

Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland

Irish VCR Newsletter No. 4, June 2015



Hello Irish VCRs,

Welcome to the fourth Irish VCR newsletter. As usual, I hope you will find the contents interesting and informative. You will receive this both by email and as a hard copy. Maria.

RECORDER NEWS

Following the recent retirement of the long-standing and hard-working recorder for Cork (H3, H4 and H5), Tony O'Mahony, we have had great luck in having Clare Heardman agree to be the new recorder for H3. Clare is an excellent naturalist, with broad interests spanning plants, invertebrates and more. She will be a great addition to the network of VCRs (vice-country recorders). John Earley has very kindly agreed to keep an eye on H4 while we search out a full-time recorder.

Another new addition to our network is Alexis FitzGerald who will join Pat Lenihan and become joint-VCR for Monaghan. Alexis is a young botanist with great promise and enthusiasm.

Fiona MacGowan and Mark McCorry, joint-VCRs for Laois, have recently set up a webpage for their vice-county. See it here: <http://bsbi.org.uk/laois.html>

Note that you too can set up a page very easily – just get in touch with me if you would like to. To make a basic page, which will serve very well as a focal point, all you need is a photo or two (and I can provide those if you like), and your contact details. It can be set up in just a couple of minutes for you once those pieces of info are provided.

FIELD MEETING NEWS

Please note: Change from originally advertised field meetings schedule - Con Breen's Westmeath trip has been moved from July (originally advertised) to September 5th. Also – fuller accounts of field meetings will appear as usual in IBN or BSBI Yearbook.

This year we have already had field trips to **south-east Galway** and **Limerick** in May; and **Portlaoise, Coleraine, Kilkenny** and **Cavan** in June.

Micheline had a large group both days in east Galway, and one of our keen members, Hannah Mulcahy, took photos of one of the star plants of the trip, *Cephalanthera longifolia*, narrow-leaved helleborine (see below). Five enthusiasts, including two relative new-comers, turned out for Sylvia's day at Curragh Chase, Co. Limerick. Fiona MacGowan reports that the fieldtrip to The Heath near Portlaoise went well – "lots of lovely plants and terrific little pockets of assorted habitats in a very ancient landscape". I've included a photo of a marsh orchid that they think is the *coccinea* subspecies - it had a very distinctive red colour and there were quite a

few of them. Roger Goodwillie's trip to Ballyhale quarry in Kilkenny was very well attended with 15 or 16 participants. They had a number of nice finds, and I have included here a few photos taken by an excellent and keen young naturalist (and botanist) Ciarán Byrne.

The Annual Summer Meeting in Coleraine was a great success. The group was much smaller than 'typical' meetings of this size, but this worked very much in our favour in the end. Everyone got to know everyone else in the group, and the targeted recording days when the group split into threes worked very well. Please take a look at the photos and accounts written by Oisín Duffy, our recorder-in-training in east Donegal (along with partner Mairéad Crawford) at: <https://oisinduffy.wordpress.com/> I really do encourage you to visit this site - his pieces are easy to read, and the photos are just great. You can click on the links on the left hand side of the page to read other pieces by Oisín.



Cephalanthera longifolia, narrow-leaved helleborine, east Galway.
(Ph. Hannah Mulcahy)



A marsh orchid, most likely *Dactylorhiza incarnata* subsp. *coccinea*, The Heath.
(Ph. Fiona MacGowan)

An additional trip, organised at short notice, took place on Bull Island on the day after the Irish BSBI Conference this year, on 26th April. This was kindly lead by Con Breen, and here is his account:

"We worked some of the area southwards from the new causeway. Plants in flower included *Valerianella locusta*, *Myosotis ramosissima* and *Viola canina*, while early grasses included *Festuca rubra* and *Helictotrichon pubescens*. Further south from where there is an old toilet, originally closer to the shore but now marooned inland marking an earlier shore line, there are two quite damp dune slacks which are very interesting. The outer one is quite brackish with more *Juncus maritimus* but the inner one is less so with extensive *Equisetum variegatum* - the sand dune version tends to be more prostrate than the type found inland. Also here are *Ranunculus aquatilis* and some *Eriophorum angustifolium*. Always something new to see on the Bull - I had never seen the *Ranunculus* before."

Note from Cavan: here is a report from Robert Northridge on an exciting find at last weekend's targeted recording weekend in Cavan.

