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Collaboration between BSBI and
other organisations at a local and
national scale.

BSBI local groups: a growing network

More than half the vice-counties now have local botany groups

Many have pages on the BSBI website

There are as many ways of working together as there are local groups!

Some very professional (Shropshire, Hants, Kent) some less so (Leics.)

BSBI local groups: VC55

Started in 2008 by 3 amateur botanists who joined BSBI in 2008.

2 experienced, 1 intermediate

Differing interests:

Taking specimens for the local herbarium.

Conservation – writing a management plan.

Learn more ID tips!

BSBI local groups: VC55

All agreed on:

Wanted to record what we saw

Wanted to improve our skills

Wanted to have fun!

Didn't want:

Bureaucracy, planning meetings, local
subscription.

BSBI local groups: VC55

Our then VCR supported us, would accept our records but didn't want to get involved with the group – preferred to botanise alone.

We approached 4 local botanists, each suggested a location for a meeting.

7 botanists soon grew to 300+ and regular meetings through the season

VC55 local training courses

- Level 1 course takes students from absolute beginner to budding botanist.
- Level 2 course helps students improve their skills and culminates in a FISC, the industry standard for botanists.
- Both courses help students feel they are part of the local botanical community.
- The local group provides the courses with new students each year – and vice versa!

Plant ID Level 1

- Aka Botany for Beginner – arose due to local demand.
- Launched in 2013, eight weekend modules, runs from May to September each year.
- Taught at LUBG by 1 tutor and several volunteer assistants: Botanical Buddies (ex-students) and local experts/BSBI members.
- Students are conservation volunteers, recorders of other taxa, workers at NGOs/local authorities & wildlife-lovers keen to gain new skills.

Plant ID Level 1

- Each module comprises 1 day of tuition, 1 day in the field, half-day in the herbarium.
- Outcome 1: introduce students to c500 of Leics' more common plant species.
- Outcome 2: show students various ways to identify plants (keys, jizz, by habitat, by frequency, comparing with herbarium specimens, using on-line resources).

Botany for Beginners

- No assessment, but:
- The course is a partnership between LUBG, LRWT, BSBI and NatureSpot.
- Participate in the local botanical community.
- Attend meetings of the local BSBI group.
- Volunteer with the local Wildlife Trust.
- Submit records and images to NatureSpot.

