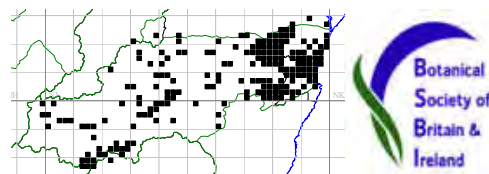


## BSBI Botany News

### VC92 South Aberdeenshire

Number 2. April 2014



This is the second newsletter for those interested in plants and botanical recording in South Aberdeenshire. I will produce them occasionally, to stimulate botanical work and seek help for BSBI recording projects. Please contact me (address below) with queries and especially any plant records!

#### Plant recording in South Aberdeenshire towards the new atlas

The main ongoing task is to gain records for the next **UK plant atlas 2020**, covering the period 2000-2019. Every plant recorder has a part to play! Many areas have not been visited by botanists for a long time, and some places have never been surveyed. Almost anywhere is worth exploration. The maps following show aspects of coverage over the years. There is still some further data for 2012-2013 to incorporate, but they show recent recording and more importantly highlight the major gaps.

#### Recording strategy

It will probably not be possible to visit all tetrads in the vice-county before 2020, and certainly not every 1x1km square (monad). The maps show that a few peripheral 10km squares (hectads) have no recent records. These of course are shared with neighbouring vice-counties so at a national hectad mapping scale this may not matter. But it would be very nice to receive records at a detailed level from within every hectad covered by VC92. In addition, we need to ensure a good spread of records across other hectads. So by 2019, I would like to achieve the following:

1. Detailed recording visits to at least five 1x1km squares within every 10km sq. containing more than 20 1x1km squares (there are 36 of them), a total of 175 monads over 6 years to 2019.
2. At least one detailed visit to one monad in each of the peripheral 10km squares with fewer than 20 1x1km squares - a further 14.

That's 30 per year, divided by all the botanists I can find! This is being refined, and may be too ambitious, but your help would be greatly appreciated! (See also further notes on page 4).

#### How to submit records in 2014

To help with field recording and submission, a customised recording card is available on the BSBI website at: <http://www.bsbi.org.uk/VC92.pdf>. I am happy to receive these and will enter the data. Another useful way is to send me an Excel spreadsheet (or similar). Please make sure there is one species per row, and the columns include date, location, grid ref and comments as a minimum. Otherwise, any emails with records would be fine. I receive so few that converting these into a more useable format will not be a chore. My main aim is to make sending in records as easy as possible!