"With just one hour of botanising left on the second day of the BSBI outing to Co. Cavan, Heather Bothwell who, with Hannah Northridge and me made up the team surveying hectad N58, looked at a map of the hectad and saw a long straight road in the south east of the county on the border with Meath. "Straight roads usually mean bogs" said Heather, so we decided to investigate further.



Clockwise from top left: *Carex curta*, *Minuartia hybrida*, *Potentilla palustris* and *Cirsium dissectum*. (Phs. Ciarán Byrne)

To the west of the road was a flat area where the most obvious plants were scattered, low willows. We pulled in, squeezed through a fence, crossed an area of infill with many interesting "weeds" and were immediately in to an area of quaking bog. We were excited to see our first orchids of the weekend, a dozen or so *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*, and we proceeded to record *Menyanthes trifoliata*, *Potentilla palustris*, *Veronica anagalis-aquatica*, *V. scutellata*, *Carex rostrata*, *C. lepidocarpa*, *C. diandra* and many more.

When I got a chance to raise my eyes from my recording card I noticed, about 20 metres away, about a dozen white spikes which I took to be butterfly orchids. As I carefully made my way across the quaking bog, the plants came in to clearer focus and their identity was obvious; they were spikes of *Pyrola rotundifolia*, Round-leaved Wintergreen. We counted 26 flowering spikes over an area 3m x 1m; there were further patches as we proceeded carefully across the bog. Due to lack of time (the party was invited to tea by Jonathan Shackleton at five o'clock), and the dangerous nature of the bog, we returned to the car and, on our map, checked the grid reference (N54666 83400) against the county boundary between Cavan and Meath. We were about 100m within Cavan and had just found an exciting **New County Record!** Heather lives in Killeshandra in County Cavan so this was a great example of the benefits of local knowledge.

Interestingly, several years ago, *Pyrola rotundifolia* was found in north Monaghan at Killoosky Lough which is on the border with Fermanagh, so it is worth looking out for at further sites in Cavan and Monaghan."

And finally - I have attached the most up-to-date version of the field meetings schedule to the email version of this newsletter. Please feel free to circulate widely, and to print out and hang up in appropriate places (work places, County Council notice boards, college notice boards, local libraries, etc.). It all helps to raise the profile of the BSBI and the great work that recorders do.



Above: Group relaxes in Jonathan and Daphne Shackleton's stunning garden after a good day recording.

Left: Round-leaved Wintergreen, *Pyrola rotundifolia*
(Phs. Hannah Northridge)

ATLAS NEWS

Atlas 2020 Guidance document

Jim McIntosh, the Scottish Officer, has put together guidance for Atlas 2020 for Vice-county Recorders. It collates all the information and advice that has already been published in various places, so little is new, but it is useful to have it all in one place in logical order. It is available on the new [Atlas 2020 webpage](#). Have a look, and get in touch if you have any queries.

Atlas 2020 webpage

Remember that there are many other useful documents on the Atlas 2020 webpage: http://www.bsbi.org.uk/atlas_2020.html There are a number of new (and/or revised) guidance documents which are likely to be very useful (in addition to Jim's one mentioned above). For example, '[Fieldwork for Atlas 2020 - notes on Identification works and some difficult and under-recorded taxa](#)' provides a number of lists, including one giving species included in aggregates (very handy for reference), a table with recent plant name changes, and notes on some tricky taxa. All-in-all, there is a lot of information available on this page, and I'd encourage each and every VCR to make themselves familiar with it.

Customised Recording Cards on the BSBI website

In case anyone is having difficulty finding the VC customised cards on the [BSBI website](#), here's where to look: bring up the BSBI home page, click with the cursor on the word "Resources" (on blue menu bar across the top), then scroll down to find the card for your vice-county. Cover sheets (same one applies to all VCs) are available in the box at the top of the VC lists.

FUNDING THE IRISH OFFICER POST

John Faulkner, Chair of CFI, has asked me to include the following announcement:

“Since February 2014, the Committee for Ireland (CFI) has been looking into ways of securing further funds for the Irish Officer post. Hitherto, all the funding for the 2-day a week post has come from within BSBI’s own resources, and there was no prospect of BSBI being able to support any more than that. As announced at our AGM last September, the main potential sources seemed to be the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) and the Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA). After initially promising noises, our approaches to NIEA collapsed late last year when the NI Government hit a major financial crisis. An application to the NI Challenge Fund had also failed. However, I am delighted to report that we have now secured some funds from NPWS, and that this has enabled BSBI to expand Maria’s work to 3 days per week until at least the end of 2016.

