

# The BSBI Threatened Plant Project recording form

## Before you set out...

Make sure you have with you:

- a copy or copies of the form, and a writing implement;
- a device (GPS, smartphone, ...) to give you grid references;
- your usual plant ID reference work;
- a tape measure (anything longer than a metre is fine) or a walking stick / pole marked up with a metre length.

You may also want to take:

- a camera;
- a map.

## Notes on completing the form

This form can be used whenever you want to record a population of any plant on the Hampshire Notables list (and not just those with a Red List 'Threatened' status). It would not really be sensible to record common plants on this form unless the plant is a rarity in the part of the county where you are recording it.

The notes below are intended to help you to fill in the form whatever your current expertise in carrying out formal surveys. If you are revisiting a known site (recent or historic) and fail to find the target plant, a 'null record' with your view on the reasons is still a valuable document.

## Header information

**Species** Please use the scientific name. You do not have to be fully up to date with name changes: the county recorders will be able to sort those out. Please do not use a form for recording more than one target species.

**Site** Please use a name that can be found on the Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 or 1:50,000 map or on OpenStreetMap. If there is no named feature nearby, please locate the nearest and add a direction, e.g. "NW of Cold Comfort Farm". The name helps us to check grid references and assure ourselves of the location.

**VC** This stands for "vice-county": for a full explanation of vice-county boundaries in Hampshire, see the [Hants Plants web site page](#). If you are unsure of the vice-county, you can use the [Cucaera web site](#): enter the grid reference for the site into the search box, and you will be shown the vice-county details in the text on the left-hand side. If there is more than one vice-county listed, you can use the 'Options' button on the map to display the boundary lines, showing you where the boundary falls.

**Selected site? / Site number** You can ignore these, as you will not be participating in a national project.

**Aspect / Slope / Altitude** If you can get any of this information from maps or from devices you have in the field, all well and good, but leave these blank otherwise.

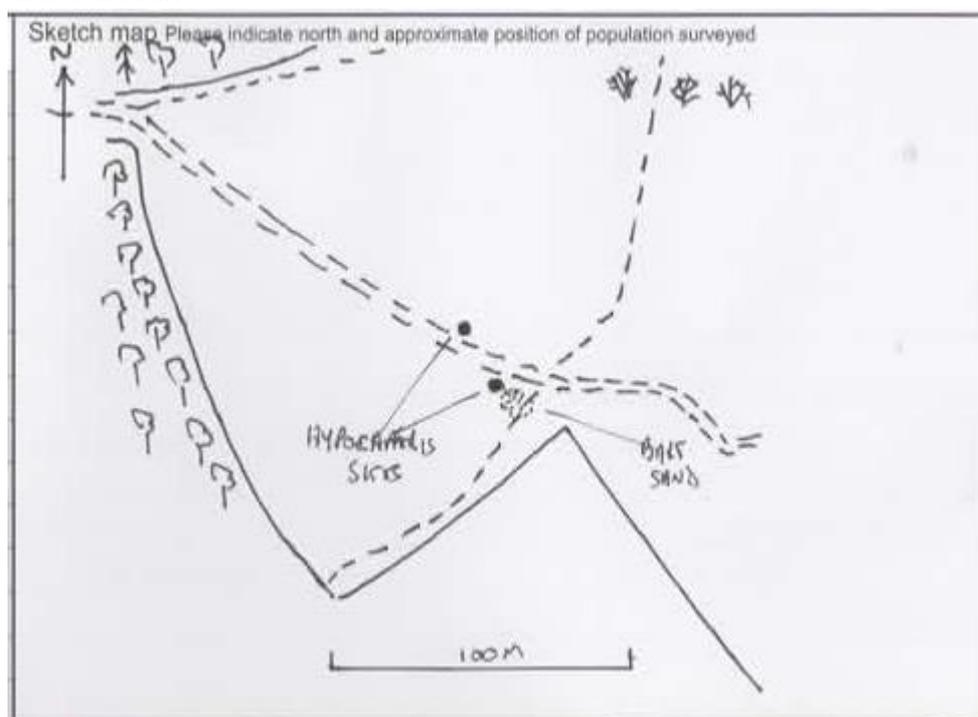
**Recorder(s)** If you go out in a group, record as many individuals as you see fit, but after two names you are welcome to use 'et al.'