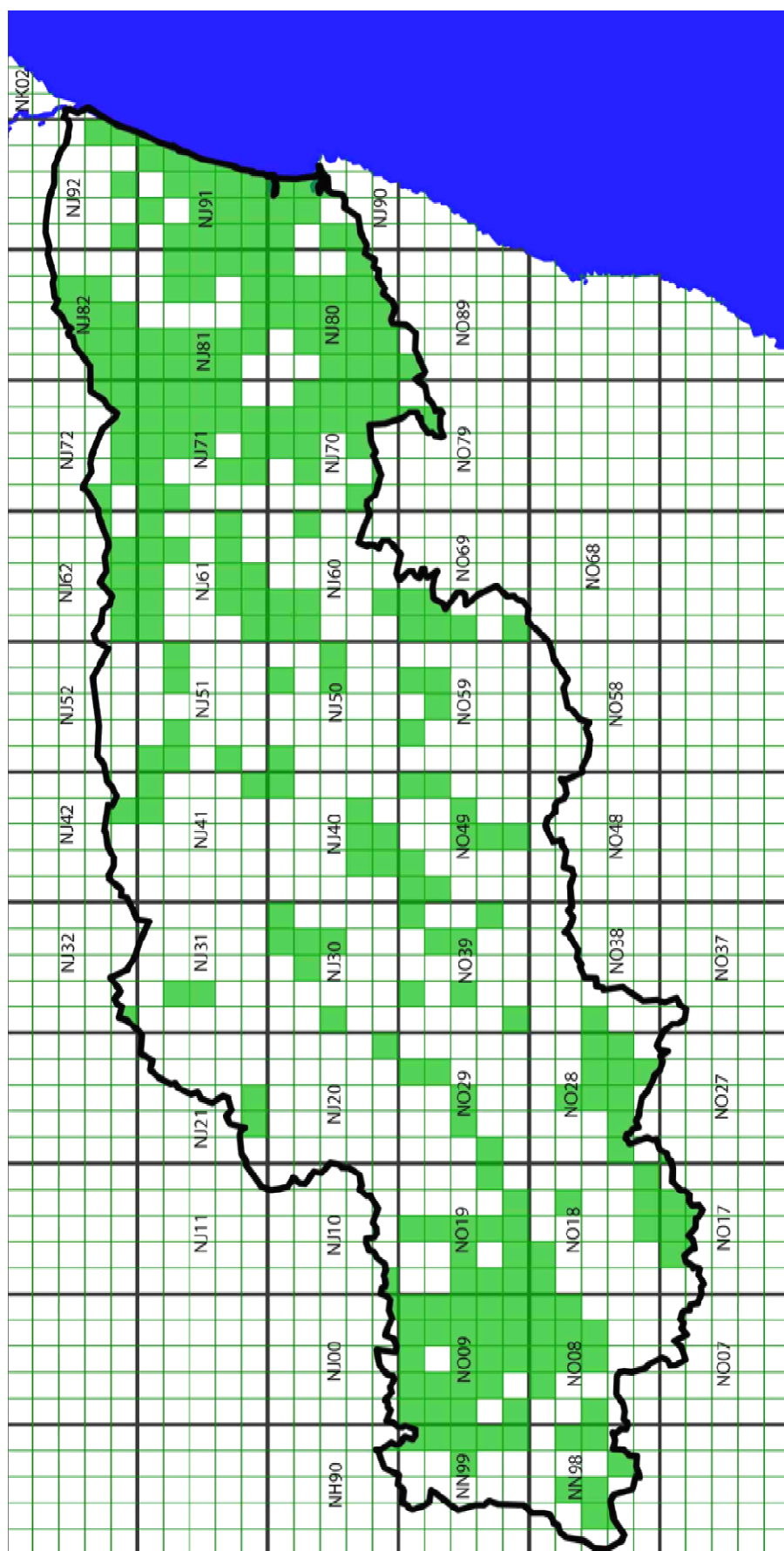


Twinflower, Bunzeach Forest, July 2013

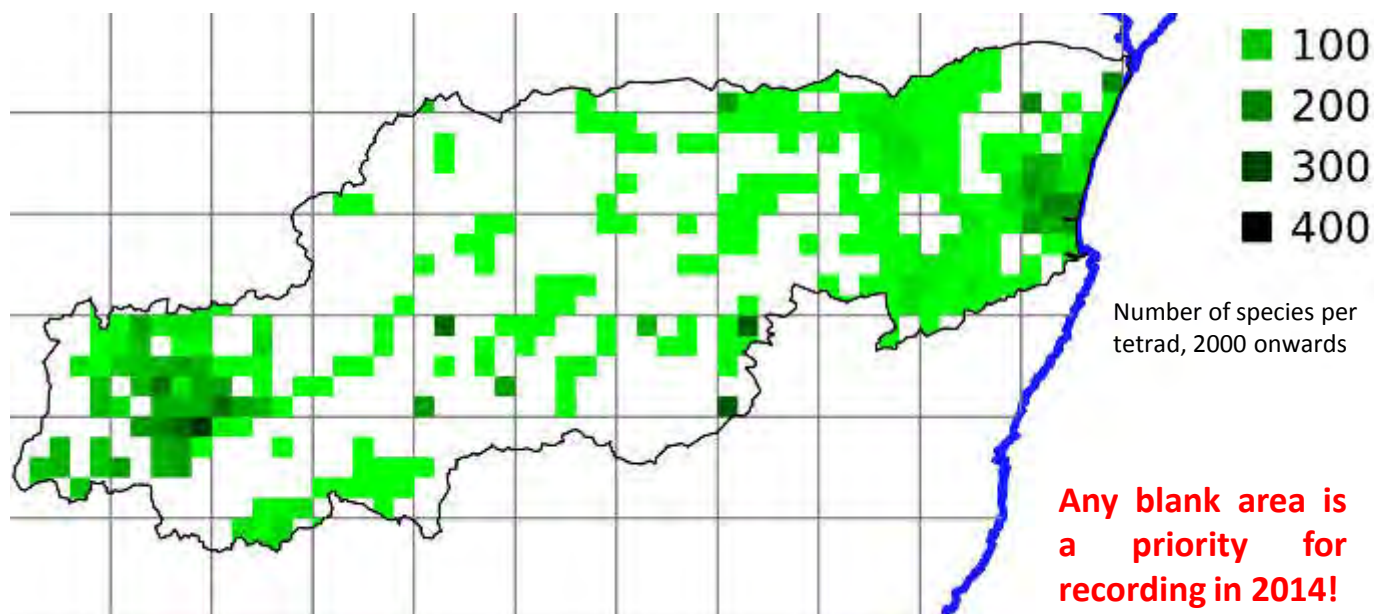
**BSBI Vice-county recorder:** Ian Francis