The main purpose of the extra funds is to increase the effectiveness of BSBI in those activities which are of mutual benefit to the Society and to NPWS. Broadly speaking, these are the training and outreach side of our work, and our recording activities. This means there will be no fundamental changes in the nature of Maria’s work, but – in line with the source of funding - there will be more emphasis on work south of the border in her third/extra day. Of course, it would have been wonderful if we had been able to make the post a full time one, but a 50% increase in the support she gives to VCRs and members is much better than nothing!

The CFI is very grateful to Maria for her patience during the time we have been negotiating with NPWS and for the support of Jane Houldsworth, Jim McIntosh and Terry Swainbank during this process.”

Volunteer – data scanning and entry

The Irish Officer is very grateful to volunteer Tanya Martin, an NUIG student going into 4th year Botany, for giving some of her time this summer to help with scanning and digitising records from Co. Westmeath. Thanks also to Con Breen for working with us on this project.

BSBI talks – on tour!

The Irish Officer gave a successful talk on BSBI (who BSBI are, what they do, why it is important, and how people can get involved or learn more) earlier this year at the National Botanic Gardens. The plan is to give this talk, or similar, at a number of locations around the country over the coming months. Talks are currently planned for Cork (as part of the field meeting weekend 11/12 July) and Mayo (during the recording week end July). If you know of places/groups who might like to host the talk, please get in touch (maria.long@bsbi.org).

OTHER NEWS

Irish BSBI Conference, April 2015

This year’s Irish BSBI Conference was a great success with nearly 70 people coming for the one-day event. We had four great talks in the morning – they were varied in terms of their content and focus, but all were entertaining and accessible. Thanks to George Smith, Faith Wilson, Oisín Duffy, Mairéad Crawford and Fiona MacGowan. The workshop sessions were heavily subscribed. I did one on the DDb - maybe not so heavily subscribed!, but good nonetheless with participants saying they found it very useful. Matthew Jebb lead people around the Botanic Gardens in dubious weather, sharing some of his vast plant taxonomy knowledge. Cilian Roden talked people through lakes and lake plants ID, and Paula O’Meara and Rory Hodd lead a fern ID

workshop. We are indebted to Matthew Jebb and the team at the Botanic Gardens for providing us with a great venue and lots of organisational support. Special thanks are also due to Teagasc for the use of two rooms in their beautiful new building – much appreciated!

Irish Species Project (ISP)

We have now received a large number of records as part of the ISP. However, there are still a number of VCRs who have been recording but haven't yet sent in cards. It would be great if you could please send in any existing ISP cards so we can assess the gaps *before* we reach the end of the project (Oct this year). If we have gaps we may be able to send some keen volunteers out (e.g. Phoebe O'Brien and Hannah Mulcahy have visited three *Carex pseudocyperus* sites in east Clare in recent weeks and filled out cards).

As part of ongoing efforts to increase collaborations with the NBDC (National Biodiversity Data Centre), we are delighted to let you know that they have kindly created species profile pages for the eight ISP species. Phoebe O'Brien (thanks Phoebe for all your voluntary effort!) drafted the accounts and sourced the photos. These accounts are still draft (they only went live last week), and so the layout needs a few tweaks, but it is great to see the information up there. I will shortly link to them from the Irish page, but for the moment you can follow the links given below:

- Link to Cyperus Sedge page: <http://species.biodiversityireland.ie/profile.php?taxonId=28266>
- And Toothwort: <http://species.biodiversityireland.ie/profile.php?taxonId=29439>
- And for the full list of links to the eight species (click on the eye symbol at the rhs), follow this link: <http://species.biodiversityireland.ie/index.php?keyword=BSBI%20%E2%80%98Irish%20Species%20Project%E2%80%99>

And one final snippet of ISP news – Chris Peppiatt (VCR north-east Galway) recently found 16 spikes of Moonwort, which I thought was impressive. But a few days after, Donna and James Rainey, BSBI enthusiasts in Derry, found 59 spikes on Benbradagh Mountain – that must have been a sight to behold!