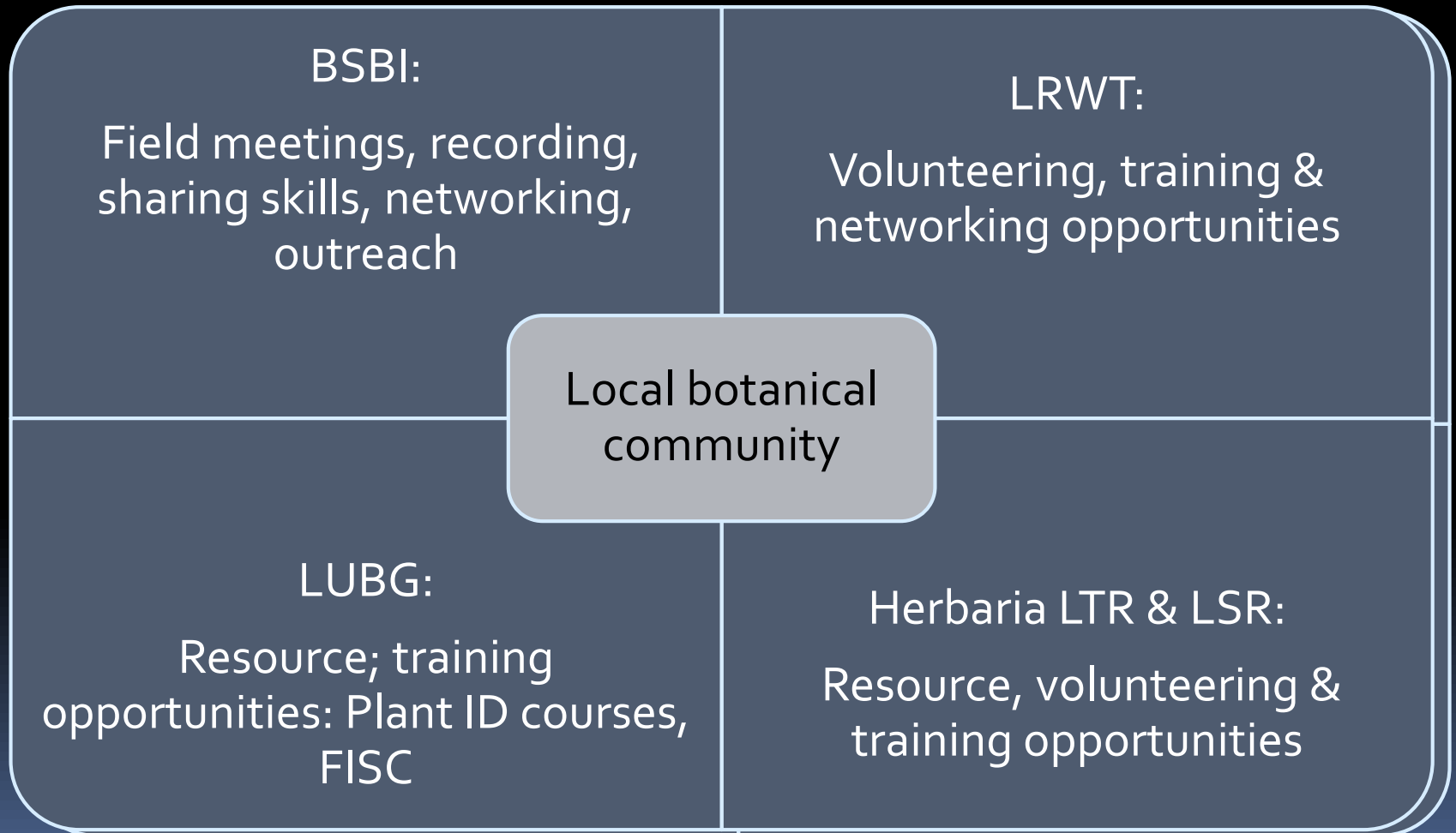
A local botanical community

- BSBI55 as a hub for the botanical community.
- BSBI, LRWT and LUBG share common aims!
- LRWT needs skilled botanical surveyors.
- BSBI needs skilled botanical recorders.
- LUBG – training provision, botanical education & conservation.

A local botanical community

- Main feedback from BSBI outreach events:
 - more local botanical meetings;
 - more local botanical training opportunities;
 - must be local, affordable, beginner-friendly.
- BUT not every county has an active local botany group – yet!

A local botanical community



How do we spread the word?

- Via the local BSBI group webpage, blog, word of mouth, local meetings and outreach events, eg VC55 Recorders' Conference.
- Via national BSBI: training page, FISC page, Twitter & Facebook accounts, national outreach events, word of mouth.
- Via the local Wildlife Trust: website, newsletter, outreach events, word of mouth.
- Via NatureSpot: website, word of mouth.
- Via LUBG's newsletter & outreach events.

Building a local botanical community!

- Meetings and training courses - to develop botanical ID skills.
- Networking opportunities: building up a local botanical community.
- Volunteering opportunities: we become more effective volunteers.
- Outreach opportunity: come out with the local group, go on to join BSBI.

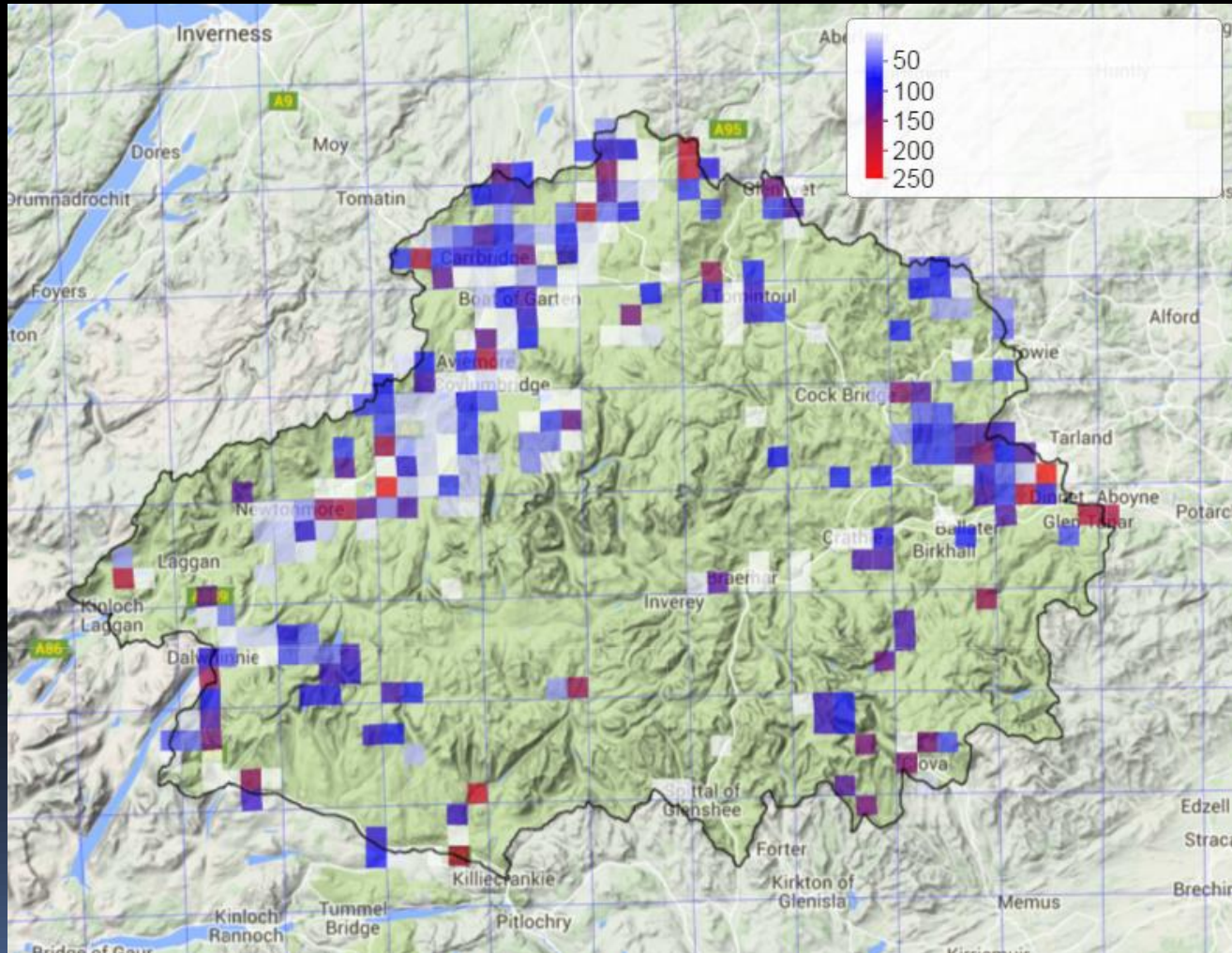
Working together in Scotland: BSBI and Cairngorms National Park Authority

