turnout ever and re-finding RPR species *Carex punctata* (Dotted Sedge) and *Asplenium obovatum* (Lanceolate Spleenwort), last recorded there in 1990 and 1986 respectively as well as *Carex distans* (Distant Sedge), new for the site and the first hectad record since 1986.

At Llyn Oror we failed to update a *Valeriana dioica* (Marsh Valerian) record but did find *Potamogeton crispus* (Curled Pondweed), a vice-county first, and

*Myriophyllum spicatum* (Spiked Water-milfoil), both rare in this very acid county. In July, I failed to get to Moelwyn Mawr to look for some of the calcicoles known from there. Fortunately Andrew and Janet Graham went there later and found *Arabidopsis petraea* (Northern Rock-cress) in its only known Merioneth site (see image 2 on inside front cover).

We did have two dreadfully wet days. Annie Seddon led a walk in August in very species-poor country on the Migneint in a torrential downpour and with Rhys Evans they managed only 35 records! All credit to them for going out at all and sticking to the plan! Our October meeting, in the beautiful countryside around Rhyd in the far north-west, was a very drizzly, damp day, though in that better, farmland habitat we did find over a hundred commoner species.

Merioneth Naturalists members maintain their continuing support and have my grateful thanks. There are a few people who deserve special mention. Martin Rand has been wonderful support as ever. Andrew Graham's records are always full of interest and this year he also led a Caerdeon walk. John Hughes hasn't been able to join Merioneth Nats' walks this year but sends me his records from the Dinas Mawddwy area and the mountains around. Jacky Langton too is indefatigable and whenever she stays at her cottage above Talsarnau she walks for miles collecting plant records as she goes. Roger Cope is another botanist who holidays in Merioneth and sends me all his records. Guy Lloyd has not only welcomed us to park in [and visit] his lovely garden, but has done a great job of obtaining access permissions in the Dyffryn Ardudwy area. To these, and everyone else who sends in their sightings, I am very grateful. Particular thanks as ever to the Welsh Officers, Polly S-V and Paul Green for being there and always being ready to help.

# *Lemna valdiviana* Phil. (Valdivia Duckweed) in Wales

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*Lemna valdiviana* is a non-native species to the UK but native in many parts of the Americas. It is not clear when *L. valdiviana* first arrived in the UK because of a confusion with the closely related *L. minuta* (Least Duckweed). *L. valdiviana* is very similar to *L. minuta* which is another widely recorded non-native duckweed common in natural and semi-natural habitats.

*L. valdiviana* fronds are translucent, uniformly thin, of a pale green (usually looking whitish on the water surface) with an oval body 2-4mm long, usually in fours, giving a characteristic butterfly appearance. They can be in clusters of up to seven individuals. There is a longitudinal vein visible under magnification (or to the naked eye if the frond is held up to strong light), typically extending  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the distance from the node (point of root attachment) to the apex.

*L. minuta* fronds are lime green, not translucent, slightly thicker in middle, 1-2(4)mm long, usually in twos. One vein extending less than  $\frac{2}{3}$  distance from root node to apex.

The first Welsh record was reported from the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust's Llanelli Wetland Centre, Penclacwydd, Carmarthenshire (SS534982), discovered by Barry Stewart, and, shortly after, shown to BSBI members attending the Glynhir meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> July 2012. The next Welsh record was from a newly dug pond in a field at St Arvans, Monmouthshire, first found by Elsa Wood in 2013. Another Monmouthshire site was found at the Newport Wetlands Reserve, on one of the BSBI excursions arranged at the AGM in 2014. Here *L. valdiviana* grows in vast numbers in several of the drains.

*Lemna minuta* and *L. minor* (Common Duckweed) also grow on the reserve. In places, all three can be seen growing together. In January 2014, Richard Pryce observed *L. valdiviana* growing in at least two of the lily tanks in the double walled garden at the National Botanic Garden of Wales. Llanarthne, Carmarthenshire growing with *L. minuta*, *L. minor* and *Spirodela polyrhiza*, but examining photos taken here in September 2009, it would appear that *L. valdiviana* was also growing there then!

Even though specimens and photos were shown to Richard Lansdown and Fred Rumsey from Llanelli Wetland Centre and St Arvans neither would

commit 100% to the identity of the duckweed. Finally, with specimens grown on at home and better photos, Lansdown and Rumsey agreed that the Newport Wetlands Reserve duckweeds were *L. valdiviana*.

As far as I know, the three Welsh records from wild locations are the first for the UK. I have seen *L. valdiviana* in many garden centres floating amongst other aquatic plants for sale. There must be other wild sites waiting to be recorded in Wales!

## Reference

Landolt, E. (2000) *Lemna*. In: Flora of North America Editorial Committee, eds. (1993+). *Flora of North America North of Mexico*. 18+ vols. New York and Oxford. Vol. 22, p146. Available at [www.efloras.org/florataxon.aspx?flora\\_id=1&taxon\\_id=117936](http://www.efloras.org/florataxon.aspx?flora_id=1&taxon_id=117936)

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## Images on inside back cover:

**7:** Paul Green (BSBI *Allium* Referee) meets a Wild Leek (*Allium ampeloprasum*) near South Stack on Anglesey in September 2014. Photo: Ian Bonner (see article, page 19).

**8:** Location of the *Lathyrus japonicus* (Ytbysen y Mor/Sea Pea) at Ceibwr, north Pembrokeshire, 19<sup>th</sup> June 2011. The inset shows a close up of the habitat at Ceibwr, north Pembrokeshire. Photo: Stephen Evans (see article, p27).

## Images on back cover:

2011-2014 *Lathyrus japonicus* at Ceibwr, Pembrokeshire: (see article, p27)

**9:** Close up showing the hairs on the leaves suggesting that it could be subspecies *japonicus*. Photo taken on 19/06/2011. Photo: Stephen Evans.

**10:** The whole plant. Photo taken on 5/10/2014. Photo: Stephen Evans.

1933 *Lathyrus japonicus* specimen without flowers from Amgueddfa Cymru-National Museum Wales collected by Eleanor Vachell from shingle at The Leys, Aberthaw, Glamorgan: (see article, p27)

**11:** Close up showing hairs at the base of the leaflets. Photo: Kath Slade.

**12:** Whole herbarium specimen. Photo: Helen Cleal.

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