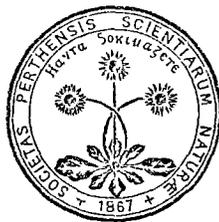


June 1981

P.S.N.S.
BOTANICAL SECTION



Quadio + veritas

Bulletin Number 6

EDITORIAL

Over the past year there have been various changes on the committee of the Botanical Section. Our chairman, Mike Burns, left us at Christmas to go to Kashmir where he will be spending six months on fieldwork for an M.Sc. on the ecology of the Kashmir pinewoods. John Rohrbach took over as acting chairman until the A.G.M. but sadly did not feel able to continue in the position of chairman. We are very grateful for his help during his brief period of office. Mr Bill Gauld, a former president of the Botanical Society of Edinburgh was elected as the new chairman at the A.G.M. and we look forward to his guidance in the future.

Also new to the committee are Norman Addison and Ann Mathers, although Ann Mathers is in fact returning to the position of secretary which she held when the Botanical Section was first formed by Allan Robson.

Besides the changing faces on the committee, there have been changes amongst the B.S.B.I. vice-county recorders for Perthshire. The recordership for vice-county 87, West Perthshire became vacant when Richard Thomas transferred to the adjacent vice-county of Mid-Perthshire (V.C.88). The vacant recordership was enthusiastically taken up by Beth Henman at the beginning of the last season, but unfortunately she had to relinquish the work when her husband was transferred to a post in England. This leaves the recordership for West Perth (V.C.87) vacant once again, though it is hoped that a new recorder will be appointed before the season is far advanced.

After a year of so many changes we hope we can now look forward to a period of relative stability !

Nick Stewart
Helen Stace

BIOLOGICAL RECORDING IN SCOTLAND (BRISC)

Following the success of last year's project to involve naturalists of all persuasions in recording a selection of twelve different plants and animals in Scotland, a new 'twelve species' card has been produced for 1982. In addition to twelve species of particular interest, including Butterfly Orchids, Kidney Vetch, Dark Green Fritillary, Adder and Red Squirrel, this year's card can be used to record interesting siting of other species such as otter or wildcat if you are lucky enough to see them !

If you would like to participate this year, copies of the card and an explanatory sheet are available from Mike Taylor at Perth Museum. Mike will also accept record cards from last year if any one still has any - better late than never.

ROADSIDE VERGES IN PERTHSHIRE

The Perthshire branch of the Scottish Wildlife Trust have a network of hedgerows and roadverges throughout Perthshire, which they consider to be of particular interest. These are visited regularly by S.W.T. members to ensure that they are properly managed and cared for.

At present the S.W.T. are revising this list of roadside verges. If you know of any hedgerows or roadsides that are particularly nice, for instance with a good selection of meadow species, or with orchids or other uncommon species, please send details of the verge to Bill Gauld at 1 Banks Crescent, Crieff, PH7 3SR.

EXCURSION REPORTS 1981

HARE MYRE AND STORMONT LOCH

4th June 1981

Twelve members met at Hare Myre on a warm but insect-ridden evening to see how the Twinflower colony was progressing. About ten years ago the section cleared an area of brambles to allow this rare Perthshire plant to spread from the few plants that then existed. The colony is doing very well and now covers a roughly circular area about ten metres across and has almost reached some areas of brambles that have re-established themselves. The colony produces few flowers

but the twin was nicely in flower for the meeting. A few spikes of Creeping Ladies Tresses were also found among the Twinflower but these were seen in much greater numbers near Stormont Loch. Near the edge of Hare Myre a new colony of *Amsinckia intermedia* agg (an alien similar to Small Bugloss but with orange flowers) was found. This flower has been seen in several Perthshire localities in recent years and seems to be increasing.

Nick Stewart

LOCH LOMOND

21st June 1981

19 members met in brilliant weather at Balloch to join "Maid of the Loch" the last paddle steamer made, to sail down Loch Lomond to Rowardennan and back. The excursion was led by Mr Eddie Idle, the Regional Officer for the South East Region of the Nature Conservancy Council who astounded everyone with his bottomless knowledge of the area, its history, wildlife, agriculture and use.

In an exceptionally interesting and delightful manner Mr Idle unveiled the secrets of Loch Lomond from the Volcanic Age through the Ice Age to the present. The loch was originally three separate lochs formed in the late Ice Age, and the sand bars which used to separate them can still be located.

Each of the islands in the loch has its own story - ancient Yews which have to be protected from goat grazing by individual fences round each tree, the use of oak coppice from another island for tanning, the immigration of Fallow Deer and the use of the loch itself first for water supplies and later in Hydro-electric Schemes and water sports.

Historically the loch and surrounding area is of great interest, particularly from Viking times onwards and the area has a long story to tell of the Colquhouns, the Buchanans and the McGregors and their 'activities'.

The sail was much enjoyed by all and will long be remembered. We are grateful to Mr Idle for making his vast knowledge available to us.

Freddie French

COMMEMORATIVE TREE PLANTING

7th November 1981

20 members and friends of the Botanical Section met on 7th November 1981 to plant 3 oak trees in a Commemorative Ceremony with which we all wished to honour the late Allan W Robson DA. Sadly Allan who had been chairman of the section since its inception over 20 years ago, passed away in January 1981.

Mrs Jessie Robson and their son Alan were present and the ceremony which was ably conducted by Michael Burns, who succeeded Allan as chairman. The trees were planted on Moncrieffe Island on the east side of a belt of trees which were planted to commemorate the Society's Centenary Year, facing the building in which the P.S.N.S. was originally formed.