In Praeger's footsteps

Matthew Jebb, Director of the National Botanic Gardens, has a project underway that I think will interest a number of VCRs. Essentially, by providing Praeger's historic walks (<http://www.botanicgardens.ie/herb/books/itbitineraries.htm>) and the species list to go with them, people can follow the same route and compare the species list to 100 years ago, especially if the walk is conducted at more or less the same time of year. Please take a look at http://www.botanicgardens.ie/praeger_footsteps/ where you can download two sample field card pages. The map provided on the field card shows and labels the tetrads to encourage people to do a list for each.

Note from BSBI member in Carlow: I asked Ciarán Byrne to write a short note on a nice find that he and Lisa Dowling (VCR Carlow) had earlier this year.

"In my first year as a BSBI member I hope to make a contribution, however small, to recording locally in both south Carlow and north Wexford [Ed. I can confirm that Ciarán has made a considerable contribution so far!]. As a result I have gotten to know and have been fortunate to get out with local recorders Paul Green and Lisa Dowling.

At the start of April this year I arranged to get out with Lisa in Cuilaphuca Wood, an area of woodland I had chosen as one of my recording areas outside Bunclody, Co. Wexford. Armed with Evelyn Booth's "The Flora of County Carlow" we kept an eye out for Toothwort and Goldilocks buttercup, both described as occurring in the wood. Lisa informed me that Evelyn had lived in the nearby Lucy's Wood so I felt a real sense of history recording in an area Evelyn had frequented.

Although our search for both species was fruitless, we recorded a large number of woodland species. Walking along the river Slaney we passed the track I usually take back to the car and continued further into an area of the wood I hadn't explored. As we made our way through this unexplored territory I noticed a fleck of yellow amongst the green. Our decision to keep going had been rewarded by finding a large stand of Yellow Archangel *Lamiastrum galeobdolon* subsp. *montanum* in what is a new location for Cuilaphuca Wood. Our find gave me a thrill that is difficult to understand by many but is hopefully the first of many exciting finds."



Yellow Archangel *Lamiastrum galeobdolon* subsp. *montanum* from Cuilaphuca Wood. Phs. Ciarán Byrne

In brief:

- I have heard people make contrasting statements of how the membership numbers in Ireland compare to those in the UK/Britain, so I thought I'd do some sums myself! Here's what I found:
 - Ireland (north & south) has 10% of the total population of England, Scotland and Wales.
 - Ireland (north & south) has 6% of the members of BSBI.So we do have proportionately fewer members here on this island, but not massively so.
- Matthew Jebb of the National Botanic Gardens has created a very useful spreadsheet called the 'Irish Vascular Plant Synonym Workbook'. It lists synonyms, Irish names, common names, families, etc. It can be downloaded at this webpage: <http://www.botanicgardens.ie/contents.htm> by scrolling down and clicking on 'Synonymy spreadsheet download'. It is a very handy file indeed to have stored on your computer.
- Irish Botanical News will, as always, be put together this year by Paul Green. The deadline for submissions is Jan 31st (paulnewross@eircom.net). Remember that you can see all of the previous issues of IBN on the [Irish webpage](#). If you lead a field meeting in 2015, you will, I'm sure, remember to write a field meeting report or ask for a volunteer from the attendees to do so (it can be a lovely way to include attendees more).
- Here is a list of some of the BSBI blogs which I am aware of. Please let me know of any others you are aware of and that would be good to include here. (If you are new to 'blogs', maybe they could be described as being half-way between a newsletter and a diary?)
 - Louise Marsh: <http://bsbipublicity.blogspot.co.uk/> This blog is excellent and very regularly updated. It's a fantastic way to hear about activities that are going on and to pick up on news and happenings.
 - Paul Green, Wexford: <http://wildflowersofwexford.blogspot.ie/> Paul regularly writes up finds, and so this is well worth checking out
 - Oisín Duffy, east Donegal: <http://oisinduffy.wordpress.com/> I've already mentioned this above – an excellent collection of writings and photos from Oisín