- BSBI Scottish Officer Jim McIntosh
- BSBI County Recorder for Banffshire, Andy Amphlett
- Working together with CNPA.
- Recruited a team of volunteer helpers.

Working together in Scotland: BSBI and Cairngorms National Park Authority

- 40+ botanists
- 27,000+ records
- 777 taxa
- Park covers >4,500 sq. km under 5 local authorities.
- CNPA: “this would have been impossible if we hadn’t worked in partnership”

Andy's tetrad maps



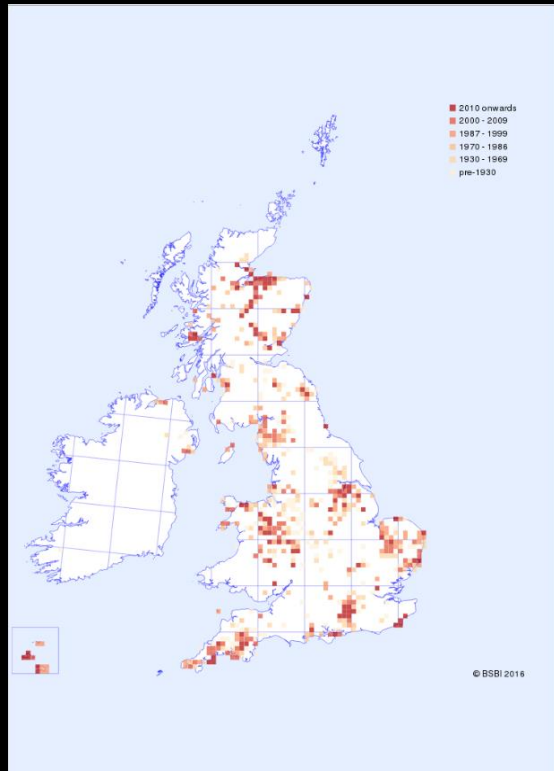
A chance to see some great plants



Shepherd's-cress
Teesdalia nudicaulis

Classified as Near
Threatened on the
England Red List

... some of which are in decline



Teesdalia nudicaulis doing well in northern Scotland (where Andy is based)

Success story

- CNPA have just approved funding for a third (and final) year of recording by Andy and his team of volunteers.

Working together at national level

- NPMS: working with BRC/CEH, JNCC and Plantlife.
- SPLASH: working with BRC/CEH, BBS & BLS to survey plants and lichens associated with ash trees.
- SPLASH is part of a DEFRA-funded, CEH-led project to investigate new approaches to biological recording.

The National Plant Monitoring Scheme: working with BRC/CEH, JNCC and Plantlife

- Launched 2015
- Habitat-based, aims to provide robust data on changes in habitats supporting our wild plants.
- Along same lines as national schemes for butterflies , bats and birds.

The National Plant Monitoring Scheme: working with BRC/CEH, JNCC and Plantlife

- Appeals to beginners
- BSBI supporting on training
- Helps people improve as botanical recorders.
- Lots of resources: videos, forum, species ID book

BSBI involved since
inception, eg testing survey
method



Steering group comprises
staff from 4 partner
organisations



BSBI Head of Science heavily involved



BSBI Training: FISCs

- BSBI Skills Pyramid
- Tests your ID skills in the lab and in the field
- Brainchild of Sarah Whild (MMU, BSBI T&E) and Sue Townsend (FSC, BSBI T&E).

BSBI Training: FISCs



A FISC test includes first a lab test and then a site survey, to assess your skills in the field

BSBI Training: FISCs

- Fast becoming industry standard
- 3 FISC centres so far: Shrewsbury, Leicester, Maidstone
- Enquiries from other parts of UK & Ireland
- Some consultancies send their staff for an annual FISC.

BSBI Training: FISCs

- BSBI T&E Committee allocates annual programme of grants to support botanical courses and research, eg FSC, RBGE and many universities, eg Edge Hill.