## Location details

**Grid references** If your population is confined within one or a very few 100-metre squares, please record all locations where it occurs to 10-metre (8-digit) precision (i.e. you should be putting digits into the 'grey box' digit positions on the form). If it extends more widely, 100-metre (6-

digit) precision is good enough. If you have access to a GPS, this will often give you a more accurate reading than a smartphone; but whatever you are using, be sure to settle long enough on the spot that the device gives you a consistent reading with an error estimate lower than 10 metres. Take special care in low spots in hilly country, under trees and around tall buildings.

**Sketch map** Omit this if time pressures are too great, but a map is a very useful adjunct. It doesn't have to be a masterpiece, but conditions in the field often make it best to use a rough copy of the recording sheet in the field and then spruce it up onto a clean copy for forwarding. Include any geographical features (buildings, boundary features, tracks, overhead transmission lines etc.) that help to pinpoint the site. Mark the population either with one or more points for dispersed point locations, or with an outline showing its extent. When drafting the submission copy, it's easier to delineate scale when referring to the Ordnance Survey map. Please include both a North arrow and a suitable scale bar.



## Population details

Before starting, it's wise to consider whether the population is truly countable at the time of the visit, and if so, what is the best feature to count. A non-flowering rhizomatous plant or a rhizomatous shrub offers nothing reliably countable, and it's better to omit the count details and pass straight to the Regeneration, Density and Extent details. But if you do provide a count, these latter details should not be neglected either.

**Population size** For anything but a very small population, the ranges are likely to be the best option to record. Precision can be the enemy of accuracy.

**Unit counted** Make sure to indicate what you have counted. If you recorded more than one aspect of the plant, it's better to tick each of the individual aspects counted rather than just ticking 'Combination of above'.

**Regeneration** Record what you can but omit anything that gives you difficulties.

**Density** Include an assessment here if more detailed information doesn't already make this clear.

**Extent** This should cover anything which is shown on your grid references and / or as spots or patches on the sketch map. If there are several discrete patches, you might like to write down their extents separately here.

## Site quality

- Habitat type** The rubric on the card suggests many different types of information, but just note what you feel confident of recording; it doesn't have to be technical.
- Management** Just record what you either know about already or can observe at site, and again it doesn't have to be technical.
- Threats etc.** Tick all that you are confident will apply.
- Site history** May be left blank if you don't know. You don't need to supply the year of last record if you are making a null return, as the county recorders will know that.
- Site status** (i.e. designation) Note it if you know, but don't worry if you don't.

## Associated species lists

This is why you were recommended to bring a tape measure or some such. You may find this part of the form challenging, and it will be the most time-consuming in the field (although it can be good fun). If you don't have time to do it, or feel seriously diffident about your general ID skills, you can omit it; but it can add serious value to the survey, even if you don't make a comprehensive list. Only record what you are confident of, and if you think your list falls significantly short of what was there, please add a note to that effect in the comment box below it. Note that you only need to record more than one list in a really extensive population, or one that spans more than one type of vegetation.

## What to do when you get home

Ideally, make a fair copy in black ink onto a new copy of the recording card; but if this would be too time-consuming, and as long as your field copy is legible and doesn't include a lot of untidy or provisional jottings, just send the original card. If your survey was on private land without public access (presumably with the permission of the landowner or their agent), please note this fact in the 'Any other comments' box and say whether you've confirmed that they are happy to have the survey details made generally available.

Send it to Martin Rand in the first place; he will make sure that Tony Mundell gets a copy for any sites in VC12. If you have a scanner, you can send it electronically as either a pair of images or as one or two PDF files. Please don't send photographic snapshots, as we want to archive them in a clear and consistent way. Alternatively, post it to Martin or hand it to him at a convenient time.

Most record cards will become part of the survey archive on the Hants Plants web site, and some may be shared with Hampshire Biodiversity Centre and the BSBI. Most of these are open access, but sites with landowner sensitivities will be restricted and password protected, and only available on request to the county recorders, as will vulnerable populations of threatened species. If you consider that your record is of a population vulnerable to public pressure or illegal exploitation, please mention that in the 'Any other comments' box on the form.