

THE BRITISH PTERIDOLOGICAL SOCIETY

England & Wales · Charity number 1092399

Details

Other names BPS

Status Registered

Legal form Other

Registered 2002-06-11

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

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Activities

Objects: THE OBJECTS OF THE SOCIETY ARE TO PROMOTE ALL ASPECTS OF PTERIDOLOGY BY ENCOURAGING THE APPRECIATION, CONSERVATION, CULTIVATION AND SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF FERNS, HORSETAILS, CLUBMOSES AND QUILLWORTS THROUGH PUBLICATIONS, MEETINGS, THE PROVISION OF GRANTS AND OTHER APPROPRIATE MEANS.

Activities: The main activities of the society are to promote all aspects of Pteridology by encouraging the appreciation, conservation, cultivation and scientific study of ferns, horsetails, clubmosses and quillworts through publications, meetings, education, the provision of grants and other appropriate means.

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Individuals, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** Education/training, Arts/culture/heritage/science, Environment/conservation/heritage
- **Who:** Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** NATIONAL AND OVERSEAS
- Guernsey
- Ireland
- Jersey
- Scotland
- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£21,930	£25,590	-	-
2023-12-31	£23,817	£24,660	-	-
2022-12-31	£27,582	£30,519	-	-
2021-12-31	£25,839	£25,646	-	-
2020-12-31	£28,184	£25,982	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
ALEC EDWARD GREENING		2012-05-01
ALISON MARY PAUL		
Alice Junka Taylor		2021-04-30
Andrew Tolman		2023-04-22
BRYAN DUDLEY SMITH		
David Gavin Hill		2016-04-16
Dr Adrian Dyer		
Dr Alison Jean Evans		2011-05-12
Dr Peter Blake		2013-04-06
Dr Sue Dockerill		2012-04-14
GILL SMITH		
Isabelle Cantillon		2023-04-22
Julian Phillip Reed		2013-04-29
Laurence Sutton		2019-04-13
MARTIN HENRY RICKARD BSC		
Peter Madders		2021-04-30
ROB COOKE		

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Accounts

REPORTS OF OFFICERS & COMMITTEE APPOINTEES FOR 2022

OFFICERS' REPORTS

GENERAL SECRETARY – David Hill

I am pleased to say that, to a greater degree, most of the Society's activities are up and running again. The ability to have face-to-face meetings, field trips and talk to people at plant society events and exhibitions is a welcome change, and, as you will see from the accompanying Officers' reports, seems to have been embraced wholeheartedly.

However, some things have changed. Committee meetings are now held online, and this does make it easier to be more inclusive, saves a huge amount of travel and allows a lie in! The Society calendar starts with a committee meeting in January. I don't miss the early start to get a train to London, but I do miss meeting others on the committee face-to-face. I had hoped to meet people at the AGM at Edge Hill University, but was denied that by Covid-like symptoms (fortunately not the actual condition); however, being able to attend online was very useful, and it was also good to see some overseas members online. The range of speakers and topics (reported elsewhere) made for a fascinating day. Minutes of the AGM are reported separately.

Alongside committee meetings in January, May and October, a small working group (Peter Blake, Peter Grimby, Rob Cooke, Peter Madders, Gill Smith and myself) examined the practical implications, benefits and drawbacks of becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. In summary, it doesn't suit our structure or needs, but did prove a valuable exercise, and we will now start looking in detail at other aspects of the Charity to see where we can make things run more efficiently.

A smooth change of the Membership Secretary to Peter Madders is in large parts thanks to Ann Robbins, made easier for both with a handover transition period. We are keen to do this with the Treasurer role, and Peter Blake is looking to help any new incumbent with a lengthy handover period in this critical position. The post is ably supported by Peter Grimby who is our spreadsheet and PayPal guru. Despite appearances, there is no technical requirement for all Officers to be called Peter!

Bryan Smith is also keen to spend some time handing over to a new Meetings Secretary. This role is primarily a co-ordination one, keeping track of who is doing what, where and when. Meetings are a fantastic part of Society life, and I would encourage all who can, either to attend or offer to run one – it need be nothing more than a trip to your local botanic garden, or a day out to your local wood with like-minded folk.

Publications, newsletters, journals, magazines and website all take work, so a huge thank you to all those, both authors, editors and behind-the-scenes individuals who make our Society not just a thriving one, but a very important one. With all these roles, having multiple people able to help out at short notice, or who know what is involved is invaluable, so even if you are just able to provide 'holiday cover' that would be useful.

As Fred outlines in his Conservation Officer and Recorder reports, there is still plenty to learn with our native ferns, in terms of distribution and subsequent protection. There are always unusual finds to make, and long-term monitoring of even routine species will pay dividends as our climate changes.

The majority of my year has been indoors and computer-based, but I did manage my first visit to Southport Flower Show to see the wonderful display and meet large numbers of visitors. Meetings, events, exhibitions and teaching all seem to be gathering pace, showing that there is still a great demand from the public for learning more about the mysterious world of ferns and lycophytes, so helping out at any of these events is always worthwhile.

The Spore Exchange and Plant Exchange have undoubtedly been impacted by Brexit, but still remain a core service of the Society. Thanks to Brian and Sue for all the unseen work that goes on. My own move inland, followed by a severe cold spell means I certainly have a fair number of plants to replace, so I will be availing myself of the service.

With all the Society activities that take place, I would encourage you to submit items to Michael for the archives, especially if you feel they will be of use to future pteridologists. Please contact Michael to see how best to submit things.

In summary, a huge amount has been achieved over the past year. Thank you to all of those who have helped in any way, large or small. The coming year promises to be just as busy, and I look forward to seeing at least some of you face-to-face or appearing from behind a frond in the field.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY – Peter Madders

Taking over the role of Membership Secretary from April 2022 has at times been a baptism of fire, but overall a positive experience. I have enjoyed the many conversations, both through e-mails and in person. Thanks to Ann Robbins' comprehensive handover I hope it has been quite a smooth transfer and that I've not made too many errors.

Prior to taking on the role I hadn't quite appreciated the reach of the Society. We consistently have approximately 700 members, spread across 29 countries in six continents. Roughly 70% of members reside in the UK, with 15% living in mainland Europe and 15% across the Rest of the World.

In 2022 we attracted 89 new members (68 full, 9 optional and 12 student members) with four of these including additional family members. We also had three new subscribers join the fold. The geographical distribution was 77 from the UK, four within Europe and 11 from further afield. However, we did lose 115 members – 86 lapsed, 24 resigned, and sadly we were notified of the death of five members and a further two in 2023. We were particularly sad to lose two of our Honorary Members – Rose Murphy and Chris Page. Breaking down the figures it is apparent that a significant disproportionate number of those leaving are from mainland Europe – possibly a consequence of new border regulations between the UK and EU coming into force.

We did have a steady stream of new members towards the end of the year (technically new members for 2023) so as of 31st December 2022 we had 697 (+59 family) active members.

MEETINGS SECRETARY – Bryan Smith

We gradually began to start getting back to normal during 2022 and a number of National events/meetings were held, led as always by volunteers willing to give their time and effort.

For the outdoor programme, there were meetings in Eskdale in July (led by Bruce Brown), Scotland in August (led by Roger Golding), South Devon in September (led by Martin Rickard) and the West Midlands in September (led by Julian Reed).

We began our indoor programme with the Spring Meeting and AGM at Edge Hill University in April (organised by Alison Evans), with talks and displays around the theme of 'Taking pteridology forward'. In June, we had a stand at the BBC Gardeners' World Live show in Birmingham NEC (led by Gill Smith and me) and also a stand at the Plant Societies Weekend at Wisley (led by Jude Lawton). In July, we took over Hilltop at Wisley with the Carnivorous Plant Society for a weekend-long fern event (organised by Julian Reed), and in August we had our annual stand at the Southport Flower Show (organised by Alison Evans). Following our success at BBC Gardeners' World, we were invited to participate at their inaugural Autumn Fair at Audley End in Essex in September; we put on a small display (again led by Gill Smith and me). The finale to our year was the Autumn Meeting (organised by Bridget Laue and Chris Nicholson) in October at the Glasgow Botanic Gardens (including a book auction) with a trip to the Fossil Grove. Reports on all of the 2022 meetings can be found elsewhere in this *Bulletin*.

The Meetings Subcommittee held its annual get-together early in December to plan for 2023 and beyond. This time the meeting was held by Zoom, and, as previously agreed by Committee, Regional Organisers were invited to attend. Some did attend, but it is hoped that more will be involved in our next annual meeting. A provisional programme was agreed, which included the AGM at Harlow Carr in April, the Plant Societies show at Wisley in June, Exmoor ferning in June, the Ferns and Carnivorous Plants Show at Wisley in July, East Anglian ferning in August, the BBC Gardeners' World Autumn Fair at Audley End in September, Anglesey ferning in September, and the Autumn Meeting in October or November (theme and venue as yet to be decided).

As always, I would endorse the fine work that Regional Meetings Organisers do in arranging trips 'on your doorstep'. Even if you are visiting an area on holiday, it is worth checking the BPS website or contacting the Regional Organiser to see if there's a meeting you can join.

Finally, I have decided to stand down as Meetings Secretary, a post that I have held since 2011. Despite advertising for a replacement in our Newsletters, no-one has come forward for what is a very rewarding and not terribly onerous Society role. Please do think about whether you would be interested, and contact me if you are.

PUBLICATIONS SECRETARY – Martin Rickard

All our journals have thrived over the last twelve months.

The Fern Gazette completed Volume 8 with a typically interesting string of articles. The total page number for the volume was 500. Averaging 125 pages per year of high standard pteridophyte research is incredible. I am always surprised that some members opt not to have the *Gazette*. Not every article will appeal to everyone but there is always something to be taken from each issue. Mary Gibby and her editorial team from six different countries are to be warmly congratulated.

The *Bulletin* is a must-read journal for me, mostly cover to cover, especially the meeting reports. Quite apart from refreshing my memory about meetings I attended, I find reports of those I missed fascinating – often wishing I had been there. Alison Paul pulls all this together every spring with no help apart from the contributions of the members. As I once did this job, I know just how difficult it is. Most contributors have to be chased down, me included! Volume 9 is now up to 156 pages after only two issues. We are very lucky to have had Alison for so long doing this arduous, but hopefully rewarding, job.

The *Pteridologist* is so good we just take it for granted! Alec Greening has excelled himself in always managing to get enough appropriate copy to fill each part. Currently each year's issue, on average, amounts to about 100 pages. Chris Evans has again done a great job of proof-reading all articles. Please remember Alec when you come across something interesting, even short notes are welcome, but please try to get articles to him each year by January.

Special Publication sales jog along. There is always a huge rush for sales of new books, gradually tapering off over time. The *Athyrium* Special Publication by Ian Unsworth is just being finished off as I write. I am looking forward to hopefully seeing it published this spring. The 'Scollie' publication is still some way from publication, it is not a five-minute job assembling all the information. Tim Brock is an enthusiast and an excellent grower, so when ready this will be something special too.

In the past we have had news sheets. Today is no exception, but now we have two in the form of online journals, both free to all members. Mark Border continues with his quarterly Cultivar Newsletter. It amazes me how he assembles so many tidbits so frequently, all beautifully illustrated. This is distributed by Julian Reed (julianreed@waitrose.com). Mark also does a quarterly newsletter for the members of the South-East regional group. The second newsletter is by Matthew Reeve for the Indoor and Tropical Fern Group (IATFG). Again, an amazing amount of information is given together with a lot of good quality pictures. Contact matthew@reeve.name for inclusion on the distribution list.

The new British fern flora being compiled by Fred Rumsey is progressing. When complete this will be a high-quality book, the first colour flora of every fern and lycophyte taxon ever recorded in the British Isles and Ireland. I cannot wait!

This is an amazing quantity of published material for a relatively small society. Add in meetings and the chance to chat with like-minded enthusiasts, and it is remarkable value for £21 with no *Gazette*, or £25 per annum for all journals.

FERN GAZETTE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF – Mary Gibby

Two *Fern Gazette* parts were published during 2022. Volume 21, Part 7, published in spring comprised the single, multi-authored *Checklist of the lycophytes and ferns of the Solomon Islands*, whilst Part 8, published in autumn, included five papers. The quality of the coloured illustrations greatly enhanced some of these papers. The publication of Parts 7 and 8 completes Volume 21. We continue to attract a range of papers on varied subjects relating to

lycophytes and ferns, and the first part of Volume 22 of the *Fern Gazette* has already gone to press. As always, I am very grateful to all the contributors, and especially to the many reviewers who have provided excellent support to ensure the quality of manuscripts accepted. Andrew Leonard continues to provide vital technical support to ensure the quality of the journal.

PTERIDOLOGIST EDITOR – Alec Greening

The *Pteridologist* was back to normal with just one issue in 2022. It contained articles ranging from National Collection reports to ferns from Taiwan and Honduras. There were two book reviews and historical reports concerning Thomas Moore and Charles Drury. An article on common fern parasites gave some food for thought, and the fern hardiness survey was reported on, which is also on the BPS website.

The 2023 issue has plenty of room for more articles. Please contact Chris Evans at Receiving@eBPS.org.uk and we will do our best to include your contribution.

BULLETIN EDITOR – Alison Paul

With the return to normality as regards Society meetings, this *Bulletin* is back to its more usual size of 100 pages. Many thanks to all contributors and in particular those who submitted their reports in good time!

WEBSITE CO-ORDINATOR – Bridget Laue

The BPS website serves as the public face for the Society and is a central repository of information about ferns and BPS activities, as well as a place to buy membership, merchandise and Special Publications. Our website is run entirely by volunteers: the Webteam members are Peter Grimbley, Andrew Leonard and Bridget Laue. David Hill, Alison Evans and Roger Golding have retired this year from the Webteam; we are very grateful for their past contributions. We are especially indebted to Andrew for his diligence and creative problem solving in day-to-day maintenance. As a result of this effort, the website has almost no cost to the Society. Again, thank you also to other volunteers who manage individual pages of the website: Brian and Sue Dockerill (Spore Exchange and Plant Exchange), Bryan Smith (Merchandise), Peter Madders (Membership), Alison Evans (Where to see ferns), Roger Golding (Ferns) and Andrew Leonard (What's that fern?). There have been some interesting Blogs on the website, but we need more!

The website is also linked to our Social Media groups, which can be accessed using the icons on the left-hand side of the homepage screen. All of these accounts invite viewers back to the BPS website for more information.

Facebook: Fern World on Facebook was set up by Alison Evans. We are looking for someone to take over this role. The plan is that fern pictures are posted every Friday for 'Fern Friday', and interesting posts from other fern societies are shared. Or other new ideas? There are also some specialist fern groups on Facebook run by BPS members – the *Polypodium* cultivar group, the *Dryopteris* species, hybrids and cultivars group, the *Polystichum* group, and the *Athyrium filix-femina* cultivars group; a good place to discover new things and keep up-to-date with what is happening in the cultivar world.

