

Plants in Vice-County 104: A Review of January-June 2017

Skye Botany Group met twice, visiting Staffin and the slopes of Sgùrr nan Gillean. The Inverness Botany Group spent a week recording on Muck.

Talks were given to the Sleat Environment Group (*From Orchids to Invasives*) and SWT Skye Region Group (*Recent Botanical Finds in VC104*). Monthly articles on matters of local botanical interest continued to be written for Am Bratach, the Raasay Community Newsletter. Articles also appeared in BSBI News (*Extracting records from the Scottish Saltmarsh Survey*) and the BSS Newsletter (*On Being BSBI Recorder for VC104: Skye, Raasay & The Small Isles*).

Nearly 8,000 records were made in VC104 in the first half of 2017 including 149 new hectad records, although a few of these are the result of subspecies recording e.g. *Huperzia selago subsp. selago* where *Huperzia selago* was already recorded. Many thanks to all who have contributed so far this year, especially Steve Terry who produced over 1,100 records including several first vice-county records for introductions.

Skye

New to British Isles:

Seth Gibson found *Mitella ovalis* (Bishop's-cap or Oval-leaved Mitrewort) in Uig Wood and traced the source to a garden linked to the woodland site by a drain. This has been written up for BSBI News.

New to VC104:

- *Acaena anserinifolia* (Bronze Pirri-pirri-bur) at Uig.
- *Arum italicum* (Italian Lords-and-Ladies) in Glendale.
- *Doronicum pardalianches* (Leopard's-bane) near Hinnisdal Bridge.
- *Echium vulgare* (Viper's-bugloss) at the Aird of Sleat.
- *Euphorbia griffithii* (Griffith's Spurge) at Ardvasar.
- *Phacelia tanacetifolia* (Blue Tansy) planted at Tormore.
- *Phormium tenax* (New Zealand Flax) planted on Muck.

New to Skye:

- *Juncus foliosus* (Leafy Rush), south of Orbost – known on Raasay, Rona and Rum.
- *Tulipa gesneriana* (Garden Tulip) near Broadford Airstrip.

Second for Skye:

- *Nitella translucens* (Translucent Stonewort) in Loch Corlarach, north of Dunvegan – known on Raasay, Rum and Soay.

General:

Carex paniculata (Greater Tussock-sedge) is turning out to be not quite as rare as earlier records suggest, though it remains far from common on Skye.

Hyacinthoides x massartiana (*H. non-scripta x hispanica*) appears to be spreading, with some 2017 records amongst populations of the native parent.

A single excursion in May added three Nationally Scarce species to tetrad NG55C, *Cephalanthera longifolia* (Narrow-leaved Helleborine), *Dryas octopetala* (Mountain Avens) and *Epipactis atrorubens* (Dark-red Helleborine) and two to NG55H, *Dryas* and *Equisetum x font-queri* (Font-Quer's Horsetail).

Muck

A rather wet and windy week on Muck with the Inverness Botany Group resulted in over 1,800 records at the monad level. As well as re-finding old records of many species, the following were added to the Muck list.

- *Calystegia sepium* (Hedge Bindweed)
- *Carex extensa* (Long-bracted Sedge)
- *Carex limosa* (Bog-sedge)
- *Carex oederi* (Small-fruited Yellow-sedge)
- *Salix cinerea* subsp. *oleifolia* (Rusty Willow)
- *Valeriana officinalis* (Common Valerian)

Also, many introductions were recorded for the first time, though Muck is particularly difficult in terms of knowing which introductions to record. *Phormium tenax* (New Zealand Flax) was found planted on the edge of a forestry plantation, the first record for VC104.

Fumaria bastardii (Tall Ramping-fumitory) was a good find with only two previous sites in VC104 (on Muck and Eigg) and no record since 1999.

Raasay

A *Hieracium* specimen from 2016 was determined as *H. praesigne* (Distinguished Hawkweed). This turns out to be only the eighth record for Scotland – and the second for the east coast of Raasay. It was previously recorded by Alan Stirling in 1969 at Druim an Aonaich, 4 km north of the new site and in a different 10 km square.

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