

BSBI COMMITTEE FOR SCOTLAND

Minutes of the meeting held on 7th May 2006, at 2pm c/o Ian Green, Spey Bay

1a. Present

Richard Pankhurst (chair), Stephen Bungard, Alistair Godfrey, Ian Green, Jeff Waddell, Jim McIntosh, Heather McHaffie, Lynne Farrell, Jane Squirrell

1b. Apologies

Deborah Long, Jeanette Hall

2. Minutes of previous meeting (11th March 2006)

The minutes were agreed as correct

3. Matters Arising

- LF typed minutes from meeting (5th Nov 2005); JS distributed to Committee.
- JM sent yahoo botany link to Committee.

Action point: JH to confirm that current Scottish membership list has been obtained and that new Committee account has been set up.

- DL is SEL representative.
- JW presented draft of ideas for recruiting new members.

Action point: JW and JM to meet later in year to discuss practicalities of exchanging records

- RP confirmed Richard Bateman will speak at this year's Scottish AGM.
- JM has approached people suggested at previous meeting regarding talks.

4. Chairman's report (Richard Pankhurst)

- RP attended last BSBI Council meeting and reported the achievements of the Scottish Committee: link with FES, web pages, VCR conference, computerisation project progress.
- RP highlighted David Pearman's note (distributed with current BSBI news) on the future Development Officer post.
- JM noted a draft document for JNCC regarding the development of the BSBI, including staffing, is being prepared by BSBI staff.

Action point: JM to distribute document to Committee once finalised

- RP reported that Abstracts have not been updated for the past 5 years. John Swindells has taken over role but VCRs are now asked to report any written data relating to their VC.
- RP advertised new BSBI book on the Local Change Project and Volume 4 of Sell and Murrell's Flora of Great Britain and Ireland.

- RP highlighted Flora Locale leaflet and asked were the BSBI in contact with their Scottish branch?
- LF informed Committee they are an organisation involved with sourcing wildflowers for restoration projects. LF would provide Giles Laverack's (Flora Locale's Scottish contact) contact details and could approach him should BSBI wish to discuss native Scottish wildflower seeds further with him. Giles Laverack, Scotia Seeds, Mavisbank, Farnell, Brechin, Angus DD9 6TR, 01356-626425, sco.seed@netcomuk.co.uk

Action point: RP to ascertain dates for the next BSBI Records and Educational Meetings and distribute dates to Committee.

5. Secretary/Treasurer's report (Jeanette Hall)

- No report was available

6. Scottish Officer's report (Jim McIntosh)

- JM submitted a written report (see attached)
- LF suggested that Ben Chonzie & Dalcroy Promintory be added to the BSBI SCM programme for 2006.
- JM noted VC choice for paper record computerisation may change, but VC 96 and 104 are of high priority due to the recent retiral of their VCRs.
- JM noted that it is far more timing consuming (and therefore expensive) to computerise Species Record Cards as opposed to Site Record Cards.
- LF noted that the need for computerisation in Scotland may be a result of the lack of new floras being produced in Scotland compared to in England and Wales.
- SB raised a problem over record ownership and the potential for MapMate users to alter records in VCRs' databases via synchronisation.
- IG noted that in some VCs only the VCRs enter records onto MapMate and others share the work.
- JM has drafted a response to SNH's *Making a difference for Scotland's Species* conference.

Action point: JM to circulate response to Committee for comments

- JM supported choice of 3 target vascular plants for conservation (*Salix lanata*, *Plantanthera bifolia*, *Melampyrum sylvaticum*), all show a marked decline in Scotland.
- LF noted this will run in parallel to BAP, but this short list presents targets that can be met within the 5 year period.
- JM supported the brevity of the list, the inclusion of *Rhododendron ponticum* and the sustainable use of Red Deer in the proposal.
- JM objected to inclusion criteria for extinct Scottish species, suggesting funds be directed to extant species. Similarly funds for translocation/introductions should be limited as there is very little data on their actual success.
- LF noted that a subsidiary list exists for the next period of funding.
- JM to produce glossy report from VCR's conference, highlighting key points from the meeting, this will be circulated to all participants and those VCRs that didn't attend

7. Species survey's for 2006/7 (Jim McIntosh and Lynne Farrell)

- 5 SCM sites have been chosen this year (20 SCMs last year) in addition to a small number of species surveys (perhaps also five).
- Smaller number of species targeted (*Carex maritima*, *M. sylvaticum*, *P.bifolia*, suggested so far.)
- LF noted the need for a mixture of attractive species that would engage people to record. Species need to be widespread and flower at different times of year (possibly *Astragalus danicus*, *P. bifolia*). The Framework species work could continue over 2 or even 3 years.
- LF suggested a combined project with Plantlife and SNH to aid publicity, mailing and collation of records.
- LF showed Committee a draft of a proposed advertising/recording leaflet for *P. bifolia*.
- LF aims to have leaflet ready by end of June, for it to be placed on the web (using SNH's expertise) and to advertise the project on the television/radio.
- Committee supported LF's proposal for the *P.bifolia* project.