YouTube: we have a dedicated channel – search British Pteridological Society on YouTube for a range of informative videos.

Instagram: our account is managed by Chris Nicholson.

As always, we welcome comments, participation and contributions. We would also welcome anyone who is interested in getting involved in the Webteam.

CONSERVATION OFFICER – Fred Rumsey

In marked contrast to the speed of legislative progress in England (and worse still in Scotland), where recommendations made in one, or indeed several quinquennial reviews of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 have not been acted upon, in the Republic of Ireland things have commendably happened faster. Here, the comparatively recent Flora (Protection) Order of 2015 was replaced in May 2022, amended to give immediate protection to the recently discovered *Stenogrammitis myosuroides*. This, considered Europe's rarest (and quite possibly smallest) native fern, was overlooked in the remote temperate rain-forests of Co. Kerry until July 2019. A survey funded by the Killarney National Park authority and carried out in October by the plant's original discoverer Rory

Hodd with my assistance, revealed a total population of 114 plants in three separate woodlands, but only 13 of these were fertile/mature. The species has a very precise and narrow ecological niche that is inherently unstable and vulnerable through visitation; the hot and dry summer of 2022 may have increased turnover and loss of some larger plants. Collection of this fascinating plant, which may yet, following molecular work, prove to be specifically distinct from its closest congeners in the Caribbean and Central America, could prove highly damaging and so the rapid legal protection now afforded it is to be applauded.



photo: Fred Rumsey

Rory Hodd examining *Stenogrammitis*

The publication in March 2023 of the BSBI's *Atlas 2020* is eagerly anticipated and the analysis of the data is now all but completed. One of the first products will be a revision of the lists of Nationally Rare (present in 25 or fewer hectads) and Nationally Scarce (present in 100 or fewer hectads) species, with similar lists calculated for each of the devolved countries using appropriately down-scaled numbers to reflect proportional areas. These categories, while having decreased importance in our current threat-based system, do still matter for site assessment and notification, amongst other reasons. The data gathered for this, the third British and Irish plant atlas, will in due course be used to revise Red-Lists at National and Country level. *The European Red-List of Lycopods and Ferns* from 2017 indicated how at a broader regional level our species were all to be considered unthreatened. This, however, may belie their importance. Work now being considered here, which will feed into our revised national Red-Listing, will look at 'International Responsibility', i.e. the identification of those species for which we hold a significant proportion of the global population. While these taxa may currently not be considered at threat, should that change, the implications would have global consequences. Identifying these perhaps under-appreciated gems of our flora will be a valuable step.

EDUCATION OFFICER – Gill Smith

It was a full year, with several actions to take forward and events to promote. Following up our action points from the previous year, there was a lot of discussion about what sort of posters and updated handouts we needed. Peter Blake and Matthew Reeve put their heads together and produced what they thought would be eye-catching and relevant to the many queries we get from the public. It was agreed that they had pitched it correctly, so a series of five posters and some new full-colour leaflets were produced. A set was given to each Regional Group for use at any event they undertook for the BPS.

The BBC Gardeners' World show at the NEC (14-19 June) was well attended and the Society Stand won a Gold Medal, which was very encouraging. They gave a fixed sum of money to help with any expenses for the event, plus the Gold Medal award was £300 – some income for the Society as well as good publicity.

On the same weekend (18-19 June), there was an RHS Plant Society event at Wisley, so our Education Group personnel were stretched to find enough volunteers to cover both events, though we were able to enlist help from other BPS members. In July, another show was held at Wisley, in conjunction with the Carnivorous Plant Society, which was well received by the public.

From 18-21 August, our annual stand was set up at Southport Flower Show. A fantastic display of plants gained the Society a Large Gold Award and more prize money. This is the first time that the BPS has won a Large Gold at Southport, and the feedback was that in addition to the display, it was because of the excellent educational content of the stand. A very good start for Alison Evans who had just taken over the organisation for this event from Michael Hayward.

A small stand was set up at an autumn event (1-4 September) run for the first time by the BBC Gardeners' World team. There would be no judging or prizes, it would just be a trial event at Audley End, an English Heritage site near Saffron Walden, Essex. The tickets were sold out for every day, so it was decided that the event would continue – another date to be added to our annual list.

All these events are reported more fully in this *Bulletin*.

In Scotland, members had been approached to help out at an area in Glasgow called Fossil Grove. It is an old Victorian park, which had been excavated, revealing stumps and roots of fossil lepidodendrons. Glasgow City Council had put a roof over it and a 'Friends' group had been created. They had been clearing out rubbish and tidying up and created a Fernery, which was a good effort. What was missing was an interpretation board, and it was suggested that the BPS could help by providing this. A visit to the Grove was included as an extra to the national Autumn Meeting in Glasgow.

The Scottish Botanists' Conference on 2nd November, jointly organised by the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (BSBI) and the Botanical Society of Scotland (BSS), and held at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, attracted 150 participants. The BPS presented a stand, with general posters explaining about ferns and introducing the Society, as well as a special poster by Roger Golding and Alison Evans detailing a new fern for Scotland: *Dryopteris affinis* subsp. *kerryensis*, found by Roger Golding in 2021. As part of the BPS national meeting in Scotland in August, the site was revisited and the identification confirmed. In addition, Heather McHaffie led a workshop on an introduction to fern identification. The workshop was presented twice, and was well attended and well received on both occasions.

Alison Evans gave a talk on local ferns and their identification to the Craven Conservation Group on 17th March, and also taught fern identification on the Edge Hill University Field Botany module.

David Hill led a four-day Fern Identification course in North Wales for Manchester Metropolitan University Master's students in July, and will be repeating the course in August 2023, along with additional one-day workshops at FSC Rhyd-y-Creiau and Quarry Bank Mill.

As usual, there were various talks given to local gardening clubs and other groups.

Our future plans have yet to be formalised.

PUBLICITY & COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER – Laurence Sutton

During 2022, spring, summer and autumn newsletters were sent out to BPS members via an e-mail containing a link to the newsletter file on the Mailchimp platform. Subsequent discussions have highlighted the issue that a substantial number of members have inadvertently precluded contact to their e-mail address (and thus no access to the newsletter) through a quirk of the membership application form and this will be rectified.

My intention with the newsletters was to make them slightly more than information mailshots (notices of upcoming events and general notices) and contain snippets of information of previous and upcoming events in addition to material that would not normally fit into the *Bulletin* or *Pteridologist*, such as articles on individual members. I realise that there is overlap with e-mails sent out by Specialist and Regional Groups, some

of whom have their own newsletters. However, the purpose of the BPS newsletter is to proactively inform the general membership of activities within the Society.

I am stepping down as Publicity and Communications Officer for personal reasons and I wish my successor(s) the very best in further developing this nascent BPS newsletter particularly in conjunction with the BPS Website. The role of the website and the newsletters are complementary, and I would very much like to thank Andrew Leonard for his constant support for the website and its current developments.

I would like to thank the many members who have provided copy for the newsletters and given supportive advice, and I look forward to putting together my final Spring 2023 Newsletter before the 2023 AGM.

COMMITTEE APPOINTEES' REPORTS

RECORDER – Fred Rumsey

The fruits of our combined recording efforts over the last two decades will be published in the BSBI's *Atlas 2020* in March 2023. For those like me who like to hold a hard copy, the wealth of data has meant the need to go to two volumes, but an interactive online version giving far more information and analytical capabilities will also be released. Recording has continued after this massive effort in spite of the pandemic and an element of recorder fatigue and it is frustrating that some recent finds won't make it into the Atlas! One such was of **oak fern** (*Gymnocarpium dryopteris*). This small and delicate woodlander is curiously rare or even absent from many areas, such as Ireland, and has declined elsewhere in its southern English range. I was thus delighted to have been sent a voucher for confirmation of the species, new to Dorset, by Mark Gurney back in 2016. For a variety of reasons this record sadly never made it to the BSBI in time for inclusion in the forthcoming Atlas, but in October I finally got the chance to check the plantation near Arne where he had reported it and was delighted (and no little relieved) to finally re-find several diffuse but rather dwarfed patches, some under bracken. Even the less promising looking parts of this otherwise species-rich area, now due to become a much-enlarged reserve, clearly are worth further investigation.

With increasing familiarity and more keen eyes looking, some apparently rare segregates of the **scaly male fern** (*Dryopteris affinis* s.l.) are now proving to be more widespread, if still very uncommon. I can report several intriguing discoveries this year. On a visit to Somerset this summer, Roger Golding and Alison Evans, hosted by myself and North Somerset Vice-county Recorder Helena Crouch, visited several sites where we believed there to be **narrow scaly male-fern** (*D. cambrensis*). To our embarrassment the majority of these records were to prove to be the superficially similar *D. paleaceolobata*. Some face was saved with the realisation that both taxa occurred at one of our sites, the coniferous plantations at Stockhill near Priddy. These overlies lead workings that date back to the Roman period. Even more excitingly, one of our mystery clumps was determined by Roger and Alison to be **Kerry scaly male-fern** (*D. kerryensis*), which Roger had found new to Scotland in 2021 and which previously had only been known in England from a few sites in the south-west Lake District, also found by him. This was not to be the only excitement, as the day before, while exploring a recent plantation on the Stourhead Estate (just into North Somerset) a single large individual of the, to my eyes more distinct, *D. pseudodisjuncta* was found. This triploid taxon had previously only been found in three sites in south and west Scotland and at a site in the south-west Lakes, and typically as one or very few plants per site. Its discovery in Somerset was therefore most unexpected. Elsewhere in the South-West, others have also been trying to make more sense of this difficult and critical group. Lionel Pike, working in Heathercombe on Dartmoor, also found a hot spot for unusual examples, recording amongst others *D. lacunosa* and also a plant Roger believed to be the hybrid between *D. paleaceolobata* and *D. filix-mas*. Another plant morphologically looked to be *D. pseudodisjuncta* but confusingly may prove to be diploid. It is an intriguing and frequently repeated observation that unusual scaly male-ferns are often found together, even in comparatively recent woodland sites.

In the spring I was fortunate enough to be in Guernsey helping to launch an initiative to promote the use of native plants in gardens, and took the opportunity to revisit and monitor sites of the hybrids of the genus *Asplenium*, which had been visited by the Society in 2015. **Guernsey spleenwort** (*Asplenium* × *sarniense*), the hybrid between the **black** and **lanceolate**

spleenworts, was described from the island in the 1970s and is more frequent here than anywhere else in the world, for reasons that are still not fully resolved. Due to the similarity of its parents, it can be a challenging plant to spot, but working with members of the Botany Section of the Société Guernesiaise, over 50 individuals were located, some known to me since my first visit to the island nearly 30 years ago. Even rarer is the very distinctive **Guernsey fern** (*A. ×microdon*), the hybrid between the **lanceolate spleenwort** (*A. billotii*) and the **hart's tongue fern** (*A. scolopendrium*). Aside from a poorly localised specimen from Cornwall collected in the 1850s, this remarkable plant has only ever been found on Guernsey. It forms on open, disturbed but sheltered habitats where the base-rich and acid substrates enjoyed by its disparate parents mix, but this disturbance (often brought about by vehicles scraping banks, or over-zealous prescribed cutting) also leads to a short existence. Of the 19 individuals seen in 2013/5 only four were probably extant, but a further 16 plants were seen during my visit, with another detected shortly after.

Another very rare spleenwort hybrid *Asplenium ×murbeckii*, the cross between the common **wall-rue** (*A. ruta-muraria*) and its much rarer and metal-loving relative **forked spleenwort** (*A. septentrionale*), had until recently only been known as a single clump on Arthur's Seat in Edinburgh, with another possibly just out of reach on Stenton Rocks, near Dunkeld. Surveys by Jim McIntosh and Mary Gibby have, however, revealed another two plants at the former site. Some European examples of this hybrid are fertile but it is likely that these are *de novo* F1 hybrid formations.

One of my erstwhile Guernsey compatriots and hosts, Gareth Coleman, subsequently went on to make another interesting discovery while touring Scotland during the summer. While visiting the Chatelherault Country Park, near Hamilton, he found a plant of the **American maidenhair fern** (*Adiantum pedatum*). This pedately fronded species is one of a vicariant pair, one Eastern American (*A. pedatum*), the other Western (*A. aleuticum*), that were finally separated by molecular studies in the 1980s. While the Western species is now the more commonly sold and cultivated, the two other most recent finds, high in Cwm Idwal (on a BPS meeting) and in a Lake District quarry, have also been *A. pedatum*. The two are, however, challengingly difficult to separate and all earlier British records are open to question as to the true identity of the plants discovered.

Finally, in early November news came from Louis Parkerson that he had found sporophytes of the **Killarney fern** (*Vandemboschia speciosa*) at a new site in coastal woodland in South Cornwall. While it is difficult to be certain as to the origins of some Cornish examples of this species, occurring as they do in or close to previously gardened areas, nationally we have witnessed increasing recruitment from the previously overlooked gametophyte populations. One of the few positives to result from climate change?

SPORE EXCHANGE ORGANISERS – Brian & Sue Dockerill

These statistics give an overview of the main Spore Exchange for 2022.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
No. taxa in list	459	452	405	402	384	401	396
Orders received	96	135	155	164	146	171	120
Packets supplied	1,568	2,331	2,486	2,664	2,324	2,683	1,780
No. first choices supplied (%)	1,400 (90%)	2,024 (86%)	2,077 (83%)	2,220 (85%)	1,927 (83%)	2,305 (86%)	1,643 (92%)
No. donors	32	39	36	40	35	38	29

The number of donors and number of orders were lower this year, primarily due to the restrictions on sending spores to the EU. The impact of this is less than it might have been, as many European members continued to support the Exchange, for which we are extremely grateful. Overall, the scheme remains healthy, with a wide range of interesting taxa along with some reliable favourites.

We continued to supply short viability spores separately, and the statistics for this are shown below.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
No. taxa donated	9	11	11	13	13	5	5
No. donors	4	6	7	7	6	2	2
No. packets supplied	40	30	39	63	67	14	9

There continued to be limited donations and orders under this scheme. If anyone grows unusual *Osmunda* or related genera, these spores would be most welcome.

As always, we are very grateful to the spore donors, without whom there would be no Exchange. If anyone is interested in becoming a donor, we are very happy to offer advice, or they can look on the website for help.

PLANT EXCHANGE ORGANISERS – Brian & Sue Dockerill

The following gives some statistics for the scheme.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
No. taxa available	32	22	62	44	48	29	33
No. donors	6	5	5	7	8	8	7
No. taxa wanted	19	25	41	49	67	53	51
No. requestors	5	8	13	15	18	16	20

The Plant Exchange continues to list a reasonable number of ferns, and many of these are requested – of the 33 available during 2022, seven are not currently listed as they are used up. As in 2021, we feel this aspect of the system is working well, albeit on a moderate scale and we would encourage members to support it.

