

Introduction

This is the seventh mid-winter Newsletter, which will provide details of the activities and events of 2018. As with previous years it has been another year of intensive field work for the Atlas and recording effort has been maintained. Other projects have been started and will continue for the foreseeable future contributing to the publication of a county flora at some stage in the not too distant future.

Recording During 2017 and 2018

Reference to the big database held by the Botanical Society provides details of records downloaded year by year. In 2017 a total 69,790 records were added; to date, a total of 48,412 records have been added during 2018, but approximately 12,000 records are close to being uploaded so similar levels of effort have been achieved. With regards to the source of the records, it is the same group of recorders as 2017 with significant contributions from Gareth Hirons, who has just started systematic recording in Nottinghamshire after being active in Derbyshire in the past.

One of the less pleasing tasks with regards to the Atlas is validation of records on the big database. Particular attention has been given to removal of duplicates; records with erroneous grid references and verification of records that are located on the boundary between Vice Counties. The data set is now largely free of errors and important records have been validated.

Much of the effort in 2017 and 2018 has been directed at filling the gaps in the distribution maps for common species. For the most part, this activity has confirmed the ubiquity of our more common species, but there have been some surprises. The plant species that have declined most are the aquatic species. Once very common species such as water-cress *Nasturtium officinale* agg., flote grass *Glyceria fluitans* and jointed rush *Juncus articulatus* are missing from numerous tetrads across the county. It is probably the loss of ponds that is the most significant factor. The other group that seems to have suffered is the arable weeds, but losses are by no means universal. The Sherwood Sandstones, Lias Clays and Alluvial areas still support important assemblages of arable weeds, but the mudstones, marls and boulder clays generally support a depauperate assemblage.

Recording effort in the final year of Atlas Recording (2019) will continue to concentrate on the gaps across the county. Tetrads in SK52, SK53, SK62, SK64, SK85 to SK88, and SK75 to SK79 need further recording, but there are now few tetrads that remain unvisited in recent years. Reassuringly, there is already sufficient coverage in all hectads to fulfil the requirements of the new Atlas, but the coverage is now getting to a level that is sufficient to prepare a county flora at Tetrad level and a few more years of gap-filling will achieve full coverage.

Before the start of the 2019 recording season I will be able to provide, upon request, a breakdown of the number of species recorded in each tetrad and which of the more common species remain unrecorded or overlooked (and in most cases are probably present). If anybody would like these lists, please email a request in March 2019. For active recorders I will be sending out lists relevant to preferred areas of recording in plenty of time before March 2019.

Rare Plants Recorded in 2018

As with previous years, most of the new species found during 2018 were neophytes, but two species; *Artemisia maritima* and *Orobanche hederæ* recorded as casuals are of particular note. *Orobanche hederæ* is usually associated with the western and southern coastal habitats. *Artemisia maritima* is extremely rare as a casual inland, the nearest to the Nottinghamshire record being the A6 trunk road at Quorn in Leicestershire (recorded in 2017)

An update to the Rare Plant Register (Third Edition) is scheduled for this year, but given the priorities with regards to the national atlas, it is very likely that the next edition will have to be postponed until 2020.

First and second records in 2018 include:

Amaranthus caudatus L., Gareth Hirons, 2nd record, 21 November 2018, SK500377 Bramcote, neophyte, small patch under a wall, close to the original record at Bramcote Landfill, which is no longer extant.

Artemisia maritima L., Dave Wood, 1st record, 6 July 2018, SK56813530 to SK56853527, A52 Ring Road, Lenton, casual, road margin, barish ruderals, on east side, several plants.

Asarina procumbens Mill., Ken Balkow, 2nd record, 12 June 2018, SK593845 North Clifton, neophyte, found on a wall and unaffected by drought when viewed on 02/08/2018.

Bidens ferulifolia (Jacq.) Sweet, Rob Johnson, 1st record, SK599413 Carlton, pavement weed.

Crocus pulchellus Herb., Gareth Hirons, 1st record, 29 October 2018, SK507375 Bramcote Churchyard, naturalised and flowering in October.

Dianthus caryophyllus L., Gareth Hirons, 1st record, 4 August 2018, SK790569 South Muskham, neophyte, sandy waste ground, plants on old wall.

Echium pininana Webb & Berthel., Rob Johnson, 1st record, 30 October 2018, SK482602 Brierley Forest Park, neophyte, three well established plants growing in area with much dumping. One plant particularly robust.