8a. Scottish Environmental Link report (Deborah Long)

- DL submitted a written report (see attached)

8b. Scottish Plantlife Link (Deborah Long)

- DL submitted a written report (see attached)

8c. Plantlife (Deborah Long)

- DL submitted a written report (see attached)
- RP noted that there was some progress on IPAs and that the Plant Diversity Challenge conference papers are now available on the web
- LF and JM to attend next PLINKS meeting

8d. BSS Council (Heather McHaffie)

- HM reported that the new BSS president is Richard Abbott (St Andrews).
- RA has proposed a symposium on Arctic-alpine vegetation (and climate change) potentially in June 2007.
- HM noted that the BSS has a new web site
- HM reported that papers from the Atlantic Oakwoods symposium will be issued in the next two volumes of the Botanical Journal of Scotland
- JM noted he has little contact with BSS and wondered if he should be doing more.
- HM noted that BSS covers all plants groups (not just vascular plants) and provides lectures/teaching to students, these are aspects which the BSBI does not cover.

8e. SNH report (Lynne Farrell)

- LF submitted a written report (see attached)
- LF confirmed that several SSSI citations were being reviewed and updated in some cases. The Site management Statements were also being updated, and there was an opportunity to include further information in these, particularly in regard to Lower Plants information.

8f. FCS (Jeff Waddell)

- JW has completed analysis of all FES areas to survey and is about to issue tenders for habitat surveys..
- JW noted that FES boundaries do not match VC boundaries and FES's has difficulty in obtaining VC GIS information from NBN as FES is a commercial enterprise, hence not free and OS copyright issues arise.
- RP asked how BSBI members could apply for these survey contracts.

Action point: JM to provide list of VCRs who could undertake habitat survey work to JW

- JW presented document of ideas to raise younger BSBI membership.
- JM suggested a part-time Educational Officer could take on many of these initiatives.
- JM has approached all Scottish University's to promote the BSBI, but Sarah Whild may actually be addressing this question.
- JM had raised issue of membership fees and promotional gifts with Michael Braithwaite but the feedback hadn't been very positive.
- RP suggested BSBI should target conservation agencies.
- JM/SB/LF noted they help NTS staff, rangers and SNH staff respectively.
- LF suggested at AGM VCRs could be asked whether they could help out with educational projects
- LF noted the Hammerschlag legacy could provide funding for these initiatives.

Action point: All to comment on JW's ideas; ideas then to be presented to BSBI educational Committee

9a. Field Meetings 2006

- LF reported logistical problems surrounding number of attendees and availability of transport on Mull trip.

9b. AGM – Edinburgh 2006

- RP reported that facilities at Edinburgh for the 2006 AGM had been booked.
- Douglas McKean has been asked to be local organiser and attend next Committee meeting.
- JM suggested a questionnaire to ascertain whether the date of the AGM should be 1) kept as is 2) changed to an alternative day in November or 3) be over two days in the summer and include a field excursion.
- AG suggested the questionnaire be printed on a flyer to accompany appropriate mailings and placed on the web to give members an opportunity to respond.
- JM proposed a new timetable layout for AGM.
- LF suggested changing Member's Forum to Open Forum to encourage both members and non-members to attend.
- AG suggested that a 9am start was too early (times must include set up and travel times)
- RP suggested a more formal poster session to ensure exhibitors are available to discuss their posters during a specific time period.
- All discussed various time schemes, number of and length of talks throughout AGM meeting, position of key lecture, who should be invited to present news and project updates.
- AG suggested a talk from BSS
- HM suggested a BSS news slot, either present by RA or another BSS member

- LF suggested asking DL to talk about Plantlife projects; Alan Forrest on BSBI hybrids project; BSBI President to introduce new Development Officer
- JM proposed buffet lunch (charge to members); considered a good idea by Committee.
- JM raised the issue of transport problems for some members. Consider adding tick boxes to booking form ie. do you require transport / are you willing to provide transport
- *Action point: JM to re-draft programme and consult Committee.*

11. Scottish Newsletter

- No information available, but newsletter has gone to printers

12. Date of next meeting

- Saturday 23rd September 2006 at Lynne Farrell's
- LF suggested Committee meetings be combined with a short field trip to start at 1pm for 1 hour prior to meeting.