For plant wants, members continue to post occasional requests, but it is not apparent that many are fulfilled. As the system requires little effort to support it, it will remain in place but does not appear to be making an impact on the availability of ferns for members who are looking for specific items.

Both aspects of the Exchange are advertised in the Autumn Mailing and other communications, and with all spores sent out from the Spore Exchange. We also offer to send out a paper list on request, but none were requested this year.

BOOKSALES ORGANISER – Frank Katzer

2022 was a very busy year for BPS Booksales, and most of my time was taken up by organising the auction of the fern books that I purchased in 2021 from Sarah Whittingham and Frank McGavigan. In total, 137 items were offered for sale. In the first round, 24 BPS members expressed an interest in 102 of the 137 books. Based on this, the books were grouped into four categories: 1) Books that nobody expressed an interest in. These 35 were added to my stock of books. 2) Books that only a single person expressed an interest in. These 49 were offered to those people at the guide price, and 36 were sold and 13 added to my stocks. 3) Books that up to three people expressed an interest in. These 37 were all sold by an e-mail auction involving those people. 4) Books that four or more people expressed an interest in. These 16 were sold at the face-to-face auction at the national Autumn Meeting in Glasgow in October. In addition, some of the books from the first two categories that had not sold were for sale at the meeting in Glasgow. During 2022, Booksales had an income of £4,608.50 and an expenditure of £223.03.

As always, I would be grateful if you could let me know if you become aware of any new fern books before they are published so that I can contact the publishers in order to get a better deal for our members.

BPS Booksales always welcomes donations and bequests of books or offers to purchase either individual books or whole book collections. Please keep in mind that the prices offered cannot be internet prices but if you sell books to dealers, they will not offer sales prices either. To contact me please use my work e-mail: Frank.Katzer@moredun.ac.uk or alternatively the Booksales e-mail: Booksales@eBPS.org.uk. I can also be contacted by post: Frank Katzer, Highfield House, Muirburn, Skirling ML12 6HL, Scotland or by phone 0044 (0)1899 860 307.

BACK NUMBERS OF JOURNALS ORGANISER & SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS SALES – Pat Acock

We had only 34 postal sales during 2022, consisting of 20 journals – 18 *Pteridologist* parts and one each of the *Bulletin* and *Fern Gazette*, and 76 Special Publications – five *Fern names and their meanings*, 19 *Polystichum cultivars*, eight *Fern albums and related materials* and 27 *Polypodium cultivars and species*, plus odd copies of others in the series. Considering one of the botanical book shops that sell our books decided at the beginning of the year to top up their shelves, these numbers were a little disappointing. Postal sales were supplemented by sales at regional and national BPS meetings including the AGM.

Perhaps at meetings members who value these publications could show this to our newer members, who might then avail themselves of a few more of these well researched and beautiful books. In a webinar that I watched on the Victorian Fern Craze, the librarian giving the presentation from the Elizabeth Miller Botanical Library in Seattle had laid out various artifacts and books on the tables to go with his talk. On display he had four of our Special Publications and *Fern fever* by our member Sarah Whittingham. This is truly amazing since the lecture was on the other side of the world about a predominantly British phenomenon.

MERCHANDISE ORGANISERS – Bryan & Gill Smith

We had a steady flow of orders through the early part of 2022, but once people started to get out and meet up again, the orders dwindled. We only had 31 orders via the website plus one in the post; most were for the UK, with one each from the USA, Belgium, France, Sweden and Germany.

We attended a couple of face-to-face meetings during the year, notably the BBC Gardeners' World shows at the NEC, Birmingham and at Audley End, Essex, so there were chances for people to see and be tempted by a limited range of our Merchandise! We were very grateful that colleagues were able to take some merchandise to the Spring Meeting and AGM at Edge Hill University, which we weren't able to attend. Plus, colleagues sold merchandise for us at Southport Flower Show and the national BPS Autumn Meeting in Glasgow as well as at the Yorkshire and NW Group AGMs. We continue to get positive feedback about the wide range of items that we stock from some of the new members who sent us orders! We are hoping to get along to some of the meetings planned for 2023, where we always offer pre-ordering so that people don't have to pay postage (which seems to go up all the time!).

A big thank you to all those who have supported us. If you have ideas for any other items that you think would enhance our list, please contact us on Merchandise@eBPS.org.uk.

ARCHIVIST – Michael Hayward

Material received over the last year included manuscripts by Jimmy Dyce, manuscripts by Clive Jermy and a variety of photographs of the Southport Flower Show.

Requests for information received this year were chiefly for addresses of early Society members and records of early fern cultivars.

If you have any items that you would like to donate to our archive, please get in touch with me. Biographical details of past members and any good photographs of individual Society members, past or present, would be particularly useful. Photographs can be sent as prints, which I can scan and return to you if you so wish, or in digital form. Photographic images in the archive are stored in jpeg format, with the minimum of compression. Images of documents are scanned in multipage pdf format. There are over 2,100 catalogued items in the archive.

CULTIVAR REGISTRATION WORKING GROUP – Roger Golding

Progress is being made on producing a first draft of the Cultivar Register for Polypodium, for potential publication at a future date. This first draft will be a discussion document to enable decisions on correct names to be made by the group.

BPS ACCOUNTS FOR 2022

	2021	2022
ORDINARY ACCOUNT		
INCOME		
Subscriptions (<i>see note 1</i>)	£19,525.12	£19,025.27
Booksales (<i>see note 8</i>)	£546.00	£4,608.50
Merchandise (<i>see notes 6 & 8</i>)	£1,220.91	£1,437.59
Publications (<i>see notes 6 & 8</i>)	£2,101.81	£1,111.68
Pteridologist	£55.50	£16.44
Inland Revenue Gift Aid	£1,481.28	-
Donations	£936.71	£668.64
Plant Sales & Spore Exchange	-	£193.50
Prize Money	-	£520.00
Miscellaneous	-	-
TOTAL INCOME	£25,867.33	£27,581.62
EXPENDITURE		
Pteridologist	£8,926.16	£5,091.24
Fern Gazette (<i>see note 4</i>)	-	£10,622.80
Bulletin	£6,834.49	£7,841.83
Printing & Stationery	£100.00	-
Administration & Postage	£756.28	£819.69
Subscriptions to Societies	£95.00	£95.00
Plant & Spore Exchanges	-	£296.93
Merchandise (<i>see note 6</i>)	£1,198.17	£388.35
Publications (<i>see note 5</i>)	£725.00	£369.00
Trustees' Expenses	-	-
Booksales	£4,246.99	£446.88
Special Awards	£551.30	£94.91
Autumn Mailing	£1,185.26	-
Website	£18.87	-
Meetings (<i>see note 7</i>)	-	£14.05
Promotion & Advertising (<i>see note 5</i>)	£34.09	£3,381.09
Insurance	£371.10	£376.10
Donations/returned overpaid fees	£25.00	£97.60
Bank Charges (<i>see notes 2 & 3</i>)	£577.86	£583.12
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£25,645.57	£30,518.59
Balance (income minus expenditure)	£221.76	-£2,936.97
Brought Forward from previous year	£36,008.66	£36,230.42
Total in Ordinary Account	£36,230.42	£33,293.45
RESERVE FUND		
Brought Forward from previous year	£20,327.07	£20,330.45
Interest	£3.38	£289.06
Total in Reserve Fund	£20,330.45	£20,619.51
CENTENARY FUND (Restricted Account)		
Interest	£1.03	£88.07
Interest brought forward from previous year	£609.66	£610.69
Total Interest	£610.69	£698.76
Capital brought forward from previous year	£5,583.73	£5,583.73
Total in Centenary Fund	£6,194.42	£6,282.49

	2021	2022
GREENFIELD FUND (Restricted Account)		
Interest	£0.45	£38.68
Interest brought forward from previous year	£1,669.00	£1,669.45
Travel Grant	-	-
Total Interest	£1,669.45	£1,708.13
Capital brought forward from previous year	£1,051.00	£1,051.00
Total in Greenfield Fund	£2,720.45	£2,759.13

GRAHAM ACKERS FUND		
Brought forward from previous year	£14,883.92	£14,886.41
Interest	£2.49	£211.66
Total in Graham Ackers Fund	£14,886.41	£15,098.07

SUMMARY

Ordinary Account	£36,230.42	£33,293.45
Reserve Account	£20,330.45	£20,619.51
Centenary Fund	£6,194.42	£6,282.49
Greenfield Fund	£2,720.45	£2,759.13
Graham Ackers Fund	£14,886.41	£15,098.07
Total Funds	£80,362.15	£78,052.66

REPRESENTED BY

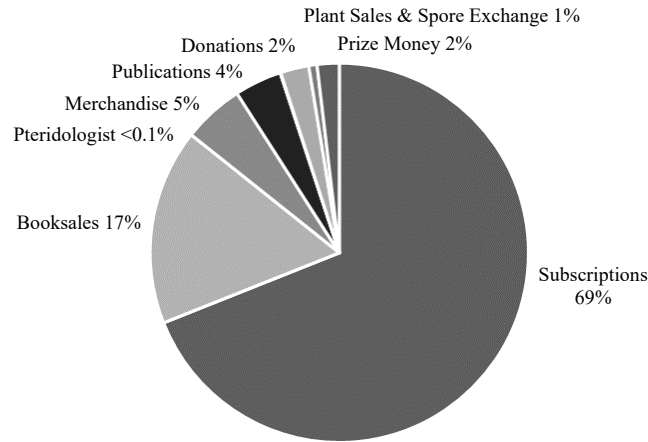
Charitable Organisations Investment Fund (COIF)	£50,999.34	£51,626.82
NatWest Bank & Others	£29,362.81	£26,425.84
Total Funds	£80,362.15	£78,052.66

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

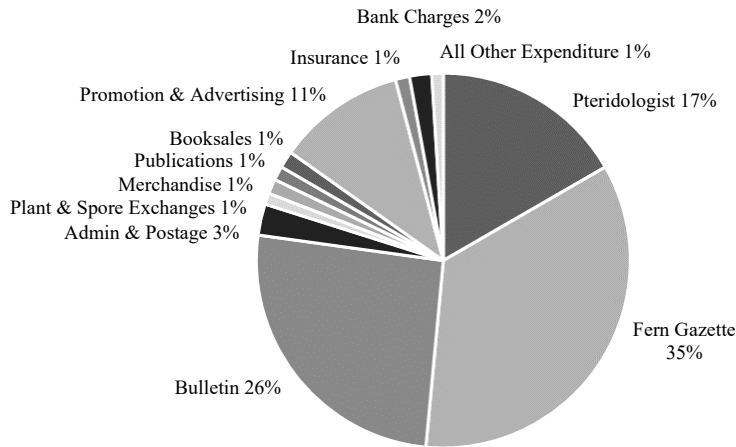
1. The accounts reflect the subscriptions received in the year.
2. Transaction charges are levied by NatWest and PayPal. All payments received via PayPal into the bank are net of the bank charges included here. Payments received via NatWest are received gross and the charges included here are levied separately.
3. The Society is using internet banking as some service providers are no longer accepting cheques.
4. Increased expenditure in 2022 was largely due to the settlement of three invoices for the *Gazette* whilst none were settled in 2021. This was due to accounting problems at OUP (now defunct).
5. The increased spending on promotion and advertising reflects the production of a new range of updated leaflets, pamphlets and posters.
6. Stock values for Merchandise and Special Publications are estimated in agreement with the Treasurer as future demand for this stock is unknown.
7. It was possible to hold the AGM as a face-to-face event at Edge Hill University, whilst other Society committee and business meetings have remained on Zoom.
8. On 31.12.2022 the face value of Merchandise stock was estimated to be £1,500 and of Special Publications was estimated to be £13,288. Booksales stock had a value of £6,279.

Peter Blake, Treasurer

INCOME 2022



EXPENDITURE 2022



BRITISH PTERIDOLOGICAL SOCIETY

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER’S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity for the year ended 31 December 2022. As the charity’s trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (‘the Act’).

I report in respect of my examination of the charity’s accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and, in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which give me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a ‘true and fair’ view, which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Independent Examiner: Barrie Buels FCCA FCIE, 10 March 2023

Crestmere Limited, Chartered Certified Accountants

BPS ACCOUNTS FOR 2022

	2021	2022
ORDINARY ACCOUNT		
INCOME		
Subscriptions (<i>see note 1</i>)	£19,525.12	£19,025.27
Booksales (<i>see note 8</i>)	£546.00	£4,608.50
Merchandise (<i>see notes 6 & 8</i>)	£1,220.91	£1,437.59
Publications (<i>see notes 6 & 8</i>)	£2,101.81	£1,111.68
Pteridologist	£55.50	£16.44
Inland Revenue Gift Aid	£1,481.28	-
Donations	£936.71	£668.64
Plant Sales & Spore Exchange	-	£193.50
Prize Money	-	£520.00
Miscellaneous	-	-
TOTAL INCOME	£25,867.33	£27,581.62
EXPENDITURE		
Pteridologist	£8,926.16	£5,091.24
Fern Gazette (<i>see note 4</i>)	-	£10,622.80
Bulletin	£6,834.49	£7,841.83
Printing & Stationery	£100.00	-
Administration & Postage	£756.28	£819.69
Subscriptions to Societies	£95.00	£95.00
Plant & Spore Exchanges	-	£296.93
Merchandise (<i>see note 6</i>)	£1,198.17	£388.35
Publications (<i>see note 5</i>)	£725.00	£369.00
Trustees' Expenses	-	-
Booksales	£4,246.99	£446.88
Special Awards	£551.30	£94.91
Autumn Mailing	£1,185.26	-
Website	£18.87	-
Meetings (<i>see note 7</i>)	-	£14.05
Promotion & Advertising (<i>see note 5</i>)	£34.09	£3,381.09
Insurance	£371.10	£376.10
Donations/returned overpaid fees	£25.00	£97.60
Bank Charges (<i>see notes 2 & 3</i>)	£577.86	£583.12
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£25,645.57	£30,518.59
Balance (income minus expenditure)	£221.76	-£2,936.97
Brought Forward from previous year	£36,008.66	£36,230.42
Total in Ordinary Account	£36,230.42	£33,293.45
RESERVE FUND		
Brought Forward from previous year	£20,327.07	£20,330.45
Interest	£3.38	£289.06
Total in Reserve Fund	£20,330.45	£20,619.51
CENTENARY FUND (Restricted Account)		
Interest	£1.03	£88.07
Interest brought forward from previous year	£609.66	£610.69
Total Interest	£610.69	£698.76
Capital brought forward from previous year	£5,583.73	£5,583.73
Total in Centenary Fund	£6,194.42	£6,282.49

	2021	2022
GREENFIELD FUND (Restricted Account)		
Interest	£0.45	£38.68
Interest brought forward from previous year	£1,669.00	£1,669.45
Travel Grant	-	-
Total Interest	£1,669.45	£1,708.13
Capital brought forward from previous year	£1,051.00	£1,051.00
Total in Greenfield Fund	£2,720.45	£2,759.13

