

## Plants in Vice-County 104: A Review of January – June 2019

Over 8,000 records were made in VC104 in the first half of 2019 including 91 new hectad records, although a few of these are the result of subspecies or aggregate recording. Many thanks to all who have contributed this year.

Skye Botany Group met three times, visiting Sgùrr nan Gillean, Kimaluag and Torrin.

Early in the year a considerable amount of analysis of VC104 records was undertaken in order to help prioritise recording trips during the season. As well as poorly recorded areas, this highlighted tetrads that had the most records of plants not re-found in the relevant hectad. These are potential hotspots for re-finding plants missing at the 10km level.

Additionally, areas where *Anemone nemorosa* (Wood Anemone) and/or *Ficaria verna* subsp. *fertilis* (Lesser Celandine) have not been recorded were used as an indicator of places not visited early in the season in recent times. Visiting some of these areas proved quite useful. A similar approach using *Gentianella campestris* (Field Gentian) as an indicator species will be tried in the late summer.

Several mountaineers have sent record from the Cuilins which has helped to improve coverage of these high peaks.

Neil Roberts deserves special mention as he has been sea-kayaking in order to reach tetrads with small land areas (islands, skerries and inaccessible areas of Skye) and no vascular plant records. By the end of the season there should be no tetrad with more than 2% land and no post-1999 records.

### Skye

New to VC104 – all garden escapes/throw-outs or planted:

- *Ornithogalum umbellatum* (Star-of-Bethlehem)
  - *Iris sibirica* (Siberian Iris)
- and two to be confirmed:
- *Berberis julianae* (Chinese Barberry)
  - *Spiraea hypericifolia* (Iberian Spirea)

*Daphne mezereum* (Mezereon) has escaped along the road at Borge and is new to Skye

Good numbers of old hectad records were re-found i.e. plants known in a hectad from before 2000 but not seen since.

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