- A new BSBI booklet 'So you want to know your plants' is available to download here: bsbi.org.uk/Know_your_plants.pdf It might be useful for beginners and improvers to see where they fit in terms of progressing to becoming a good botanist.
- Post-doctoral researcher Eileen Power has earlier this year initiated a citizen science project entitled '[Count Flowers for Bees](http://tcdenvironment.blogspot.ie/2015/06/count-flowers-for-bees-citizen-science.html)'. She wants people to take 10x photos in flowery fields all across Ireland and upload them to Flickr. Read more here if you would like to get involved: <http://tcdenvironment.blogspot.ie/2015/06/count-flowers-for-bees-citizen-science.html>
- The [BSBI Dublin local group](#), set up in 2014, is going strong. The group uses an email list to plan and organise outings, and heads out about once a month. Lots of records have been generated, and lots of learning takes place, all in the context of having an enjoyable morning out. Thanks in particular to Róisín NigFhloinn, Séan Meehan and Brian Seales for a lot of work behind the scenes. If you would like to investigate setting up a local group in your area, get in touch.
- NPWS (National Parks and Wildlife Service) data available to recorders: To request data from NPWS go to this website (<http://www.npws.ie/maps-and-data/request-data>), download the data request form, and ask for the records you need (e.g. all records for your vice-county). Mike Wyse Jackson has also very kindly said that VCRs are welcome to arrange to come to his office to check through his extensive collection of paper files for particular records.
- Training courses from CEDaR and NBDC are always excellent value and well worth checking out. By this time of year, of course, many have already run, but you can check out the remaining courses by following these links:
 - CEDaR training courses 2015: <https://nmni.com/CEDaR/Training>
 - NBDC training courses 2015: <http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/events/>
- New Grass ID book available from NBDC (National Biodiversity Data Centre), authors Úna FitzPatrick and Lynda Weekes. It is available for €15. I have trialled it and find the vegetative key at the back to be extremely useful. It is short and clear, featuring only Irish species. Visit: <http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/grass-identification-guide-now-available/>
- [True Harvest Seeds](#) was established in Co. Down in Dec 2013 by Debbie Gillies and four others. They have engaged in collecting seeds from all of Ireland's species and started this year with around 50 collections from the northern counties as a pilot, with the help of many wonderful volunteers. They are also in partnership with Kew's Millennium Seed Bank and have received training from them in making high quality seed collections suitable for long term deep storage at -20C. From each collection, one half is sent to Kew and one half kept at True Harvest Seeds in Co. Down. The collections are available for conservation and restoration projects upon request from suitable conservation organisations. The group is interested in linking with BSBI VCRs who may be able to help in a number of ways – e.g. to verify plant identifications, to confirm whether a population is native rather than introduced, and to help in sourcing good populations. They hope that the project might be of interest to recorders and that they might enjoy being part of the it. BSBI VCRs and others interested are warmly welcomed on any of the seed collection outings. Send Debbie Gillies an email at trueharvestseeds@yahoo.com expressing your interest, and she will include you in the mailing list. The focus this year is on northern counties, but the group hopes to roll out to all of Ireland in 2016. Drop Debbie a line if you want to know more.

New 'my county' feature on DDb

A new DDb feature called "*my county*" will help identify gaps in Atlas 2020 coverage. This menu option appears to the left of "*message board*" at the top right of the screen when Recorders log in, along with "*my mapmate records*" – if you are a MapMate user. The "*my county*" option has three tabs: *Summary*, which includes a year-by-year breakdown of recording since 2000, *Data validation* and *Atlas 2020 survey coverage*. This last tab displays colour-density maps of your vice-county showing the number of intensive tetrad surveys and another showing the number of taxa not refound since 2000. The underlying data can be seen by clicking links. It is absolutely fascinating – log in and take a look! [This paragraph taken, with thanks, from Jim McIntosh's Scottish summer newsletter.]

Analysis of progress - % spp recorded since 2000

Scottish recorder Andy Amphlett has created a series of Excel files that allow recorders to calculate the percentage of total taxa which have been recorded since 2000. This can be done at both hectad and tetrad level. In the case of Ireland, where so much of our older data on the DDb is in summarised hectad form, the hectad version is probably the best one to start with. This file can be downloaded here (<http://bsbidb.org.uk/forum/viewtopic.php?f=1&t=179#p479>) and analysis is done in conjunction with using the DDb. Give it a go, and if you have any queries you can use the excellent DDb message board.