GRAHAM ACKERS FUND		
Brought forward from previous year	£14,883.92	£14,886.41
Interest	£2.49	£211.66
Total in Graham Ackers Fund	£14,886.41	£15,098.07

SUMMARY

Ordinary Account	£36,230.42	£33,293.45
Reserve Account	£20,330.45	£20,619.51
Centenary Fund	£6,194.42	£6,282.49
Greenfield Fund	£2,720.45	£2,759.13
Graham Ackers Fund	£14,886.41	£15,098.07
Total Funds	£80,362.15	£78,052.66

REPRESENTED BY

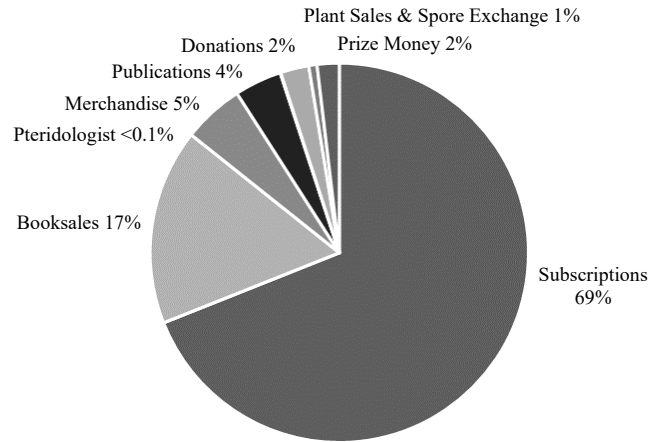
Charitable Organisations Investment Fund (COIF)	£50,999.34	£51,626.82
NatWest Bank & Others	£29,362.81	£26,425.84
Total Funds	£80,362.15	£78,052.66

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

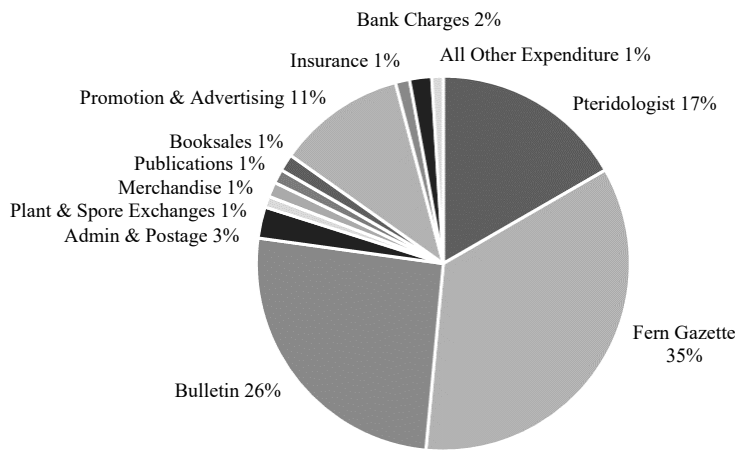
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6. Stock values for Merchandise and Special Publications are estimated in agreement with the Treasurer as future demand for this stock is unknown.
7. It was possible to hold the AGM as a face-to-face event at Edge Hill University, whilst other Society committee and business meetings have remained on Zoom.
8. On 31.12.2022 the face value of Merchandise stock was estimated to be £1,500 and of Special Publications was estimated to be £13,288. Booksales stock had a value of £6,279.

Peter Blake, Treasurer

INCOME 2022



EXPENDITURE 2022



BRITISH PTERIDOLOGICAL SOCIETY

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER’S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity for the year ended 31 December 2022. As the charity’s trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (‘the Act’).

I report in respect of my examination of the charity’s accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and, in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which give me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a ‘true and fair’ view, which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Independent Examiner: Barrie Buels FCCA FCIE, 10 March 2023

Crestmere Limited, Chartered Certified Accountants

THE BRITISH PTERIDOLOGICAL SOCIETY

England & Wales - Charity number 1092399

Accounts

BPS ACCOUNTS FOR 2021

	2020	2021
ORDINARY ACCOUNT		
INCOME		
Subscriptions (<i>see note 1</i>)	£20,361.12	£19,496.69
Booksales (<i>see note 6</i>)	£131.30	£546.00
Merchandise (<i>see note 6</i>)	£1,788.59	£1,220.91
Publications (<i>see note 5</i>)	£3,924.16	£2,101.81
Pteridologist	-	£55.50
Inland Revenue Gift Aid	£1,258.25	£1,481.28
Donations	£443.00	£936.71
Plant Sales & Spore Exchange	£210.00	-
Prize Money	-	-
Miscellaneous	£68.06	-
TOTAL INCOME	£28,184.48	£25,838.90
EXPENDITURE		
Pteridologist	£5,467.54	£8,926.16
Fern Gazette	£4,277.97	-
Bulletin	£6,469.59	£6,834.49
Printing & Stationery	-	£100.00
Administration & Postage	£1,058.05	£756.28
Subscriptions to Societies	£145.00	£95.00
Plant & Spore Exchanges	£172.52	-
Merchandise (<i>see note 6</i>)	£1,598.66	£1,198.17
Publications (<i>see note 5</i>)	£5,245.14	£725.00
Trustees' Expenses (<i>see note 7</i>)	£140.00	-
Booksales (<i>see note 6</i>)	£382.07	£4,246.99
Special Awards	-	£551.30
Autumn Mailing	-	£1,185.26
Website	-	£18.87
Promotion & Advertising (<i>see note 4</i>)	£180.00	£34.09
Insurance	£355.20	£371.10
Donations/returned overpaid fees	-	£25.00
Bank Charges (<i>see notes 2 & 3</i>)	£490.60	£577.86
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£25,982.34	£25,645.57
Balance (income minus expenditure)	£2,202.14	£193.33
Brought Forward from previous year	£33,806.52	£36,008.66
Total in Ordinary Account	£36,008.66	£36,201.99
RESERVE FUND		
Brought Forward from previous year	£20,265.20	£20,327.07
Interest	£61.87	£3.38
Total in Reserve Fund	£20,327.07	£20,330.45
CENTENARY FUND (Restricted Account)		
Interest	£18.85	£1.03
Interest brought forward from previous year	£590.81	£609.66
Total Interest	£609.66	£610.69
Capital brought forward from previous year	£5,583.73	£5,583.73
Total in Centenary Fund	£6,193.39	£6,194.42

	2020	2021
GREENFIELD FUND (Restricted Account)		
Interest	£8.28	£0.45
Interest brought forward from previous year	£1,660.72	£1,669.00
Travel Grant	-	-
Total Interest	£1,669.00	£1,669.45
Capital brought forward from previous year	£1,051.00	£1,051.00
Total in Greenfield Fund	£2,720.00	£2,720.45

GRAHAM ACKERS FUND		
Brought forward from previous year	£14,838.62	£14,883.92
Interest	£45.30	£2.49
Total in Graham Ackers Fund	£14,883.92	£14,886.41

SUMMARY		
Ordinary Account	£36,008.66	£36,201.99
Reserve Account	£20,327.07	£20,330.45
Centenary Fund	£6,193.39	£6,194.42
Greenfield Fund	£2,720.00	£2,720.45
Graham Ackers Fund	£14,883.92	£14,886.41
Total Funds	£80,133.04	£80,333.72

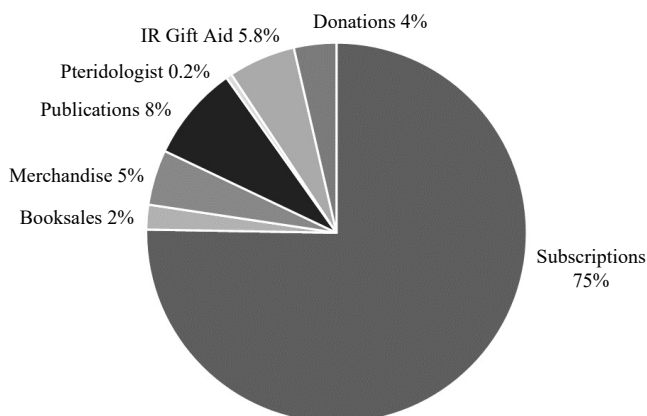
REPRESENTED BY		
Charitable Organisations Investment Fund (COIF)	50,991.99	£50,999.34
NatWest Bank & Others	£29,141.05	£29,334.38
Total Funds	£80,133.04	£80,333.72

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

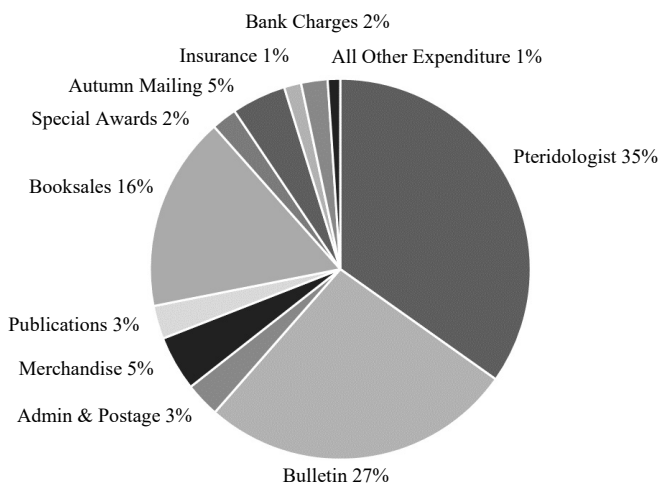
- The accounts reflect the subscriptions received in the year.
- Transaction charges are levied by NatWest and PayPal. All payments received via PayPal into the bank are net of the bank charges included here. Payments received via NatWest are received gross and the charges included here are levied separately.
- The Society is now using internet banking as some service providers are no longer accepting cheques.
- Promotion and advertising were reduced in 2021 due to the Covid-19 restrictions. There was a reduced number of shows and displays.
- There were no new Special Publications in 2020 or 2021. Income was reduced in 2021 at £2,101. Residual stock is valued at £14,400.
- Merchandise stock is valued at £1,500 and Booksales at £9,520 with an additional £2,118 capital. These accounts are reviewed by the Treasurer.
- The AGM and Committee meetings were held on Zoom, with consequent savings on travel expenses.

Peter Blake, Treasurer

INCOME 2021



EXPENDITURE 2021



BRITISH PTERIDOLOGICAL SOCIETY INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity for the year ended 31 December 2021. As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and, in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which give me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view, which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Independent Examiner: Barrie Buels FCCA FCIE, 10 March 2022
Crestmere Limited, Chartered Certified Accountants

REPORTS OF OFFICERS & COMMITTEE APPOINTEES FOR 2021

OFFICERS' REPORTS

GENERAL SECRETARY – David Hill

Change is inevitable, and a lot can change in twelve months. Over the last year the Society has adapted well to a changed world, we've lost good friends but made new ones. Despite the temporary loss of field meetings, we have maintained our membership, and benefited from fresh ideas from new committee members. The future for the Society is looking positive.

The year started with a Committee meeting, again online rather than in person, followed a few months later by an online AGM. Thanks for their contributions go to Steve Munyard who stepped down from the Committee, and Sophie Walwin and Ziska Wittenstein who stood down from the Publicity Officer role. Rob Cooke was voted in as President-Elect, marking the final year of Alison Evans' presidency, and I'm sure it was not quite the same as she had originally envisaged!

Shortly following the AGM, we were greatly saddened by the death of Matt Busby. After meeting him at the Hull AGM, my wife described him as "a very friendly and welcoming old-fashioned gentleman, in the true sense of the word", and one who will be missed by all those fortunate enough to have chatted with him. The Society is certainly poorer without him.

May and October saw further online Committee meetings, and over the course of the year we had a few new additions to the Committee – co-opted pending official nomination in Ormskirk at the end of March. Peter Madders has been learning from Ann Robbins the intricacies of managing the Membership, Jonny Lamb will be shadowing Peter Blake to take on the mantle of Treasurer in 2023, and Matthew Reeve has thrown himself (or been dragged by Peter Blake) into the newly created Indoor and Tropical Fern Group. Laurence Sutton has enthusiastically taken on the challenge of the quarterly newsletters with much gusto, as I'm sure you will have noticed.

I could easily list every member of the Committee here, as they have all helped or been working away in the background, often unacknowledged and unseen, but all greatly appreciated. The amount in the following reports testifies to all the quiet beaver-ing away behind the scenes.

Another unforeseen set of positives to come out of the pandemic has been the forging of closer ties with the Hardy Fern Foundation and other online groups. The evening talks via Zoom and the Autumn Meeting on Ferneries have been both fascinating and bridge-building, and I look forward to them becoming a permanent fixture. If you have any ideas for talks or would like to join any of the groups or the Committee just to see what goes on, please do get in contact.

To end on a positive note, I am greatly looking forward to the Spring Meeting and AGM. The programme is packed with some fascinating speakers, and I'm looking forward to seeing people in real life, and hopefully meeting many of you there.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY – Ann Robbins

During 2021, 83 people joined or rejoined the Society, and there were two new family members. Of these, 64 live in the UK, 13 in Europe and six in the Rest of the World; 61 are full members, eight are 'optional' members and 14 are students.

During 2021, 151 people left the Society: 123 lapsed, 22 resigned and sadly six died: Mr Jack Hubert in January, Mr Matt Busby in April, Mr Grant Fortune in June, Dr David Larner in August, Ms Jenny Hakney in September and Mr John Grue in November.

As of 31st December 2021, we had 674 ‘Active’ members plus 57 family members. This was made up as follows:

Full members	473
Optional members	125
Honorary members	10
Complimentary members	6
Students	21
Subscribers	39

I have enjoyed my few years as Membership Secretary. Our Society has an international reputation, which is reflected in the membership. Many new members have joined during the lockdown period; I hope they can all start getting out on field trips in 2022. I am delighted to have found a suitable successor who will take over in April, subject to approval at the AGM.

MEETINGS SECRETARY – Bryan Smith

As a result of the on-going Covid pandemic (that much-used phrase) the meetings programme in 2021 was again essentially curtailed, and most of the meetings we had hoped might be carried forward from 2020 didn’t take place. So, this report is short.

The AGM was held virtually in April and, as well as the usual business part, included talks on indoor ferns and on fern cultivars, and the results of the online Photographic Competition. We also held the Autumn Meeting virtually in November, comprising several presentations on the theme of Victorian ferneries. Only one National Meeting was held face-to-face – the Cultivar Group’s visit to fern gardens in the South-East in September, and some of the Regional Groups also managed some fieldwork. We also held our usual Fern Weekend at Wisley in July – this time in their new Events Hall in the Hilltop Centre along with the Carnivorous Plant Society. All these gatherings (virtual or real) are reported elsewhere in the *Bulletin*.

The Meetings Subcommittee did not hold its usual annual get-together, but liaison was maintained by e-mail, and a provisional programme for 2022 was included in the Autumn Mailing – albeit with few firm details. Hopefully though, these details will be enough for members to express interest and indeed be able to participate. Also, it is hoped that Regional Group leaders will be able to participate when we do eventually have an online planning meeting for future events.