Action point: JS to ask JH to take minutes at next meeting

13. A.O.C.B

- LF has been approached by PlantLife to verify that species listed in their Pond Alert project were native. Pond Alert leaflet was handed round for comment.
- RP highlighted James Cullen's (Cambridge BG) request in BSBI news for *Rhododendron* specimens, and events hosted by Flora Locale in Scotland.
- JM highlighted the BRISC *Wildlife on your doorstep* initiative to get people interested in identifying and recording wild flowers and other species groups.
- JM noted that the loophole identified by JW on the NBN gateway has been closed.

Jane Squirrell
9 May 2006

BSBI Scottish Officer Report to the BSBI Scottish Committee on 7 May 2006.

BSBI Site Condition Monitoring Survey Work

Currently in discussion with SNH about undertaking a small number (perhaps five or so) SCM sites – to keep momentum going, and to ensure that we don't leave too big a backlog to later in the new SCM 6 year cycle. So far, proposed sites include:

- Keltneyburn, vc88
- Rescobie and Balgavies Lochs, vc90
- Glen Tanar, vc92

BSBI Species Monitoring Survey Work

I am in discussion with SNH & Plantlife over a small project involving volunteers to survey a small number (perhaps five or so again) declining species in Scotland. Possibly:

- *Carex maritima* (follow on and completion of last year's work)
- *Planthanthera bifolia* (listed in *Making a difference for Scotland's Species*)
- *Melampyrum sylvaticum* (listed in *Making a difference for Scotland's Species*)
- Declining Montane Saxifrages (*S. cespitosa* & *S. cernua*)

Current BSBI Computerisation Project

Currently some 100,000 BSBI records from 4 Scottish VCRs are being computerised by 4 contractors (selected from BSBI ranks). The project is approximately 95% complete, and two of the four datasets have now been handed over to the VCRs (vc80 and vc103). The remaining two are currently being completed and checked.

Proposed BSBI Computerisation Project

A project is currently being planned by the Scottish Officer which would aim to computerise all remaining paper BSBI records in Scotland over a 3 year period, using a similar approach as the current project. To help to prepare the proposal and SNH Grant-aid application a questionnaire about VCR record holdings was sent to all Scottish VCRs. 39 out of the 40 Scottish VCRs responded: 50% said that they would like help and, of those, 50% said they would need more help than the VCRs currently involved. I pitched for SNH funding in March but subsequently SNH came back and said that no funding would be available for work during this financial year, but that I should apply in August for a project beginning next year. I am currently preparing a pre-application for Esmee Fairbairn for one year's work for this financial year to maintain momentum. The records I would propose to computerise as part of this project, **if successful** would be:

- vc78 Peebleshire (14,000 record Species Card Index)
- vc83 Midlothian (11,500 record Species Card Index)
- vc96 Easterness (20,000 record Species Card Index)
- vc104 N. Ebudes (30,000 records various formats)

Scottish BSBI VCR Workshop, Kindrogan 31 March – 2 April

25 out of 40 Scottish VCRs participated in a residential VCR Workshop at Kindrogan organised by the Scottish Officer. The main themes were feedback and support. The Scottish Officer presented on SCM, RPRs, and the Computerisation Project, and there were also sessions on Local Change, Contributing records to *Watsonia*, *Taraxaca* and MapMate *inter alia*. A glossy Workshop report is currently being prepared and will shortly be sent to both those who attended and those who did not.

Jim McIntosh
May 2006

Report from Plantlife Scotland for BSBI meeting on 6 May 2006: Updates on Plantlife Scotland, Plantlife Link Scotland and Scottish Environment Link

March – May 2006

Policy

Scottish Biodiversity Strategy: No progress to report on this.

Non native invasive species: news on progress will be available after the next non native species forum meeting in London on 24 May. Things very quiet otherwise.

Species recovery through Back from the Brink

Plantlife Scotland is supporting a number of projects through our BfB programmes. These include: Detailed e –dossiers 15 vascular plant dossiers are available online for UK species.

Research: research for Plantlife species continues on *Linnaea borealis* and *Spiranthes romanzoffiana*. Topics include pollination strategies for both plants.

