



HAMPSHIRE RARE PLANT REGISTER

'Hampshire Notables' List 2005-2017: Notes for Readers

Introduction

The original list of 'Hampshire Notables' (vascular plants) was drawn up in 2000 by Clive Chatters and Neil Sanderson, applying counts of tetrads from the *Flora of Hampshire*¹ to obtain estimates of rarity for Hampshire taxa, and using *British Red Data Books 1*² and *Scarce Plants in Britain*³ to specify national rarity.

Several factors led to the need for review and ongoing revision of the list.

- National lists of rare and scarce species have been updated as a result of the publication of *New Atlas of the British and Irish Flora*⁴. These lists were summarized 2004 in *BSBI News*⁷. A new Red Data List⁸ for vascular plants in Great Britain, using the IUCN criteria for threatened status, was published in May 2005. A list for England only⁹, published in 2014, also follows IUCN guidelines.
- Work was undertaken to produce a Rare Plant Register for Hampshire, which was published early in 2011. It is being extended and updated by occasional electronic publication of individual species accounts. BSBI criteria for inclusion of taxa are on somewhat different lines from those applied to the original 'Notables' list.
- Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre (HBIC) have overhauled their criteria for notable species within the county, and sought to harmonize them with the BSBI criteria as far as possible. Since these criteria lead to exclusion of species considered in some cases as habitat indicators and species of local conservation significance, HBIC are working on an adjunct to the list that better fulfils their purposes.
- *Flora of Hampshire* 'recent' records on distribution maps cover 1930 onwards. Review of records from 1985 onwards (which includes two completed major recording episodes in the county) suggests changes in status of a number of taxa in recent decades. A third major recording effort is being made for the publication of the next national Atlas ('Atlas 2020'), which is also yielding many additions and changes

The new criteria have been given in a separate paper⁵ and will not be repeated here. The way in which they have been interpreted and applied is described below.

Because knowledge of the Hampshire flora is always expanding, the list will always be provisional. Comments on the inclusion or exclusion of taxa are welcomed, as are

notifications of any errors in the list. Borderline issues of status do not need comment at the present, since they either have been or will be resolved (as far as possible) in the ongoing work programme to document the status of Hampshire's rare and scarce plants.

The list currently includes all vascular plant groups. It is intended to cover charophytes (which are within the scope of the BSBI's interests) at a later date.

The taxa that are for inclusion under the aegis of BSBI's 'Rare Plant Register' criteria are highlighted with a darker background in the list.

Application of Criteria

The **National Status** listed is as described in reference 5. Information on endemics is taken from a variety of BSBI sources but chiefly from *List of Plants Endemic to the British Isles*⁶.

Taxa that have a national status are included in the list, even where they are believed to be extinct, or merely casual or introduced in the county. Documenting their local status is an important clarification of the national record.

The **Reason for Inclusion** is the highest of the 'General Category' classifications from reference 5 that applies to the taxon. There is one exception to this rule. Where a plant is nationally rare or scarce, but has only casual or introduced status in the county, the Reason for Inclusion is downgraded to 'County of Other Interest'. This has no effect on its inclusion in the list, but will sometimes lower its priority in the documentation work programme (see below).

Local Status

For all taxa, regardless of whether they are listed on national or local criteria, an attempt has been made to define their local status, for each main vice-county separately on 'BSBI Criteria', and for the county as a whole on 'SINC Criteria'⁵. This is done on the basis of post-1985 records. *It should be emphasized that this status is provisional at present, being based on the current computerized record.* Some 'candidates' have gone from the list in recent revisions and more can be expected to go.

As far as possible at this stage, the BSBI Criteria for rarity are applied by counting 'Wells Sites': that is, a site defined as a continuous stretch of habitat likely to support the plant, not exceeding 1km in any direction. Where it is not possible to make such a judgement from the record, a simple count of 1km squares is applied.

The BSBI criterion for 'Locally Scarce and Declining' (CR2 in reference 5) is strictly 'in 10 or fewer sites, and thought to be in decline'. For the present, all taxa in 10 or fewer sites in a vice-county are listed. An assessment of their decline will be made as part of the documentation programme.

The BSBI category 'Alien of Interest' (3 sites or fewer, and of particular scientific, cultural or historic interest) has been intentionally misapplied in the case of nationally rare or scarce plants that occur in the county only as introductions or casuals, but in

more than 3 sites. This has been done to emphasize their status in the county. The distinction needs to be redrawn in any later documentation of status.