PUBLICATIONS SECRETARY – Martin Rickard

As ever, the Society’s journals have been brilliant – even fuller than usual. All Editors, Mary Gibby (*Fern Gazette*) Alec Greening (*Pteridologist*), Alison Paul (*Bulletin*) and their teams, are to be heartily congratulated. See their reports included here.

Apart from the Journals there has been, and will be, a lot of activity with Special Publications. One on *Asplenium scolopendrium*, by Tim Brock and another on *Athyrium* by Ian Unsworth are progressing well, but we can make no promises as to when they will appear; these are not quickly compiled books as they require a lot of research. I am sure both end-products will be worth the wait.

For the more distant future I think we should be looking to produce companion volumes on as many garden ferns as possible. These might include one on *Dryopteris* species and cultivars for the gardener, another on ‘odds and ends’ that have not been covered elsewhere, e.g. *Blechnum*, *Cystopteris*, *Woodsia*, etc. Another possibility is a Special Publication on indoor and conservatory ferns. We have several very good private collections of this type maintained by very knowledgeable growers. Such books were quite frequently released in Victorian times, but very little has been published since.

Pat Acock keeps us informed of sales of our Special Publications, which are selling well despite the lack of face-to-face meetings. We expect a surge in sales when we actually meet again and can peruse each book before purchase!

Plans for the new British fern flora to be produced jointly by the BPS and the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (BSBI) have changed a little. The author, Fred Rumsey, moved house in 2021, which not surprisingly took up a lot of his time. The publication wanted by the BSBI is a field handbook, which would be great, but after much discussion our Committee feels a more ambitious compilation is needed. There have been several field guides over the last 50 years with the most recent being James Merryweather's excellent *Britain's ferns*. It is not proposed that our book will be in the BPS Special Publication series; an A4 hardback is likely. Graham Ackers' legacy has been ring-fenced for this book.

FERN GAZETTE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF – Mary Gibby

I am pleased to report that we continued to receive a healthy number of submissions on a range of fern and lycophyte related topics, and members of the editorial team and other experts kindly undertook the task of reviewing the manuscripts. Two parts of the journal were issued during 2021, in May and December. Our usual publishers ceased business in August, and I am most grateful to Andrew Leonard for ensuring a very smooth transition to a new company.

PTERIDOLOGIST EDITOR – Alec Greening

2021 was an unusual year for the *Pteridologist*. By the closing date for articles I had very little copy, so I put out an appeal to my regular authors. The result was amazing! I now had enough for a bumper edition of 120 pages, but there was a downfall. My printer informed me that they would have to use a slightly thinner paper in order to get the weight down so that it fitted into the lower postage rate that we normally use. The Executive decided that this was a retrograde step and gave permission to print two editions in celebration of the 130th year of the Society.

So, the first edition was published in July with 80 pages. It had a wide variety of articles, ranging from National Collections to ferns from all over the world. The supplement edition was published in October with 40 pages. Again, we had reports of a National Collection and of ferns from all over world along with many articles on cultivars. A big thank you to Alison Evans, who tackled the proof-reading because my professional proof-reader was no longer available.

The 2022 issue already looks very promising. If you have an article that you would like published, please contact Chris Evans as soon as possible at receiving@eBPS.org.uk and we will do our best to include it in this edition.

BULLETIN EDITOR – Alison Paul

Since almost all Society meetings were cancelled again in 2021, this *Bulletin* is inevitably somewhat slimmer than usual (76 pages). Thanks are due to Pat Acock for offering his account of the Society's overseas excursions. All being well, next year it will be 'business as usual'! I am most grateful to our printers, Aysgarth Services, for coping, as always, with my tight deadline!

WEBSITE CO-ORDINATOR – Bridget Laue

Once again the BPS website saw significant activity, with over 42,000 users, a large majority of them new, half from the UK and the rest from 180 other countries. In 2021, more than ever, the website proved to be essential because everyone was using the internet, for so many reasons. In-person meetings were limited again, but you can find interesting virtual meetings, lectures and programmes relating to ferns, all accessible from the BPS website; these are listed on the left side of the home page. There was a healthy number of sales of merchandise and Special Publications using PayPal on the website, as well as an

increase in membership subscriptions; these website PayPal transactions represented 41% of total BPS income. A new feature was the Fern Hardiness Survey. This was quite successful in getting 83 people to contribute records for over 400 ferns. The survey is still open, and anyone can contribute, either from new or to edit and save their existing list. As always, a huge thank you is due to Andrew Leonard for both his content contribution and his vigilance and technical skills applied to management of the website. As the website is run by volunteers we do not pay for management of the site. However, we have added a new mechanism (VPS) to speed up response times, with a cost of £50 per annum. More detailed analyses will be presented at the AGM.

The website is also linked to our social media groups, which can be accessed using the icons on the left-hand side of the home page. Fern World on Facebook, @BPS.FernWorld, managed by Alison Evans, now has 2,374 followers. Over the next few months, Fern World will be compiling a comprehensive photographic list of all the featured British native ferns and lycophytes. There are also some specialist fern groups on Facebook run by BPS members, such as the *Polypodium* cultivars group, the *Polystichum* group, the *Athyrium filix-femina* cultivars group, and the *Dryopteris* species, hybrids and cultivars group. These are great places to discover new things and keep up to date with what is happening in the cultivar world. We also have a dedicated YouTube channel – search for British Pteridological Society on YouTube, to find a range of informative videos. Our Instagram account is managed by Chris Nicholson and has 2,540 followers. All these accounts invite viewers back to the BPS website for more information. David Hill manages the BPS twitter account (@FernBPS), which has 3,091 followers. As always, we welcome feedback, participation and contributions.

CONSERVATION OFFICER – Fred Rumsey

Consultation has now concluded on proposals put forward for the Quinquennial Review of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, whose schedules list those species for which protection is to be given and those whose deliberate introduction would result in prosecution. In our warming world there is a suite of primarily aquatic species that have long been in the horticultural trade and hitherto have been considered of low risk of invasivity, but which now, in our virtually frost-free winters, may not be kept in check should they escape. I have recently been engaged to look at the genus *Azolla* in trade. The now widespread *A. filiculoides* is seen as a menace and its sale is prohibited, while the more tender species previously known as *A. caroliniana* is not so restricted. The two are difficult to distinguish when sterile and have been much confused, so there are concerns that material traded online may not be correctly named. In any case, although not yet definitely recorded in the wild here, the more tender species is increasing in continental Europe and could become equally problematic. As mentioned in my Recording round-up, the Australasian *Marsilea hirsuta*, an invasive species that has caused concerns in Florida (and was famously mistaken as an endemic in the Azores), has survived for over five years in a Warwickshire wildlife pond. It remains unlikely that this, or members of the genus *Salvinia*, which prove so damaging elsewhere in the world, will have an impact here, but members are reminded to be careful when disposing of plants and to keep an eye open for escapees.

On drier land, an alien species that bears careful consideration is *Hypolepis ambigua* (pig fern), first discovered by Angus Hannah on the Isle of Bute. While still only known there and with its origin still unclear, this species would have the potential to have an impact on natural communities and species composition, as does the similar but native bracken. Keeping a watchful eye on it might be one project that the BPS's burgeoning Fern Monitoring Group may adopt. It is really gratifying to see the growing interest in monitoring (see Barry Wright and Laurence Sutton's report), and I really hope that members will seriously think about taking up this challenge. One of the species for which monitoring work is already being undertaken and where Society members have been very

influential in developing monitoring protocols and novel techniques is *Pilularia*. Some work on this was funded by Natural England in 2021, looking at practical problems for monitoring this species and what is meaningful to record, and it is hoped that this work will be further developed and trialled in 2022.

Natural England, under its Species Recovery Programme, has also continued to fund work on one of our most threatened and vulnerable species, *Dryopteris cristata*. Sadly, because of the pandemic it has still not proved possible to do a detailed national re-survey to look at changes in the seven to eight years since the last one was attempted, but monitoring work continues at its disjunct Surrey/Berkshire population and at the re-introduction site at Wybunbury Bog, Cheshire. Following site visits by FJR and members of the Yorkshire Fern Group, another past locality, Askham Bog near York, has been assessed for a potential re-introduction. Suitable habitats have been identified and young plants are now with Professor Alastair Fitter pending approval for re-introduction to commence. Once again on-going monitoring there could be taken up by the Society.

Such re-introductions, while not always successful, if carefully considered can still be very informative. In this category we might put *Woodsia ilvensis* if reports from its recent Steering Group meeting are to be believed. Re-introductions at a number of sites in Scotland and England have resulted in a high proportion of losses and still little, if any, sign of natural regeneration. Many plants, however, do survive and all we have learnt from this species here indicates that we need to consider long timeframes. Encouragingly, the largest British population, on the Wasdale screes, is increasing without supplementation, although molecular work being carried out at RBGE has shown this population to be low in genetic diversity, a factor that had always been thought responsible for the species' inability to recover from the predations of the Victorian period. We clearly still have much to learn! Members have helped previously with monitoring the Teesdale re-introduction sites of this species and it is hoped that this important work will continue. Who knows – while doing that the long lost *Cystopteris alpina*, which once grew nearby, might be refound!

EDUCATION OFFICER – Gill Smith

I am happy to report that there was a bit more activity in 2021 than in the previous year, although everyone was a bit cautious in their approach!

A talk on *Fern fever* was given on Saturday 30th September by Mary Gibby and Bridget Laue at Hospitalfield, Arbroath, to celebrate the restoration and recent re-opening of the fernery, which was originally completed in 1870. The informal talk was to volunteers and Friends of Hospitalfield, a Trust dedicated to contemporary art and ideas that was established by the last private owner of Hospitalfield House and Estate, Patrick Allan-Fraser, on his death in 1890. Mary covered Pteridomania in all its forms and also spoke about Benmore Botanic Garden. Bridget covered the Victorian fernery at Ascog Hall on Bute and then went on to some details of fern cultivation. A lively discussion followed!

Peter Blake has for some time been interested in growing ferns indoors and been asked to give talks on this subject. At the end of 2021, he had discovered that new member Matthew Reeve was also very interested in growing tropical ferns. Following discussion, they decided to go into print and started up a new Group – the Indoor and Tropical Fern Group. Between them they produced their first newsletter, plus a calendar of events for the next year. If you are interested, please contact Peter or Matthew directly.

Alison Evans ran some fern workshops for students at Edge Hill University, and David Hill ran an online course – *Introduction to ferns and lycophytes* – in April and August. There was not much progress with the Field Studies Council about the online fern courses, but little was expected until Spring 2022. There was a joint BPS and Carnivorous Plant Society Show at Wisley at the end of July, which was well attended. Jude Lawton gave three talks

about ferns to local garden societies and was booked for two more; she commented that ferns seem to be very popular!

There will be a lot of events to promote in 2022 – the first face-to-face AGM for two years will be at Edge Hill University in Ormskirk – a full programme has been prepared. An RHS Plant Society stand at Wisley in June and the BBC Gardeners' World Live at the NEC, also in June, will need volunteers to help out. A joint BPS and Carnivorous Plant Society Show is scheduled for July, and finally, the Southport Flower Show in August will also need volunteers to help man the stand.

If you have attended an event in which you have promoted our Society, please send me details so that we have a record for our archive. My grateful thanks go to all those who give their time to help with running the various BPS events, shows, training and meetings – especially to the Education Group members, you know who you are!

PUBLICITY & COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER – Laurence Sutton (co-opted)

Since Sophie Walwin and Franziska Wittenstein left the fold as Publicity Officers after their excellent newsletter of spring 2021, there remained an air of uncertainty, chilled further by pandemic viral uncertainties. The remedy promulgated by our President – to keep up the momentum with a summer newsletter – somehow claimed my interest and time, and I have endeavoured to keep the ball rolling!

The Autumn 2021 Newsletter I feel succeeded in engaging many across the regions through their local groups. This is beneficial to the Society, by giving a chance to all members to steer the Society's direction. By all observations, members' enthusiasm appears to be in robust health!

I see the Newsletter as not only providing the customary annual procedural updates but to function as a signpost, illuminating activities across the regions. I realise that several Regional Groups produce their own excellent newsletters, published on the BPS website. The newsletter can alert members directly to them, and from what I have read, they would not be disappointed!

Finally, if elected at the AGM as Publicity and Communications Officer, I hope to engage all members as reporters! Without you and the BPS officers there would be no news!

COMMITTEE APPOINTEES' REPORTS

RECORDER – Fred Rumsey

It is difficult to follow the excitement of last year, when Rory Hodd made the amazing discovery of *Stenogrammitis myosuroides* (Kerry mousetail fern) in the Killarney National Park. The discovery of this tiny neotropical grammitid posed many questions, not least over its status and likely time of arrival on this side of the Atlantic. Considered to be an overlooked native, and therefore with a good claim to be Europe's rarest and most threatened fern, it was thus particularly exciting to hear from Rory in October that he had found another small population, with six individuals though only one was fertile. Subsequently another plant was independently found in the same wood by a young Kenmare botanist. Some four kilometres from the previous find, the ecological similarities and the remoteness of the locations do much to strengthen the view that the species is native. As to the possibilities of it being overlooked for so long, suffice it to say that many have set off in its pursuit following last year's report of its discovery, but few have succeeded in locating this particular inch-long needle in the Atlantic cloud-forest haystack (although at least one past-President has been successful).

The ability of ferns to colonise sites far distant from their usual range has led to the exciting arrival of several other species in unexpected places. Urban walls have provided sites for

scarce natives, as well as an increasing array of alien garden escapes. The disjunct and all too often ephemeral occurrences of the former have, in earlier editions of the Atlases of the British Flora, been treated as ‘introductions’, a view being challenged in Atlas 2020, now in production. While some persist, such as the *Asplenium septentrionale* (forked spleenwort) that has grown on a small bridge on the Romney Marshes for well over 40 years, others rapidly fall foul of renovations and repairs. It is heartening to hear that some manage to return, whether from fragments, or from spores shed by the removed plants. Helena Crouch reports that the *Asplenium marinum* (sea spleenwort) in Bath, believed lost following cleaning operations, has managed to stage a comeback. Even more pleasing to me was to hear from Alison Paul that the *Asplenium viride* (green spleenwort) that I first found on Ravenscourt Park underground station in 1995, which was apparently lost for several years following cleaning and summer drought, had returned by 2021 behind the same signalling gantry.