Management trials for *Juniperus communis* and *Linnaea borealis* ongoing. These are long term trials so results will not be available for 3 years.

Management advice: we are to publish management leaflets for pillwort and *Ascophyllum nodosum* *ecad mackaii* later this year. Drafts are now with the designers.

Scientific papers: still working on a pillwort paper.

Plantlife surveys & campaigns

Juniper survey:

Dataset for the juniper survey is now ready for analysis. A total of 465 records will be included.

Species surveys:

Currently analysing data from the Harebell Hunt 2005. An article will be published in Plantlife's summer magazine and on the Plantlife web site. The next species survey will be for 3 invasive species, to be launched around 29 May.

Common Plant survey: was launched on 20 March 2006. We have sent out 120 packs so far this year and are promoting the survey at every opportunity in Scotland.

Important Plant Areas: The paper that Jenny wrote on progress with IPAs in the UK (Target 5) is now available online at <http://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/plantlife-saving-species-global-strategy-pdcc2006.html> .

Flora Guardians: we're planning to launch the new Flora Guardian project in Scotland in July. We will concentrate at first on recruiting volunteers to monitor habitats threatened by invasive species.

Gardening Scotland 2006: Plantlife Scotland has a stand this year at Gardening Scotland, 2-4 June at Ingliston, at which we will launch Pond Alert, our new awareness raising programme for gardeners and community groups. We also have a joint stand with the Scottish Executive looking at the issues of non native invasive species. More details on the show are available at <http://www.gardeningscotland.com/>

Operational updates:

Plant Diversity Challenge conference 2006: The conference at Kew on 26 April was very well attended. Papers were presented on all 5 objectives, based on and expanding on the issues raised in the target papers. Target papers are available at <http://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/plantlife-saving-species-global-strategy-pdcc2006.html> . See <http://www.incc.gov.uk/page-3698> for the official press release on the conference.

PLINKS:

The PLINKS Strategy for the conservation of lower plants & fungi in Scotland is available as pdf from the Plantlife website and copies are also available from Plantlife Scotland in Stirling. We are now looking for funding for a joint lower plant and fungi officer post to implement the strategy, particularly target 9 on awareness and education.

The next PLINKS meeting is 12 May at Balallan House in Stirling. The agenda will include progressing the PLINKS lower plant and fungi strategy post plus an update on the launch of the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator and what it all means.

Scottish Environment Link:

Meetings & events:

The AGM is on 20 June in Edinburgh. The next Congress will be 24 – 25 November in Birnam.

Recent activities:

All recent press releases on link work are available at www.scotlink.org Recent activities include work on climate change targets, the UK marine bill, renewable energy. Also published is a report on “The battle for Roinebhal” written by Michael Scott. Available from the website, it is a good read!!

Current issues:

Link is working alongside the Stop Climate Chaos initiative in Scotland and the current Hit the Button campaign focuses on planning rights fro communities.

Deborah Long
Plantlife Scotland
3 May 2006

Report for BSBI Scottish Committee from Lynne Farrell, SNH representative

1. Site Condition Monitoring

Lynne, Jim and Chris Sydes met on 25 April to discuss BSBI involvement in 2006/07 work. A short list of sites was agreed and Lynne was to confirm with Area staff which sites they would like surveyed.

2. IPAs and Kew conference- Plant Diversity Challenge, 26 April

This was essentially a review of the last 4 years and the 16 relevant plant targets. A summary of the different targets and achievements was provided. The need for further action on particular targets before 2010 was highlighted.

3. UKBAP

The next stages will be discussed at PSHRWG (Priority Species and Habitats Review Working Group) on May 23 2006.

4. Scotland's Species Framework

This was launched on March 23 at Hopetown House. There are 3 higher plants on the list of species for special action- Lesser Butterfly Orchid, Small Cow- wheat and Woolly Willow. The consultation package is available from SNH Hope Terrace. This was made available at the BSBI VCRs meeting at Kindrogan. It is intended to have a special survey and Action Plan for the Lesser Butterfly orchid, and that this will be a joint project between SNH, BSBI and Plantlife Scotland.

5. Local Change report

This was launched on Monday 24 April. Copies of the report were available at the Kew conference. A complimentary copy has been sent to Colin Galbraith, Director Science, SNH.

6. Review of SSSI citations

A meeting is to be held on Monday 8 May to discuss this, particularly in relation to lower plants.

Lynne Farrell
5 May 2006