Elaeagnus x submacrophylla Servett., David Broughton, 1st record, 15 May 2018, SK53084386 Cinderhill Colliery, neophyte, edge of scrub, apparently self-sown from planting in nearby industrial estate.

Erophila majuscula Jord., Les Coe, 1st record, 15 April 2018, SK683917 Barrow Hills, native, on sandy soils in mossy grassland, frequent along a shallow sandy bank.

Isatis tinctoria L., Rob Johnson, 1st record, 30 May 2018, SK797542 River Trent, Newark-on-Trent, archaeophyte, growing on edge of the wharf, origin may be former planting in flower bed and seeded from there. Likely to become well established and colonise the Trent banks.

Matthiola longipetala (Vent.) DC., Rob Johnson, 1st record, 10 September 2018, SK775525, Long Lane Farndon, casual.

Mentha requeienii Benth., Dave Wood, 2nd record, 20 June 2018, SK59823546 Edwalton, neophyte, derelict garages, barish annuals, on weathered tarmac surface, 1 patch.

Nassella tenuissima (Trin.) Barkworth, Rob Johnson, 1st record, 19 June 2018, SK507562 Kirkby-in-Ashfield, neophyte, many seedlings and plants growing in pavement by bus stops, plants originate from amenity planting in town centre.

Orobanche hederæ Duby, Gareth Hirons, 1st record, 1 July 2018, SK50853752 Cow Lane, Bramcote, casual, growing in a patch of *Hedera* 'Hibernica' that has spread onto grass verge, fairly shaded, north-facing verge, origin uncertain, not an obvious introduction, approx. 50 plants.

Rorippa x armoracioides (Tausch.) Fuss, Dave Wood, 1st record, 1 August 2018, SK592321 Barn Farm, Bradmore, native, track verge, tall ruderal grassland, by farm buildings, 1 patch.

Rumex x heteranthos Borbás, Dave Wood, 1st record, 15 August 2018, SK8168565036 Besthorpe Gravel Pits NWT Reserve, native, former gravel workings, lagoon margins where seasonally flooded, with both parents, several plants.

Sutera cordata (Thunb.) Kuntze, Gareth Hirons, 2nd record, 1 October 2018, SK574397 Nottingham, neophyte, two patches flowering at base of restaurant walls, hanging baskets in the vicinity.

Trifolium incarnatum L. subsp. *incarnatum*, Dave Wood, 2nd record, 10 September 2018, SK781426 Flawborough, arable margin, tall ruderals, in game mix, long gone over, 2 plants.

Vicia lutea L., Gareth Hirons, 1st record, 18 June 2016, SK688396 Bingham, Casual, North of the A52 Trunk Road and just east of the Saxondale series of roundabouts in rough grassland.

Photographs

Changes are happening with Flickr, but as I have not heard anything untoward from Ken Balkow, who manages the Nottinghamshire Plants page. I assume, therefore, that there are no immediate concerns. Please keep submitting those photographs – the library is excellent and always worth a look.

Historical Information

Graeme Coles and Sian Matthews are in the processing of checking first records for the county. Some of the information provided in the Howitt's 1963 Flora appears to be erroneous and detailed research has identified contrary evidence. The results of this work will be published in full with the publication of a county flora. There is a need for further research, in particular an examination of the Herbarium specimens held at Wollaton Hall, which will help to fill in gaps in our current understanding.

Conservation Work

The NWT Species Re-introduction Forum has continued during 2018 and whilst activities have been limited compared to 2017, a few activities are worthy of mention. Rare species found on Forestry Commission sites and associated activities were reported to the Sherwood Trust at a meeting in

Clipstone Forest in the summer. Relevant species include creeping willow *Salix repens* and bilberry *Vaccinium myrtillus*.

The creeping willow that was re-introduced to Stapleford Wood and Budby are surviving and monitoring has commenced.

Cuttings of bilberry are growing in pots in my back garden and not surprisingly are proving to be more difficult to grow than willows. My horticultural skills are being seriously challenged!

The translocation work from Gamston Wood to Treswell Wood has been successful and most of the plants have survived, but obviously long-term survival is critical to gauging the success of the project.

If anybody is interested in contributing to species re-introduction work by growing rare plants or monitoring, please let me know. There are plenty of ways of helping.

Happy New Year to you all,

Mark Woods (Joint BSBI recorder for Nottinghamshire)

09/01/2019