An alien first brought to my attention several years ago by the BSBI’s Warwickshire Vice-county Recorder John Walton was finally identified this year, thanks to the molecular lab of my friend Hanno Schaefer in Munich. The *Marsilea* (water clover), which had initially been thought to be the declining European native *M. quadrifolia*, instead proved to be the Australian *M. hirsuta*, a species invasive in Florida and known from the Azores, where it had previously been regarded as a treasured endemic, *M. azorica*. First recorded beside a recently created wildlife pond at Baddesley Ensor in 2015, where it is presumed to have been inadvertently introduced with other commercially sourced aquatics, the persistence of this exotic species through many winters is remarkable. It is unlikely ever to be anything other than an intriguing novelty here and I see no great virtue in ripping it out, but it will be interesting to see whether, in our warming world, this and other aquarists’ throw-outs such as *Salvinia* species start to take off and then give greater cause for concern.

Following publication of a paper clarifying many past errors in identification of the hybrid clubmoss *Diphasiastrum ×issleri* (Rumsey, Metherell & Metherell, 2021), it was interesting to receive material from Ambrose Baker, collected on Danby Beacon in North-East Yorkshire. This has proved, like plants from Northumberland, to be atypical etiolated *D. alpinum*. It is still, however, a great record, as this was last found in the vice-county back in 1988 and had disappeared by 1991.

No fern round-up would be complete without straying into the critical world of the *Dryopteris affinis* complex, the scaly stuff of dreams – or nightmares, depending on your viewpoint. While taxonomic authorities argue over what rank we should be according these apomictic taxa, the growing group of those interested in these plants have at least generally reached a consensus on the defining characters for the main forms encountered. Detailed anatomical study backed by flow-cytometry carried out by Alison Evans, in conjunction with Libor Ekrt and others, has helped elucidate ploidy levels (the number of sets of genomes possessed), an important step in understanding the evolution and relationships of these handsome ferns. This work has revealed that the plant previously known to some as ‘morphotype arranensis’, on account of its abundance on Arran, and treated by Stace in his third edition as *D. cambrensis* subsp. *pseudocomplexa* because it was believed to have affinities with that triploid taxon, is actually a tetraploid and probably not particularly closely related to *D. cambrensis*. Treating it as a distinct species, as in Sell and Murrell, seems preferable. The presence of this species in Co. Waterford has recently been confirmed by Alison Evans and Roger Golding at a site known to the late Ken Trewren, who did much to aid the identification of this group through his now out-of-print illustrated Special Publication on them. Roger has gone on to find both *D. pseudocomplexa* and another very rare and poorly known species, *D. pseudodisjuncta*, at Stromeferry in Wester Ross. This latter plant was first recorded by Ken at Kirkbean Glen, Dumfriesshire, but it transpires it had been found some decades before at Stanley Ghyll in the Lake District by

Anthony Pigott (Pigott, 2021). It was also found on Arran by Tony Church, but as yet is unknown elsewhere in Britain. This striking and robust plant with some helpfully distinctive characters – the long tapering toothless pinnules and a dark-centred indusium – should be looked for elsewhere. Another of the *Dryopteris affinis* group that Roger has proved very adept at finding is *D. kerryensis*. Having made the first British record of this in Ennerdale, he has gone on to find additional sites there, and more recently near Rydal. While scouting for the forthcoming Scottish BPS meeting and hunting accessible sites for *Woodsia alpina*, he again came across *D. kerryensis*, new to Scotland, on cliffs at Lochan na Lairige. It would seem that this fern, until recently thought to be endemic to south-west Ireland, may be much more widespread, limited less by temperature than by rainfall.

References:

Pigott, A. 2021. *Dryopteris pseudodisjuncta* in England. *BSBI News* 148: 3-5.
 Rumsey, F.J., Metherell, C. & Metherell, H. 2021. *Diphasiastrum ×issleri* (Lycopodiaceae) in England and Wales. *British & Irish Botany* 3(1): 33-51.

SPORE EXCHANGE ORGANISERS – Brian & Sue Dockerill

These statistics give an overview of the main Spore Exchange for 2021.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
No. taxa in list	374	441	503	459	452	405	402	384	401
Orders received	99	115	98	96	135	155	164	146	171
Packets supplied	1,548	2,015	1,703	1,568	2,331	2,486	2,664	2,324	2,683
No. first choices supplied (%)	1,276 (82%)	1,795 (89%)	1,526 (90%)	1,400 (90%)	2,024 (86%)	2,077 (83%)	2,220 (85%)	1,927 (83%)	2,305 (86%)
No. donors	35	31	32	32	39	36	40	35	38

We are pleased to say that the Spore Exchange continues to be popular, with a record number of orders in 2021. Due to the requirement for phytosanitary certificates to import spores into the EU, we will not be sending spores to the EU in 2022 and await the effect of this on the numbers. Our European members have been strong supporters of the Exchange in the past, and we want to record here our gratitude for the huge positive impact they have had.

We again supplied spores to the Seed Exchange of The Hardy Plant Society.

We continued to supply short viability spores separately, and the statistics for this are shown below.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
No. taxa donated	9	11	11	13	13	5
No. donors	4	6	7	7	6	2
No. packets supplied	40	30	39	63	67	14

There were fewer donors and spores donated under this scheme than in previous years. It is, in any case, based on a small number of genera and so is naturally limited in scope.

As always, we are very grateful to the spore donors, without whom there would be no Exchange. If anyone is interested in becoming a donor, we are very happy to offer advice, or they can look on the website for help.

PLANT EXCHANGE ORGANISERS – Brian & Sue Dockerill

The following gives some statistics for the current web-based scheme.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
No. taxa available	32	22	62	44	48	29
No. donors	6	5	5	7	8	8
No. taxa wanted	19	25	41	49	67	53
No. requestors	5	8	13	15	18	16

The Plant Exchange continues to list a reasonable number of ferns, and many of these are requested – of the 29 available in 2021, 11 are not currently listed as they are used up. As in the previous year, we feel this aspect of the system is working well, albeit on a moderate scale.

For plant wants, the number requested has fallen, primarily because we have removed the outstanding requests (19) from lapsed members. Overall, this aspect of the system is working less well, possibly because the plants requested do not seem to be available within the membership. We would encourage all members to look at this list and see whether they are able to meet the needs of their fellow members.

Both aspects of the Exchange are advertised in the Autumn Mailing and other communications, and with all spores sent out from the Spore Exchange.

We also offer to send out a paper list on request, and again one person took advantage of this.

BOOKSALES ORGANISER – Frank Katzer

Last year, 2021, was not as quiet as the previous year for BPS Booksales, as despite not attending any face-to-face meetings myself, I still managed to sell books with the help of Yvonne Golding and Bridget Laue. I acquired book collections from Jennifer Ide (donation), some of Matt Busby's books (bequest), and purchased book collections from Sarah Whittingham, Frank McGavigan and Elaine Liquorish. I also obtained copies of the *Monograph of Moranopteris* from the American Fern Society, and Martin Rickard's *Ferns for a cool temperate climate*. Unfortunately, I was unable to get a good deal for the new book by Rémy Prelli and Michel Boudrie – *Les Fougères et plantes alliées d'Europe* and it was cheaper on Amazon. Booksales had an income of £546 but made an overall loss of £3,700.99 due to the purchase of book collections. I hope to make Sarah Whittingham's and Frank McGavigan's books available by auction during 2021, possibly at the Autumn Indoor Meeting, and I will provide more details about the process in the coming months. If you are interested in obtaining a list of these books, then please send an e-mail to me and I will circulate the book list and information about the process when available. As always, I would be grateful if you could let me know if you become aware of any new fern books before they are published, so that I can contact the publishers in order to get a better deal for our members.

BPS Booksales always welcomes donations and bequests of books or offers to purchase either individual books or whole book collections. Please keep in mind that the prices offered cannot be internet prices but if you sell books to dealers, they will not offer sales prices either. To contact me please use my work e-mail: Frank.Katzer@more.dun.ac.uk or alternatively the Booksales e-mail: Booksales@eBPS.org.uk. I can also be contacted by post: Frank Katzer, Highfield House, Muirburn, Skirling ML12 6HL, Scotland, or by phone 0044 (0)1899 860 307.

BACK NUMBERS OF JOURNALS ORGANISER and SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS SALES – Pat Acock

During the lockdown years we gained a good number of new members, which increases the potential for sales. Towards the end of 2021 there was renewed interest in our older journals as well as the early Special Publications. Do not be caught out by not catching up on the reasonable price of our back numbers; it is so much harder to track them down later as second-hand copies from dealers. Many of our longer-serving members use these resources to research historic and cultivar articles they are writing.

Our Special Publications once again sold well. The second edition of *Polypodium cultivars and species* was our best seller (39 copies), closely followed by *Fern albums and related materials* (19 copies) and *Polystichum cultivars* (18 copies). *Fern names and their meanings* and *Who found our ferns?* sold 11 and seven copies respectively, *Fern books and related items* sold six copies, *History of Pteridology* sold five, *The British Pteridological Society abstracts and reports* sold four, and *The Jones nature prints* sold two copies. Many of these were bought by people in other parts of the world, particularly Germany and the USA, but also Australia, Belgium, Ireland, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal and Sweden.

MERCHANDISE ORGANISERS – Bryan & Gill Smith

This is a very short report! Again, in 2021 we maintained a steady flow of orders through the early lockdown period, but once people started to get out and meet up again, the orders dwindled. We had 45 orders via the website plus a few via post; most were for the UK, with a couple from the USA and Germany.

We didn't attend any face-to-face meetings during the year, so there was no chance for people to see and be tempted by our Merchandise! However, we have had very positive feedback about the wide range of items that we stock from some of the new members who sent us orders! Sales of the 2021 calendar were very poor and we were left with about half our stock. Unsold merchandise is a drain on the Society's funds, and after discussion at the October Committee meeting, it was sadly decided to discontinue this line.

We are hoping to get along to some of the meetings planned for 2022, with Merchandise items for people to see. The AGM at Edge Hill University will be the first opportunity, so please remember to bring some money with you and look out for the Merchandise stall!

A big thank you to all those who have supported us. If you have ideas for any other items that you think would enhance our list, please contact us on Merchandise@eBPS.org.uk.

ARCHIVIST – Michael Hayward

A collection of ephemera and fern nursery catalogues were received from the late John Barnett; the collection includes all the preparatory work for his own fern catalogue from the late 1970s. Physical access to the archive was not possible until late autumn when I was able to take the new acquisitions and update the filing.

Requests for information received in 2021 were chiefly for details or photographs of early Society members, and information about specific fern cultivars or collections. These types of information are readily provided from the digital archive.

If you have any items that you would like to donate to our archive, please get in touch with me. Good photographs of individual Society members, past or present, would be particularly useful. Photographs of groups are less useful to future generations, unless all the individuals are named. I can scan and return items to you if you so wish. Images in the archive are stored in jpeg format, with the minimum of compression. Images of documents are scanned in multipage pdf format.

CULTIVAR REGISTRATION WORKING GROUP – Roger Golding

Matthew Reeve has been developing a web-based database that will facilitate collaborative work on this project (it also has potential wider applications for the BPS). The focus now is to edit the mass of information in the existing database before transferring it to the new one.

THE BRITISH PTERIDOLOGICAL SOCIETY

England & Wales - Charity number 1092399

Accounts

BPS ACCOUNTS FOR 2020

2019

2020

ORDINARY ACCOUNT

INCOME

Subscriptions (<i>see note 1</i>)	£19,841.62	£20,361.12
Booksales (<i>see note 6</i>)	£618.00	£131.30
Merchandise (<i>see note 6</i>)	£1,159.32	£1,788.59
Publications (<i>see note 5</i>)	£8,523.24	£3,924.16
Inland Revenue Gift Aid	£1,358.81	£1,258.25
Donations	£336.01	£443.00
Plant Sales & Spore Exchange	£393.40	£210.00
Prize Money	£200.00	-
Miscellaneous	-	£68.06
TOTAL INCOME	£32,430.40	£28,184.48

EXPENDITURE

Pteridologist	£5,319.70	£5,467.54
Fern Gazette	£4,183.87	£4,277.97
Bulletin	£5,613.95	£6,469.59
Administration & Postage	£780.79	£1,058.05
Subscriptions to Societies	£95.00	£145.00
Plant & Spore Exchanges	£209.61	£172.52
Merchandise (<i>see note 6</i>)	£927.91	£1,598.66
Publications	£8,442.00	£5,245.14
Trustees' Expenses (<i>see note 7</i>)	£366.27	£140.00
Booksales (<i>see note 6</i>)	£330.00	£382.07
Special Awards	£200.84	-
Autumn Mailing	£453.06	-
Promotion & Advertising (<i>see note 4</i>)	£2,054.00	£180.00
Insurance	£357.20	£355.20
Donations/returned overpaid fees	£618.40	-
Bank Charges (<i>see notes 2 & 3</i>)	£344.16	£490.60
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£30,296.76	£25,982.34

Balance (income minus expenditure)	£2,133.64	£2,202.14
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Brought Forward from previous year	£14,971.85	£33,806.52
Transfer from Publications Account	£16,701.03	-
Total in Ordinary Account	£33,806.52	£36,008.66

RESERVE FUND

Transfer from Ordinary Account	£20,133.32	-
Brought Forward from previous year	-	£20,265.20
Interest	£131.88	£61.87
Total in Reserve Fund	£20,265.20	£20,327.07

CENTENARY FUND (Restricted Account)

Interest	£40.18	£18.85
Interest brought forward from previous year	£550.63	£590.81
Total Interest	£590.81	£609.66
Capital brought forward from previous year	£5,583.73	£5,583.73
Total in Centenary Fund	£6,174.54	£6,193.39

GREENFIELD FUND (Restricted Account)

Interest	£19.18	£8.28
Interest brought forward from previous year	£2,141.55	£1,660.72
Travel Grant	-£500.00	-
Total Interest	£1,660.72	£1,669.00
Capital brought forward from previous year	£1,051.00	£1,051.00
Total in Greenfield Fund	£2,711.72	£2,720.00

GRAHAM ACKERS FUND

Brought forward from previous year	£14,742.05	£14,838.61
Interest	£96.57	£45.30
Total in Graham Ackers Fund	£14,838.61	£14,883.92

SUMMARY

Ordinary Account	£33,806.52	£36,008.66
Reserve Account	£20,265.20	£20,327.07
Centenary Fund	£6,174.54	£6,193.39
Greenfield Fund	£2,711.72	£2,720.00
Graham Ackers Fund	£14,838.61	£14,883.92
Total Funds	£77,796.60	£80,133.04

REPRESENTED BY

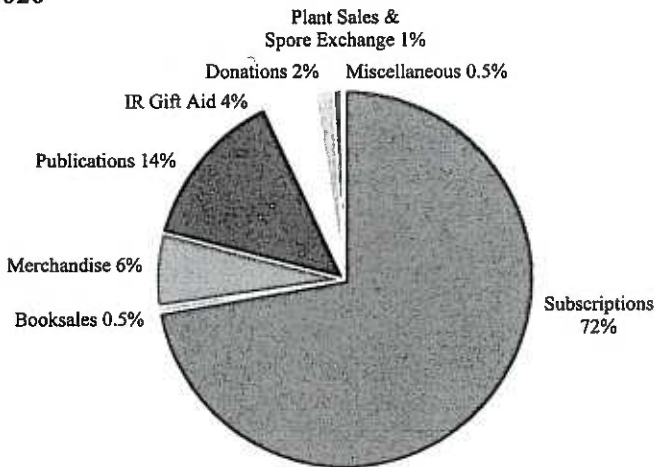
Charitable Organisations Investment Fund (COIF)	50,857.69	50,991.99
NatWest Bank & Others	26,938.91	£29,141.05
Total Funds	£77,796.60	£80,133.04