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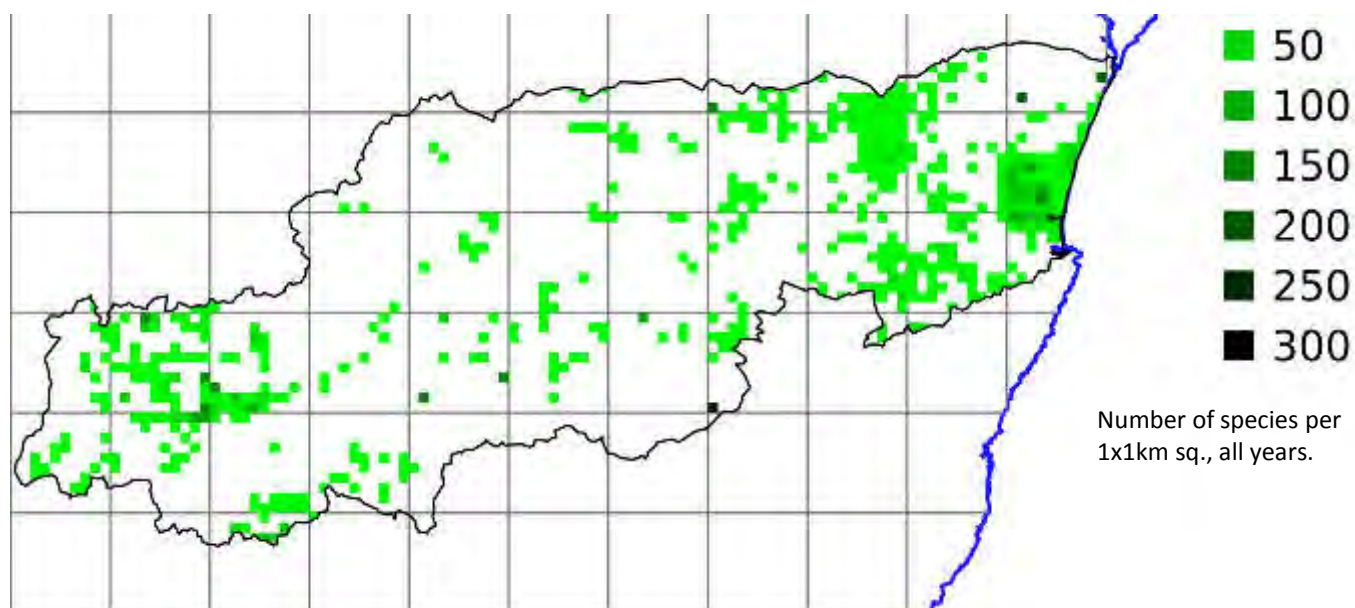
Coverage map showing all tetrads with any record since 2000. This map still has some additional records to add from 2012-13, but provides a good general indication of where to target recording in 2014 . In particular, NJ20 (Corgarff southwards to the Gairn) has been poorly covered (there are some records to add at the northern edge but none for the bulk of the hectad). Excluding the peripheral hectads (from where any records would be welcome), others which require more effort include NO18 (Glen Clunie area south of Braemar), NJ31 (Strathdon), NO38 (Glen Muick south), NJ41 (Kildrummy), NO59 (Birse – surely many uncaptured records from here?), NJ50 (Lumphanan) and NJ92 (Ellon south to inland of Menie).



These maps show the approximate numbers of species recorded in each 2x2km tetrad (above) and 1x1km monad (below). These are a different way of looking at the distribution map on page 2, which simply illustrates coverage through the presence of any record. The colour-coded categories give the upper limit of the division mapped – so for example '300' indicates that squares with this colour hold 300 or fewer species, down to the next division below.