Importing records into MapMate

Another file created by Andy Amphlett, this time a very cleverly formatted Excel spreadsheet. This is set up with all species names exactly how MapMate needs them, along with all columns MapMate requires. If you like to enter data into Excel, or if you accept data/records from others on Excel, I would highly recommend that you use this resource. It can be downloaded here: http://bsbi.org.uk/Recording_sheet_for_MapMate_Import.xlsx

Guide to using the DDb

Andy Amphlett has also written a guide to using the DDb. It is posted on the message board here: <http://bsbidb.org.uk/forum/viewtopic.php?f=4&t=120>. You can also find it on the [resources page](#) of the BSBI web site.

Open source and GIS mapping

BSBI member and Open Source Mapping (OSM) enthusiast Jerry Clough recently attended the ASM in Coleraine. He has a great interest in Irish mapping. He has given me some links to useful sites, like this one: <http://www.openstreetmap.ie/>, where you can learn more about the OSM community in Ireland, view old maps at various scales (<http://maps.openstreetmap.ie/oocmaps.html>) and also townlands, baronies, etc. (<http://dev3.openstreetmap.ie/osm/slippymap.html?zoom=7&lat=53.5&lon=-6&layers=B00TFFFFF>). Jerry has recently produced shape files of grid squares (1km, 2km, 5km and 10km) for Ireland - if anyone would like copies for use in their own GIS, just get in touch and I will send them on. Jerry is currently working on digitising Irish VC boundaries. As he works through digitising and refining these he is uploading the files here: <https://github.com/SK53/Irish-Vice-Counties>, where others can view and comment on them. Here is a note from Jerry re accuracy: "A useful rule of thumb is that where townland boundaries have been mapped (available as an additional overlay) the VC boundary is likely to be within 10 metres. Elsewhere more caution should be applied. I hope to have everything to

within 100 metres across the country pretty soon. Feedback about what is wrong & needs fixing will be crucial to final tidying up.” A big thanks to Jerry! And please do send him comments.

Online mapping resources

As in previous newsletters, I list here some useful web-based mapping resources. Two new to me are numbers 6 and 7, a Teagasc soil map and a map showing many of Ireland’s wetlands. All of these websites offer very good portals to varying kinds of data.

1. NPWS: <http://webgis.npws.ie/npwsviewer/> Digital conservation designation site boundaries available to download. You can search for places by townland, which is a very handy feature.
2. NBDC: <http://maps.biodiversityireland.ie/#/Home> See species records for plants and animals. Can measure areas and distances.
3. Heritage Council: <http://heritagemaps.biodiversityireland.ie/#/Map> Heritage and archaeological data, also habitat maps from national surveys.
4. EPA: <http://gis.epa.ie/> Soils, landuse, water quality, etc.
5. GSI: <http://gsi.ie/mapping.htm> Bedrock, etc.
6. Teagasc soils map: <http://gis.teagasc.ie/soils/map.php>
7. Map of Irish wetlands: <http://www.wetlandssurveysireland.com/wetlands/map-of-irish-wetlands--/map-of-irish-wetlands---map/index.html>

Potentially useful Smartphone apps:

1. ‘Leafsnap’ app from Natural History Museum, London (free to download) – a tree identification app for iPhones (BSBI’s Fred Rumsey was involved in this project):
http://www.nhm.ac.uk/nature-online/british-natural-history/leafsnap-uk/index.html?utm_source=leafsnap-app-short-url&utm_medium=leafsnap-app-short-url&utm_campaign=leafsnap-app-short-url
2. ‘Forest Seedlings’ app from the Forestry Commission UK (costs approx. €3):
<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.spotspecific.android.forestseedlings&hl=en>
You will find some background info on the app here:
<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/newsrele.nsf/AllByUNID/036C8CE2FE8271BF80257D56004CA9CC>

FINAL WORDS

Please get in touch if you want any further information on anything in the newsletter, or copies of things referred to sent to you directly. I hope you find the letter useful – please let me know. The newsletter will also go up on the [Irish webpage](#) in the next few weeks.

And remember – I’d love to see you in the National Botanic Gardens, so please feel free to call in any time, be it for a chat, or a coffee, or for advice, or to access the herbarium or the library.

Maria Long, BSBI Irish Officer. Tel: +353 87 2578763 **Email:** maria.long@bsbi.org

Remember: If your contact details change, **please** let me know (postal address, email or phone number).
Note: Photo quality is much reduced in this document to keep the file size small.