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

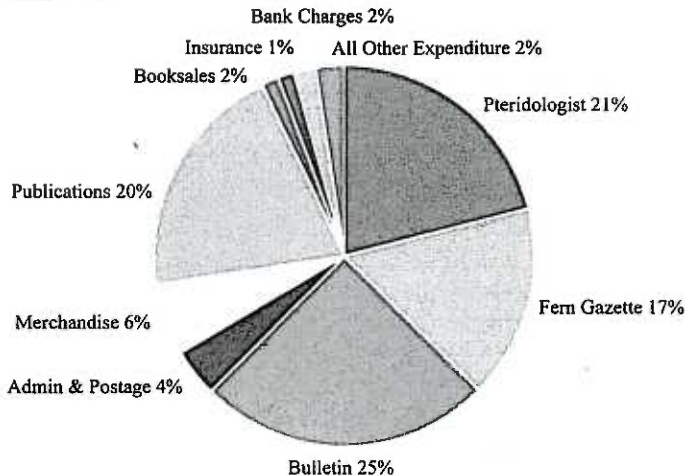
1. The accounts reflect the subscriptions received in the year.
2. Transaction charges are levied by NatWest and PayPal. All payments received via PayPal into the bank are net of the bank charges included here. Payments received via NatWest are received gross and the charges included here are levied separately.
3. The Society is now using internet banking as some service providers are no longer accepting cheques.
4. Promotion and advertising has been reduced in 2020 due to the Covid-19 restrictions. There were no shows or displays. However, close contact has been kept with the RHS with the intention of being involved in the 2021 Specialist Plant Society Show.
5. The income from Special Publications was particularly high in 2019 at £8,523, due to the publication of SP16 *Polypodium cultivars and species*. In 2020, total income was £3,924, with that from SP16 1st & 2nd editions being approximately £2,000, with plenty of stock remaining.
6. Merchandise stock is valued at £2,000 and Booksales at £5,500 with an additional £5,819 capital. These accounts are reviewed by the Treasurer.
7. The AGM and Committee meetings were held on Zoom, with consequent savings on travel expenses.

Peter Blake, Treasurer

INCOME 2020



EXPENDITURE 2020



BRITISH PTERIDOLOGICAL SOCIETY

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity for the year ended 31 December 2020.

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and, in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which give me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view, which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Independent Examiner: Barrie Buels FCCA FCIE, 3 March 2021

Crestmere Limited, Chartered Certified Accountants

REPORTS OF OFFICERS & COMMITTEE APPOINTEES FOR 2020

OFFICERS' REPORTS

GENERAL SECRETARY – David Hill

From a BPS perspective, January and February is an odd time of year for me. I can't wait for spring, planning trips and aiming to get out from behind my computer screen. At the same time, I have to look back and wrap up the previous year, reminding myself of what has happened and reviewing my list of outstanding actions before the first committee meeting of the year.

I rounded up the last General Secretary's report by noting our step into a new decade and the many changes ahead. Little did I realise quite how prophetic my comments were, and how quickly things would change.

In April the Executive held an emergency meeting to discuss Covid implications for the year ahead. The first major casualty to the calendar was cancellation of the AGM, which had been due to take place at the Natural History Museum. Subsequently the rest of the committee deftly moved online, and I must admit I was pleasantly surprised at how quickly all involved adapted to the change. The May and October Committee meetings, which had been due in Norwich and Chester respectively, were replaced with living room backdrops and mugs of tea. All were pleased to see each other but are still looking forward to face-to-face meetings. That said, my 4 a.m. start to catch a train to London was certainly not missed, and the combined carbon saving of the committee was a positive side effect.

As the year progressed, different infection rates and varying national lockdown restrictions both accentuated how far apart a lot of us felt, but also strengthened a combined sense of business as normal.

Initially the AGM had been postponed in the hope that it could be run in the summer but as the year progressed more and more things were cancelled. Statutory reporting requirements meant we couldn't put off the AGM any longer, and our first electronic AGM happened on Saturday 3rd October (reported separately). Matt Busby and Adrian Dyer were re-elected as Vice-Presidents, Sue Dockerill was formally elected as Committee Secretary, and Franziska Wittenstein as Publicity and Communications Officer to work alongside Sophie Walwin.

One event that really does lose its shine in an online meeting is the awarding of Honorary Memberships. Normally a heartfelt celebration of thanks, the awards this year to Alison Paul and Martin Rickard were no less deserved, but will need a proper in situ celebration as soon as the situation permits.

Society meetings, training events and shows were all casualties of the ongoing pandemic, but other aspects have flourished. Sophie and Ziska's cyanotypes project got off the ground, fern courses moved online, we have a YouTube channel, merchandise sales are up and the progress in online working has led to increasing international outreach.

2020 was certainly a year to remember, or forget, and I know some aspects have been particularly difficult and isolating for far too many. As a 'Brexit-ed' nation stumbles towards a 'new normal' there is at least consolation in knowing that the ferns will still be waiting for us when we return, and I suspect a renewed interest in the natural world will lead to a flourish of full field trips, and horticultural interest in ferns will increase. I know as a Society that many are itching to get back out into the field, myself included. Please help by contacting your local group organiser and offering to show people your local patch when you feel safe to do so.

Yet despite all this change I can still report some consistency. I still have the intention of getting out from behind my computer screen (it certainly didn't happen last year), and I am still trying to wrap up the previous year!

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY – Ann Robbins

During 2020, 104 people joined or re-joined the Society. Of these, 87 live in the UK, 13 in Europe and four in the Rest of the World; 81 are full members, nine are students, 12 optional members and two are new subscribers. There were three new family members.

During 2020, 101 people left the Society: 80 lapsed, 19 resigned and two died, Mr Melville Thomson in May and Mrs Fay Mandt in August.

As of 31 December 2020 we had 752 'Active' members plus 57 family members. This was made up as follows:

Full members	538
Optional members	124
Honorary members	10
Complimentary members	7
Students	25
Subscribers	48

MEETINGS SECRETARY – Bryan Smith

We began 2020 looking forward to another busy year of meetings. These were to include outdoor meetings in Cumbria (July), Seattle, USA (August), Scotland (September), South-East Fern Cultivars (September) and South Devon (September). For indoor meetings, the AGM was to have been at the NHM, London (April) with several illustrated talks on tropical and sub-tropical ferns, and the Autumn Meeting should have been in Staffordshire (November) with talks about Victorian ferneries. There should also have been four shows – the BBC Gardeners' World at the NEC Birmingham (June), the Plant Societies weekend at Wisley (June), a BPS fern display weekend at Wisley (July) and the Southport Flower Show (August).

In the event, the coronavirus pandemic put paid to all of these, and none of the meetings were held. However, we did manage to hold the business part of the AGM virtually in October, and a small socially distanced party did some reconnoitring in Devon in September. Some of the Regional Groups also managed some fieldwork, and these excursions are reported elsewhere in this *Bulletin*.

The Meetings subcommittee did not hold its usual annual get-together early in the year, but we did progress updating the BPS Safety Code and Code of Conduct, and the revised versions appeared in last year's *Bulletin*. Also, the revised Codes and the Generic Risk Assessment for Field Meetings were put on the website. The Meetings Declaration form was updated and copies of this, the two codes, the Generic Risk Assessment and a Risk Assessment form were circulated to Regional Group leaders for their meetings.

At the time of writing, there is still much uncertainty about when and if meetings will be held during 2021, but meetings planned for 2020 will be carried forward if possible, either to 2021 or to 2022. The Meetings Subcommittee will continue to hold its annual meeting and, as approved by the Committee, Regional Group leaders will be invited to attend. It is likely that these annual meetings will be held virtually.

PUBLICATIONS SECRETARY – Martin Rickard

Despite the difficult year making face-to-face meetings impossible most of the time, our publications have kept up the high standard of recent years with a flow of interesting features and general Society news, although the *Bulletin* is rather different from normal.

There were very few Society meetings for the *Bulletin* to report, but this shortfall has been largely filled by members reporting on their own ferny activities. We know that the membership will appreciate the effort of editor Alison Paul in encouraging contributions, and hopefully there will be more for the coming season if, as expected, the same problem

with face-to-face meetings continues. Short notes of a type not normally published in the *Pteridologist* could be considered, e.g. observations on unusual sites, newly noticed arrivals or losses on private walks, perhaps even for a particular road near your home, or fern interest in a local wood, mountain, bog or hedgerow. Please send potential items to Alison.

The *Pteridologist* still brings a huge number of items to members; please keep supplying copy to Chris Evans. We have already passed the deadline for this 2021 *Pteridologist*, but it is good for Chris and Alec Greening to have material in reserve, and depending on the situation at any given time late submissions might be squeezed in.

Our *Fern Gazette*, now 112 years old, continues to publish more scientific material allowing the Society to keep its relevance in worldwide pteridophyte research. Mary Gibby and her team are to be congratulated on a difficult job well done. As numbers of specialist pteridologists fall in Europe and North America, more and more research is being done in East Asia. Good quality papers become scarcer, especially in English, yet still they come, largely due to Mary's editorial team from across several continents.

Special Publications continue to be popular within, and beyond the Society – spreading the word! The monograph on *Polypodium* cultivars and species worldwide was launched in autumn 2019. Gratifyingly selling out by spring 2020, the opportunity was taken to reissue it as a slightly modified second edition, which appeared in autumn 2020. Unfortunately, it could not be launched at a Society meeting but sales have again been very good. For the future we hope that a monograph of *Athyrium* cultivars by Ian Unsworth will appear in the next few years, followed by an in-depth survey of variation in *Asplenium scolopendrium* by Tim Brock. That will give us modernish coverage of four of the main species groups of cultivars (with *Polystichum* and *Polypodium* done already). Just *Dryopteris* and 'odds and ends' left. By the time they appear it will be time to start again at the beginning!

Fred Rumsey's new British fern flora looks very exciting. Fred has prepared a few sample pages for the Committee to see. If the rest of book keeps to that high standard it will be a remarkable tome which could be a standard for many years. I cannot wait!

I hope that everyone is continuing to look at Mark Border's amazingly up-to-date Cultivar Group Newsletter on the BPS website. He frequently reports on cultivars new to me and to horticulture generally. He has developed a network of international fern enthusiasts who often make their new discoveries known to him. Don't miss it!

FERN GAZETTE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF – Mary Gibby

Despite the lockdown in spring, we were lucky with the support from our printers and were still able to distribute Volume 21 Part 3 in May, followed by Part 4 in November. We had no review articles this year, but published research articles on a wide range of topics, including fern records and distributions in Iran, India and Mexico, a new hybrid cultivar, taxonomy of *Asplenium* in the Philippines and a new hybrid *Asplenium* from the Azores. I am very grateful to Andrew Leonard, the Production Editor, who continues to provide a key role; his introduction of colour images in the *Gazette* has greatly enhanced the presentation of the articles. Adrian Dyer, Bridget Laue, Klaus Mehlreter and many reviewers have helped maintain the quality of the *Gazette*, and I thank them all.

PTERIDOLOGIST EDITOR – Alec Greening

The 2020 *Pteridologist* was published on July 12th and ran to 84 pages plus covers. The pandemic limited travel to ferny places but there were plenty of interesting articles to keep members happy. The layout has changed slightly but the biggest change was that I decided not to print contact details or show images of the authors because of the data protection act. Members who want to contact authors were invited to do so through me. There were a few complaints about this decision, for various reasons, and some contact details will appear in the next issue. Jenny Hakney, a professional proofreader, was invaluable in spotting mistakes. She is an asset to the team along with my co-editor Chris Evans.

The 2021 issue already looks very promising. If you have an article that you would like published please contact Chris Evans as soon as possible at receiving@eBPS.org.uk and we will do our best to include it in this edition.

BULLETIN EDITOR – Alison Paul

Due to be printed just as the UK went into its first lockdown of the pandemic, the 2019 *Bulletin* was delayed for a few weeks while the Printers worked out their new Covid-safe modus operandi. Due to postponement of the AGM, however, this timing was not critical.

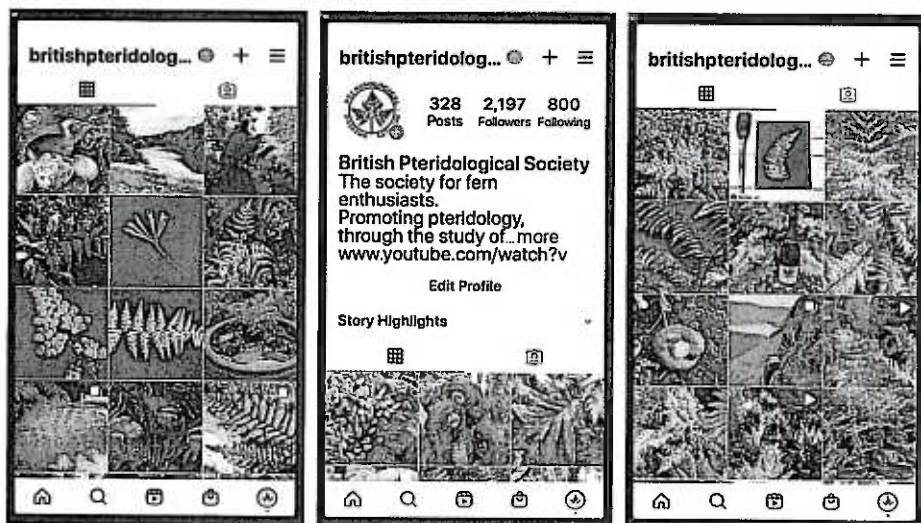
With almost all Society meetings being cancelled in 2020, this *Bulletin* is inevitably somewhat slimmer than in most recent years (80 pages). However, in spite of having virtually no official meetings to report, Regional Groups came up with many items of interest; many thanks to all contributors, and in particular to Pät Acock and Paul Ripley for their history of the South-East Group. Martin Rickard deserves special thanks for producing, at rather short notice, an overview of BPS meetings covering 150 years! I hope you find it as fascinating as I did. Our Archivist, Michael Hayward, also came up trumps with some great early photos to accompany it. A new feature is the Fern Monitoring Group report.

Huge thanks are due to Peter Elcock for again expertly compiling a really useful *Bulletin* Index, this time to Volume 8.