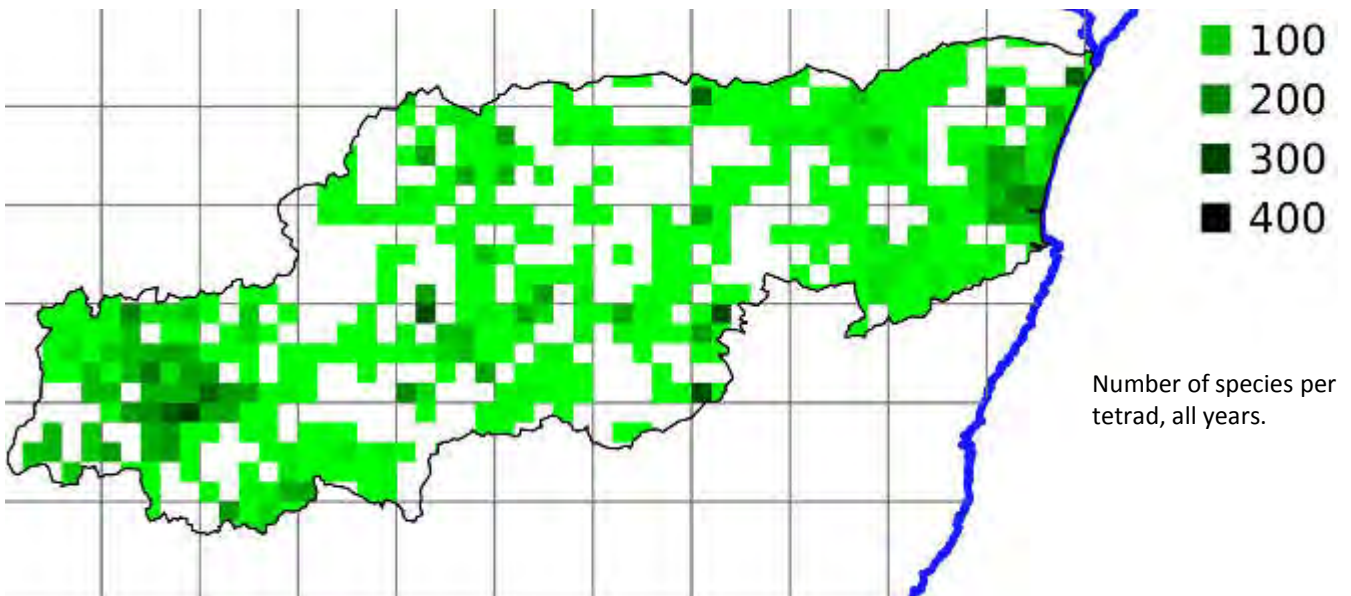
'Hotspots' of relatively high recording can be seen in the Aberdeen City, Kintore to Inverurie and Banchory areas, with another around Mar Lodge, largely related to the BSBI field meeting held there for one week in 2010.

These maps are based on just under 20,000 records, and in the above maps 298 tetrads have been covered. The maximum number of species recorded from any tetrad was 305, from NO69A near Strachan – clearly a well-worked area, and one which suggests the potential of many other tetrads!





The BSBI main Distribution Database (DDb) holds 60,206 records for South Aberdeenshire. It includes records from all historic years, including some from well before the 1930s and some from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The map below shows the number of species per tetrad from the complete dataset, for all years. While clearly many of the inland areas have received botanical visits in past decades, it does seem that some areas really have received almost no attention; once again, NJ20 stands out. Visits to upper Donside around Corgarff (north and south) and also right to the Angus watershed south of Glen Muick would be breaking new ground for plant recording in VC92!



The main priority for 2014 is to ask botanists to **visit the blank areas on the maps on pages 2 and 3**. Try adopting a 1x1km square in a poorly-recorded area - pick any you like in 2014 but later I may ask for coverage of some random squares, to balance rich and poorer areas. Spend as much time as you can, one nice day, recording all you can find in the square. Tell me which you would like! Ideally, more than one visit should be made (e.g. early and late), especially in lowland areas.

Within the square, try and record at points in the vicinity of six-figure grid refs in varying habitats, to help make up a composite list for the square whilst also recording fairly close to known points. If you find interesting species or habitats, please use a GPS to record these accurately and note any details.

Please fill in the results on a spreadsheet or recording card and send back to me as soon as possible afterwards. Many thanks.

Finally - any comments on these recording proposals would be welcome.



Chickweed Wintergreen *Trientalis europaea*, Loch Ullachie