We all hope the trees will flourish and form a lasting memory of Allan who loved all growing things.

Thanks are due to Perth District Council who prepared the site for the tree planting ceremony.

Freddie French

LOCH VENACHAR

5th July 1981

11 people met in heavy rain on the morning of Sunday 5th July to record the flora of the west end of Loch Venachar.

Several different habitat types were visited, from dryish heather and juniper moor to wet ground dominated by *Phalaris arundinacea*, or by *Carex vesicaria*, *Lysimachia thyrsoiflora* was widespread but *Scirpus sylvaticus* was restricted to one small area. In two sphagnum bogs were fine specimens of *Carex paupercula*. A ditch provided *Eleogiton fluitans* - and nearby an enormous adder uncoiled slowly and slid away in full view of the entire party. The sun broke through as the loch edge was reached - but only *Apium inundatum* proved of interest with the level being high. In all 215 species were recorded for the quadrant.

Thanks are due to the Forestry Commission and the other landowners for permission to visit, and to Dr R J Keymer (Nature Conservancy Council) for initiating the meeting.

Richard Thomas

DIARIES OF FOSS MINE

12th July 1981

On the 12th July some 25 members and friends met at Tomphubil limekiln to visit the new and somewhat controversial exploration for barytes (barium sulphate) on the Foss Estate north of Aberfeldy. The excursion was only made possible by the kindness and co-operation of Dresser Minerals Inc. and Mr Ed Wardrope, Project Engineer, in particular. We should also thank Lynnette Borradaile who helped in no small measure by ferrying members up to the adit at approximately 650 metres above O.D. in Kindrogan's Land Rover which probably needed new springs afterwards !

Mr Wardrope explained the history of mineral exploration in the area and the geological setting of the mineral outcrop. Most unusually, this deposit of barytes occurs not as a vein but as a bed and probably formed as a chemical precipitate around a submerged volcanic vent on the Dalradian sea floor. Since its formation the deposit has been bent and deformed by the forces which created the original Caledonian land mass 500 million years ago and altered the surrounding sediments to form the schists which compose most of the Breadalbane mountains.

Following an examination of the interior of the exploration adit (which has been subsequently extended) members set off through the drifting mists which obscured the general features of the landscape, to examine the flora of the Farragon range.

Particular attention was paid to the cliff ledges where we found many alpine plants including the following species :- Hoary Whitlaw Grass (*Draba incana*), Alpine Cinquefoil (*Potentilla crantzii*), Alpine Saxifrage (*Saxifraga nivalis*), Stone bramble (*Rubus saxatilis*), Hair Sedge (*Carex capillaris*).

Mike Taylor

DOLLAR GLEN AND MADDY MOSS

16th August 1981

Seven members, a baby and a dog met on a hot sunny day to look at the plants of Dollar Glen and visit Maddy Moss in search of Yellow Marsh Saxifrage (*Saxifraga hirculus*) which was discovered there by Charles Wyville Thompson about 1869.

The lower part of Dollar Glen consists of a steep wooded gorge with a lush growth of plants, including eleven species of ferns, millet

(*Milium effusum*) and Creeping Bellflower (*Campanula rapunculoides*). We emerged from the coolness of the lower glen to eat our lunch at Dollar Castle.

After lunch we walked up the Glen to Maddy Moss - although young Andrew required a lot of carrying, we all made it to the top. Unfortunately we were unable to find any trace of the Saxifrage which should have been in full flower, despite the fact that areas of suitable habitat were present. Many thanks to those that took part in the search.

The party then repaired to Nick and Helen's house for "tea". (Unfortunately Norman Addison missed the chocolate fudge as his car broke down on the way there.)

Helen Stace

RECORDING IN PERTSHIRE

Several members have shown an interest in contributing botanical records for Perthshire, so I have compiled a map to show which areas are most in need of study.

The botanical recorders for the Perthshire vice-counties work on a 5 x 5 km. basis for collecting, together their records and the grid squares on the map represent these units. The shaded squares on the map represent the squares for which there are records of over 100 species. As you can see there are large gaps and many areas still to be looked at. If you intend to visit a place such as a wood or a loch which crosses a 5 km. square boundary, please keep the records separate for both squares.

In order to help with recording, I have arranged for a supply of recording cards to be put in the library at Perth Museum. There is only a limited number of cards to last us the summer as a new redesigned card is being produced in the Autumn. Help yourself to these but please don't take more than you think you will need for this season. If anyone is unfamiliar with these cards, which use abbreviated latin names, please contact me and I will be pleased to help you out.

Nick Stewart

NATURAL SCIENCE COLLECTIONS RESEARCH UNIT (NSCRU)

Do you know of or own a collection of natural history or geology specimens, if so NSCRU would like to hear about it. The unit is aiming to compile and publish a catalogue of all such collections in Scotland with the aim of:

- (1) Tracing collections of historic interest which throw light on the life and work of past naturalists and on the development of the study of the natural history and geology of Scotland.
- (2) Aiding the communication between naturalists working in similar fields.
- (3) Identifying those subjects or fields in which further study would be most rewarding.

We hope to include collections in museums, schools, universities, public and private institutions and in private hands. Many of these particularly those held privately, are difficult to trace and we would like to hear from anybody who knows of any such collections, if necessary information about the owner and location of valuable collections can be kept confidential. Please contact Helen Stace at the address below if you have any information.

Helen Stace, Project Officer (NSCRU)
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20/22 Torphichan Street
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Produced by Perth Museum & Art Gallery