BSBI IRISH FIELD PROGRAMME 2015

See website for supplementary info: <http://www.bsbi.org.uk/ireland.html>,
or contact **Irish Officer:** Maria Long, maria.long@bsbi.org, +353 87 2578763



G = General
S = Specialised
R = Recording
T = Training

SAT 9th AND SUN 10th MAY (G, R) - SLIEVE AUGHTY MOUNTAINS, SOUTH-EAST GALWAY (v.c. H18)

Leader: Micheline Sheehy Skeffington

Exploring woods on SE slopes of the Slieve Aughty Mountains and other areas with a good spring flora. Stout footwear important. **Meet** 10.30am both days in Woodford at the bridge over the Aughty River (R734999).

Contact Micheline (micheline.sheehy@nuigalway.ie) to confirm attendance and lest there be any change of plans.

SAT 16th MAY (G, R) - CURRAGH CHASE FOREST PARK, CO. LIMERICK (v.c. H8)

Leaders: Sylvia Reynolds and Julian Reynolds

Curragh Chase Forest Park, some 18km west of Limerick City off the N69, is an extensive area mainly of deciduous woodland (with outcropping limestone), also lakes, wet grassland and an attractive arboretum. The aim of the meeting is to record the early season flora in two areas of adjoining 10km squares. Parasitic *Lathraea squamaria* (Toothwort) should be in flower. **Meet** 10.30am in the car park of the Forest Park (R411492), nearly 4km from the main road (N69) at Kilcornan, and bring lunch. You will need €5 in coins to get through the entrance barrier on the way to the car park. **Enquiries** to Sylvia (sylviacpreynolds@hotmail.com - note cp in middle), 353-1-2887856 or mobile 353-86-3511075.

SAT 6th JUNE (G, R) - THE HEATH, PORTLAOISE, CO. LAOIS (v.c. H14)

Leaders: Mark McCorry and Fiona MacGowan

The Heath is an area of commonage that has acidic grassland, rich fen and some wetland habitat.

Meet 10.30am at the Church of the Assumption, The Heath (N535016)

Enquiries to Mark (mark.mccorry@bnm.ie) or 353-87-7530718

FRI 12th to TUE 16th JUNE - IRELAND'S NORTH COAST (H39, 40) (G, R) ANNUAL SUMMER MEETING

The BSBI's Annual Summer Meeting will be based at the University of Ulster in Coleraine, which overlooks the River Bann. Accommodation with kitchen facilities will be available on site. Alternatively, there are many hotels and guest houses in the area. The meeting will start on Friday with dinner and introductory talk. Saturday will be a combination of talks and an excursion, and Sunday to be dedicated to further organised excursions to visit some of the key locations. On Monday and Tuesday, we will break into smaller groups and visit less well-known areas to generate much-needed records for Atlas 2020. This will be an exciting part of the programme and we hope to have lots of skilled botanists who will help to gather a large number of records in a short space of time.

Information: The full programme will be made available on the Meetings and Irish pages of the BSBI website, and as a flyer in the April issue of BSBI News. **Contact:** John Faulkner (jf@globalnet.co.uk).

SAT 20th JUNE (G, R) - BALLYHALE QUARRY, BALLYHALE, CO. KILKENNY (v.c. H11)

Leader: Roger Goodwillie

Ballyhale quarry is one of the richest disused quarries in Kilkenny, with *Filago minima*, different forms of *Viola canina*, *Salix repens*, *Hieracium* and orchids. A mixed calcareous and acidic flora occurs and we also want to search for *Carex curta* and *Ophioglossum* in a nearby fen.

Meet 10.00am at gate (S547310), 4km south of village; the quarry itself is marked on Discovery map.

Enquiries to Roger (rogerg@indigo.ie) or 353-87-2443024

SAT 27th AND SUN 28th JUNE (R) - CAVAN TOWN AND VIRGINIA, CO. CAVAN (v.c. H30)

Leader: Robert Northridge

The aim of the weekend will be to visit under-recorded areas in small groups to collect data for Atlas 2020. Come suitably equipped for botanising in Cavan: wellingtons, walking boots and waterproofs are advised.

On Saturday **meet** 10.00am in the car park of the Cavan Crystal Hotel on the Dublin side of the town (H441040).

On Sunday **meet** 10.00am in the middle of Virginia outside the gates of the Church of Ireland church (N602878).