A plant qualifies for inclusion with a particular local status (e.g. 'County Rare') if it has that status in one or other vice-county, regardless of its status in the rest of the county or over the county as a whole.

The differences between administrative county boundaries and vice-county boundaries account for some apparent anomalies; for instance, plants that are absent from both vice-counties, but appear as 'County Rare' (because they occur in the Hampshire parts of VC8 only).

Where condition (iii) does not apply, aggregated totals for the SINC criterion 'County Scarce' have been applied for conditions (i) and (ii).

Dates

The list of earliest and latest dates appended to the original 2000 Notables List was drawn from the currently computerized record and included many inaccuracies, in particular for 'earliest date'. Also many 'latest dates' were not up to date. These have now been rectified and continue to be updated using knowledge to hand, but no extensive research has been done on earliest dates.

Candidates and Hybrids

With the current incompleteness of the computer records, there is uncertainty about the modern status of a number of taxa that show a real or apparent decline. Where there is doubt whether a particular taxon should be included in the list at all, it has been marked with a 'C' (for 'Candidate taxon'). The status of these taxa will be reviewed as part of the programme of documentation, once post-1985 records for them have been computerized.

In deciding whether a taxon should be a 'Candidate', I have looked back at the number of tetrads recorded in the *Flora of Hampshire*¹. Any taxon which has fewer than 30 tetrads in a vice-county there, or fewer than 50 tetrads in the administrative county as a whole, has become a Candidate. For those with more recorded tetrads, I have made a judgement based on vulnerability of habitat or known patterns of decline.

Some taxa whose status is uncertain are not marked as 'Candidates'. This is because we can be reasonably confident that, even if their status is downgraded, they will still qualify for the list.

In keeping with the original list, hybrids are included; and the number of hybrids is increased. There is an issue with hybrids that they tend to be less well recorded by many field botanists than species, and sometimes recorded erroneously as one or other species. Their rarity can therefore be overstated. I have tried to form a judgement on real rarity in some cases, but the selection is inevitably somewhat arbitrary. I have tried to include:

- Hybrids of species that themselves qualify for the list;
- Hybrids that may have a long-term significance for the populations of the parents;

- Hybrids that are persistent and long established.

However I acknowledge that some groups such as *Rosa* are under-represented, partly because of the difficulty of putting together a coherent picture. Comments on candidates and hybrids are welcomed.

Critical Genera

The 2000 list included some critical groups but excluded others, notably *Hieracium*, *Rubus* and *Taraxacum*.

I believe it is important that critical genera receive adequate attention alongside other taxa. Indeed, if biodiversity is viewed as a process as much as a static phenomenon, there are good reasons on scientific and conservation grounds for giving them special attention! I have therefore aimed to include all critical groups. There is an obvious difficulty that, with the limited number of workers in the field, status can be hard to assess.

For *Hieracium*, I believe the status in the county (with a few exceptions) is sufficiently well understood to justify almost all proposed taxa.

Taraxacum has the problem of few workers in the past, and no-one undertaking local studies at present. I am certainly not in a position personally to make inferences about local status from the existing record. I have therefore taken a conservative approach for the present, including only those taxa that enjoy a national status as rare or endemic plants.

The glaring omission from the current list is *Rubus*. However a list of taxa for inclusion under national and local criteria has been drawn up by David Allen. This was published as an Appendix to the 2011 Register.

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References

- 1 *Flora of Hampshire*, A Brewis, P Bowman and F Rose, Harley Books / HIOWT 1996
- 2 *British Red Data Books 1: Vascular Plants* 3rd Edition, Ed. MJ Wigginton, JNCC 1999
- 3 *Scarce Plants in Britain*, Ed A Stewart, DA Pearman and CD Preston, JNCC 1994
- 4 *New Atlas of the British and Irish Flora*, CD Preston, DA Pearman and TD Dines, Oxford University Press 2002

5 *Hampshire Rare Plant Register: Proposed Scheme for the Different Categories of Notable Species in Hampshire*, A Barker and MW Rand, Issue 3, October 2004

6 *List of Plants Endemic to the British Isles*, TCG Rich, G Hutchinson, R Randall and RG Ellis, BSBI News 80, 1999

7 *New Plant Status Lists for Great Britain*, C Cheffings, BSBI News 95, 2004

8 *The Vascular Plant Red Data List for Great Britain*, ed. C M Cheffings and L Farrell, JNCC 2005

9 *A Vascular Plant Red List for England*, PA Stroh, SJ Leach et al. BSBI 2014, accessed at: http://bsbi.org/England_Red_List_1.pdf.