Contact: If you wish to attend please email Robert Northridge (robhannort@aol.com).

SAT 4th AND SUN 5th JULY (G, R) - LOUGH FERN AREA, WEST DONEGAL (v.c. H35)

Leader: Ralph Sheppard

Habitats visited during the weekend will include lake shore and fens along Leannan River, and also small lakes and oakwoods between Lough Fern and Lough Gartan. Wellingtons probably essential.

Meet both days 11.00am in Kilmacrenan village, bend in N56 just north of central crossroads (C140205).

Enquiries to Ralph (rsheppard@eircom.net), or 353-74-9147129

SAT 11th AND SUN 12th JULY (G, R) – COURTMACSHERRY & ENVIRONS, CO. CORK (v.c. H3)

Leaders: Fionnuala O'Neill and Edwina Cole

The main aim of this two-day event will be to generate records for Atlas 2020. Possible habitats investigated over the two days will include deciduous woodland, coastal beaches, coastal headland/heath and a graveyard. Walking boots/wellingtons, raingear, sunblock and a packed lunch required. **Meet** both days in Courtmacsherry at 11.00am in the carpark past the hotel, adjacent to the beach at the eastern end of the village (W517427).

Contact Fionnuala (foneill@botanicalenvironmental.com), or 353-86-3786752

MON 27th JULY TO MON 3rd AUGUST (R) - EAST & WEST MAYO (v.c. H26 & H27)

Leaders: Gerry Sharkey, Rory Hodd (+ helpers)

Mayo is one of Ireland's most spectacular counties, with vast areas of blanket bog, mountain ranges and breathtaking coastline. Because of this, and its sheer size, it is a very challenging area to record in. Gerry Sharkey, BSBI vice-county recorder, will lead a week aimed at recording for Atlas 2020. This will be a fun-filled and adventurous week, where new-comers are guaranteed to learn loads from the masters and make new friends. Visit the Irish webpage (<http://bsbi.org.uk/ireland.html>) for booking details. **Meet** – we will be based out of Castlebar, further details to be confirmed. **Contact** Maria Long, the Irish Officer (maria.long@bsbi.org), or 353-87-2578763

FRI 14th TO SUN 16th AUGUST (G, R) - INISHOWEN PENINSULA, EAST DONEGAL (v.c. H34)

Leaders: John Conaghan, Mairéad Crawford and Oisín Duffy

We aim to visit under-recorded areas of the Inishowen peninsula. Habitats will include sand dune, coastal heath and blanket bog. We will also search for rarer species, e.g. *Saxifraga oppositifolia* and *Euphorbia hyberna*. Whilst the main aim is to record for Atlas 2020, beginners are always welcome. Good walking boots, raingear, sunblock and a packed lunch required. **Meet** Friday and Saturday 10.30am in the car park of the Inishowen Gateway Hotel on the southern approach to Bunrana (C346312). On Sunday **meet** 10.30am in the Market Square Merville (C612385). **Enquiries** to John (conaghaj@indigo.ie), or 353-87-2239858

SAT 29th AUGUST (G, R) - BANGOR ERRIS, WEST MAYO (v.c. H27)

Leaders: Janice Fuller and John Conaghan

North-west Mayo is dominated by an extensive blanket bog landscape which is punctuated by lakes, forestry and semi-improved grassland. This field meeting will primarily record in blanket bog areas where species such as *Juniperus communis*, *Eriocaulon aquaticum*, *Carex limosa*, *Carex lasiocarpa* and *Vaccinium oxycoccus* are often found. Beginners are most welcome. Good raingear, a packed lunch and wellingtons are essential. This field meeting is dedicated to the memory of a dear friend and field meetings secretary Caoimhe Muldoon who spent many happy days on the bogs of north-west Mayo. **Meet** at the football pitch just south of Bangor Bridge (F863226). **Enquiries** to Janice (janicefuller@eircom.net), or 353-86-3476891

SAT 5th SEPTEMBER (R) - STREAMSTOWN, CO. WESTMEATH (v.c. H23)

Leader: Con Breen

The object of the meeting will be to explore under-recorded habitats in the area around Streamstown.

Meet 11.00am by the large specimen beech tree in the centre of Streamstown (N283433).

Contact Con Breen (conbreen101@yahoo.com), 353-1-8313573, or mobile 353-86-3539295