WEBSITE CO-ORDINATOR – Bridget Laue

In 2020 more than ever we found our website to be essential since everyone was using the internet for so many reasons. ‘Real’ meetings were, and still are, limited, but interesting virtual meetings, lectures and programmes relating to ferns can be found via our website, listed on the left-hand side of the home page. The BPS website saw significant increase in activity, with over 40,000 users – mostly from the UK and USA – of whom 10% were new users. There was also a healthy increase in sales of merchandise and Special Publications using PayPal on the website, as well as membership applications. As always, a huge thank you to Andrew Leonard for his valuable management of the website, both in his technical skills and also his content contribution.

The website is also linked to our Social Media groups. They can be accessed from the BPS website using the icons on the left-hand side of the home-page screen. All these accounts invite viewers back to the BPS website for more information.



photos: Chris Nicholson

Examples of Instagram posts

Fern World on Facebook, managed by Alison Evans, now has 2,174 'followers'. As far as possible, fern pictures are posted every Friday for 'Fern Friday', and interesting posts from other fern societies are shared. There are also some specialist fern groups on Facebook run by BPS members – the *Polypodium* cultivar group, the *Dryopteris* species, hybrids, and cultivars group, the *Polystichum* group, and the *Athyrium filix-femina* cultivars group. A good place to discover new things and keep up to date with what is happening in the cultivar world.

We also have a dedicated YouTube channel – search British Pteridological Society on YouTube for a range of informative videos.

Our Instagram account, managed by Chris Nicholson, has 2,197 followers.

As always, we welcome comments, participation and contributions. We would also welcome anyone who is interested in getting involved in the Webteam.

CONSERVATION OFFICER – Fred Rumsey

With little else to report in this strangest of years, I would draw members' attention to potential forthcoming changes in conservation legislation. Every five years, the country nature conservation bodies (Natural England, Natural Resources Wales and NatureScot), working jointly through the UK Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), review Schedules 5 and 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981. The review will provide recommendations to the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and to Ministers for the Environment in the Scottish Government and Welsh Government for changes to these schedules. This is known as the Quinquennial Review (QQR). A seventh QQR is now underway, giving us a chance to propose changes to the species accorded special legal protection. This time, however, clearer guidance has been given as to the qualifying eligibility criteria. These have been revised and have seen the integration of the IUCN Red-Listing categorisation into the process, such that only the species considered as at imminent threat of extinction, i.e. Critically Endangered or Endangered, can now be scheduled. Of the six fern species currently protected, only one, *Woodsia ilvensis*, would meet the new criteria. The guidance circulated suggests that Vulnerable species listed on the existing schedules will be evaluated by the QQR Inter-agency group to check their conservation dependence on the protection afforded by the schedules. This would account for a further two species: *Ophioglossum lusitanicum* and *Equisetum ramosissimum*, although it is still unclear whether if their survival were deemed conservation dependant they would still be accorded legal protection. *Vandenboschia speciosa*, which has since the discovery of its gametophyte been listed as Least Concern and has probably retained its protected status largely by virtue of European legislation, may come to rue Brexit!

It is important to emphasise that endangerment, on its own, is not seen as sufficient justification for recommending a species for scheduling. Many species will be endangered principally due to changes in land-use or land management leading to increased habitat fragmentation, deterioration or outright habitat loss. Such causes of endangerment do not, for the purposes of the QQR 7, constitute 'direct human ('reckless' in Scotland) pressures' as covered by Sections 9 and 13 of the WCA. To be recommended for scheduling, the endangerment of a species must, at least in part, be due to one or more of the direct human pressures listed in the Decision Criteria. For plants these very much focus on picking and trade.

Many had been dissatisfied by the past inconsistent approach to scheduling. The law was being employed to effectively protect sites, in lieu of any other meaningful legislation to accomplish this. This is clearly in the minds of those who have drafted the new guidance. Returning it to its original intention, protecting those threatened species particularly attractive

to collectors, I can accept, but only if we also have stronger legislation protecting habitats that is properly enforced! I will very much be fighting the corner of our plants during the consultation process, through my involvement in Red-List and agency Taxon Groups.

At a time of economic difficulty, possible post-Brexit de-regulation removing protective legislation and facing a global climate emergency, the future prospect for our countryside looks bleak indeed. I feel we must be vigilant and hold those to task who are responsible for our environmental health.

EDUCATION OFFICER – Gill Smith

We had our annual meeting in February 2020, never thinking that all the plans we were putting together would be ‘scuppered’ by Covid! Consequently, I do not have much to report for the last year. BBC Gardeners’ World was cancelled, all the RHS events were cancelled, and even our face-to-face meetings were cancelled.

Just one small light in the darkness though – in September I was contacted by the Field Studies Council asking me to take part in a Zoom meeting about new online courses that they were hoping to set up in the immediate future. They wanted to discuss how the BPS might collaborate with the FSC in 2021 by advising on course content or recruiting members as tutors. The Education Subcommittee and also the main BPS Committee were in favour of helping with this, so we are slowly progressing this project.

Apart from that, I have had many contacts via the Website from the general public seeking information, which I have followed up and encouraged other members to help with. Some of these conversations have been prolonged and enthusiastic, so hopefully may have resulted in new members.

At the time of writing this report, we are still unsure whether or not we will be able to do any events in 2021.

PUBLICITY & COMMUNICATIONS OFFICERS – Sophie Walwin & Franziska Wittenstein

We produced three newsletters in 2020 (spring, summer and autumn) and we hope you enjoyed them and found them uplifting in these challenging times. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the content and to Membership Secretary Ann Robbins for sending it out to our members so professionally.

Our social media pages continue to successfully engage with members and the wider web community. Our Twitter feed steadily gains followers and we try to post a new fern-related story or plant feature each week, but the pace has been difficult to maintain without new material being shared with us. Retweets (and ‘regrams’ on Instagram) are essential to ensure fresh topics and images appear on our feeds.

Franziska and I launched a cyanotype artwork project, ‘Ferns out of the blue’, in the summer, which received a lukewarm response after an initial flurry of shared images. Franziska produced an amazing video to demonstrate the process, which features on our YouTube channel. This project could be re-launched in the future – and perhaps the process could feature at shows as the effects are quick to produce and could be a new way to engage with the public – especially children.

COMMITTEE APPOINTEES’ REPORTS

RECORDER – Fred Rumsey

Unsurprisingly in a year of lockdowns and almost entirely curtailed group recording activities there is rather less for me to report. Many of us have made the most of our allowed recreation and as a consequence have become much more aware and appreciative of our local areas. For me this led to the discovery of *Dryopteris cycadina* established in

woodland close to habitation by Fleet Pond and new to Hants. Its discovery has recently been reported to me from a range of English vice-counties and it is probably our fastest increasing alien. The commonest alien is still, however, *Cyrtomium fortunei sensu lato*, now cropping up across the country but annoyingly variable and difficult to distinguish from related species when young, as many of the plants are. I hope to come up with better guidance on the genus shortly.

Work continues too on our lycopods. The Northumbrian plants that had been thought to be *Diphasiastrum xissleri* have now been re-assessed as atypical *D. alpinum* in a paper shortly to appear in *British and Irish Botany*. This effectively renders the taxon Regionally Extinct in England, the only definite finds being those from Gloucestershire in the 1880s. Its conservation status at the GB level remains unchanged as more Scottish populations have come to light. Also in Scotland, the careful researches of Roger Golding have, with the cytometric aid of Libor Ekr, shown that we have diploid examples of *Huperzia*, as well as the common hexaploid that we can equate to *H. selago*. There has long been confusion over the identity and appropriate nomenclature of the somewhat distinctive boreal form(s) found in the Highlands and Islands. While these plants have in recent years been treated as *H. selago* subsp. *arctica*, it seems likely that they may better be placed in *H. appressa*, although some small plants from serpentine debris on Unst may indeed be what we should call *H. arctica*. Much more work is needed. The possibility that some Scottish montane examples of *Lycopodium annotinum*, or *Spinulum annotinum* if you prefer (for me the jury is still out!), would better be placed under the boreal subsp. *alpestre* – treated by North American authors as *Spinulum canadense* – is also currently being investigated. As with *Lycopodium clavatum* and *L. lagopus* (which I am increasingly regretting not retaining as a subspecies of *L. clavatum*) the distinctions never seem as clear as the books would have you believe!

The value of digital devices as recording tools, and social media as identification forums has become increasingly obvious in these difficult times. I am grateful to those of you using the latter for alerting me to various interesting finds over recent months. I fear we must wait until 2021 to find out if we have another site for *Polystichum xlesliei*, as is suspected (possibly the only extant one?). One exciting *Asplenium* find (in 2021) must wait until



photo: Fred Rumsey

Asplenium billotii – Westminster, 16th December 2020

next year's report, but I can tell of the exciting discovery by Roy Vickery of a thriving population of *Asplenium billotii* (*A. obovatum* subsp. *billotii*), on granite blockwork a stone's throw from Parliament Square, Westminster. The only other London site has regrettably long since been destroyed by the development of the King's Cross area.

As always, my thanks to those of you who have sent me records and apologies to those of you whose exciting finds have not been reported here.

SPORE EXCHANGE ORGANISERS – Brian & Sue Dockerill

These statistics give an overview of the main Spore Exchange for 2020.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
No. taxa in list	374	441	503	459	452	405	402	384
No. orders received	99	115	98	96	135	155	164	146
No. packets supplied	1,548	2,015	1,703	1,568	2,331	2,486	2,664	2,324
No. first choices supplied (%)	1,276 (82%)	1,795 (89%)	1,526 (90%)	1,400 (90%)	2,024 (86%)	2,077 (83%)	2,220 (85%)	1,927 (83%)
No. donors	35	31	32	32	39	36	40	35

We are pleased to say that the Spore Exchange remains well supported by members. The use of the web-based ordering system is also popular, with over 90% of orders coming by that route. Because of the speedier arrival of orders, from the 2021 Exchange we will start picking orders a week after the list opens, rather than two weeks, which was originally to allow time for postage from overseas. Almost half the orders have already been received by the earlier date and this also spreads out our workload.

Many of our taxa are in short supply and this can mean some people get a very small proportion of their order. From 2021 we will be noting those that are in short supply so people are aware that this may happen.

We again supplied spores to the Seed Exchange of The Hardy Plant Society.

We continued to supply short viability spores separately, and the statistics for this are shown below.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
No. taxa donated	9	11	11	13	13
No. donors	4	6	7	7	6
No. packets supplied	40	30	39	63	67

As always, we are very grateful to the spore donors, without whom there would be no Exchange. If anyone is interested in becoming a donor, we are very happy to offer advice, or they can look on the website for help.

PLANT EXCHANGE ORGANISERS – Brian & Sue Dockerill

The following gives some statistics for the current web-based scheme.

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
No. taxa available	32	22	62	44	48
No. donors	6	5	5	7	8
No. taxa wanted	19	25	41	49	67
No. requestors	5	8	13	15	18

The Plant Exchange continues to list a reasonable number of ferns, and many of these are requested – of the 48 available this year, 22 are not currently listed as they are used up. As last year, we feel this aspect of the system is working well, albeit on a moderate scale.

For plant wants, the number requested continues to rise, but with little evidence that plants are obtained this way. Overall, this aspect of the system is working less well, possibly because the plants requested do not seem to be available within the membership. We would encourage all members to look at this list and see whether they are able to meet the needs of their fellow members.

Both aspects of the Exchange are advertised in the Autumn Mailing and other communications, and with all spores sent out from the Spore Exchange.

We also offer to send out a paper list on request, and again one person took advantage of this.

There have been several recent changes to plant import and movement regulations and we will be considering how the Plant Exchange may be affected by these. We will ensure the website reflects the situation at the time.

BOOKSALES ORGANISER – Frank Katzer

The year 2020 was the quietest year for BPS Booksales since I took over in 2006. I acquired some copies of *Britain's ferns* by James Merryweather for Booksales, which are being sold for £15.00, but sales have been very slow because there have been no face-to-face meetings. Booksales had an income of £131.30 but made an overall loss of £250.77 due to the purchase of new books. As usual I will keep looking to acquire more books during the coming year and I would be grateful if you could let me know if you become aware of any new fern books before they are published so that I can contact the publishers in order to get a better deal for our members.

BPS Booksales will welcome donations and bequests of books or offers to purchase either individual books or whole book collections. Please keep in mind that the prices offered cannot be internet prices but if you sell books to dealers, they will not offer sales prices either. To contact me please use my work e-mail: Frank.Katzer@moredun.ac.uk or alternatively the Booksales e-mail: Booksales@eBPS.org.uk. I can also be contacted by post: Frank Katzer, Highfield House, Muirburn, Skirling, ML12 6HL, Scotland or by phone 0044 (0)1899 860 307.

BACK NUMBERS OF JOURNALS ORGANISER and SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS SALES – Pat Atcock

I understand that during lockdown year we recruited a large number of new members. When I joined (over fifty years ago), I started to buy back numbers of our journals. In fact, that is how I ended up running the back numbers and, later, selling our Special Publications.

I recently spent a day trawling through all eight volumes of the *Bulletin* to research a piece for this issue. Do not be caught out by not catching up on the reasonable price of our back numbers; it is so much harder to track them down as second-hand copies later from dealers. Despite my appeal last year, we sold only a few *Bulletin* parts, one *Fern Gazette* and, as far as I can tell, no copies of the *Pteridologist*.

In contrast, our Special Publications broke new records, selling 13 copies of *Fern albums and related materials*, ten copies of the second edition of *Polystichum cultivars* and a few copies of most of our other volumes. But by far the best seller was *Polypodium cultivars and species*, with the last 33 of the first edition selling out and after many problems with the printing of the second edition we have now sold 51 copies of that all over the world, including to the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, USA, Thailand and Australia.

MERCHANDISE ORGANISERS – Bryan & Gill Smith

The year 2020 started off pretty quietly as usual, then Covid hit and we all went into lockdown in March. After the novelty of staying at home all day began to wear off, it seems that people turned to their computers for some entertainment – that's when the sales of merchandise suddenly took off!

Thereafter we had a fairly steady stream of orders – in a normal year we usually have about 25 orders via the website, in 2020 we had clocked up 75 by the end of December! We had orders from the USA, Netherlands, Belgium, Channel Isles, Australia, Germany and Ireland, as well as from many UK members. Thank you everyone for your orders and for giving us something to keep us occupied in these strange times! So that we didn't have to go to the Post Office regularly, we set up a Royal Mail account so we could pay postage online and produce our own labels for parcels. At the time of writing this report we have already had nine merchandise orders for January 2021, so it looks as if we will be kept busy for a while!

Fortunately, a lot of our merchandise suppliers were still working throughout the year so we were able to replenish stock when needed. Plus we added several more items to the already long list. We know many people still use matches, so there are three different types of match holders/boxes with fern motifs. We obtained more sets of small cards from a previous supplier, and added some larger cards of our own design introducing images of ferns created by one of our talented members using the cyanotype method. Another of our inspired members has made sets of fern nightlights that display coloured acrylic laser-engraved images of ferns – he is also using his laser to personalise garden trowels for us, which have been very popular so far! We also changed the style of our fern calendar for 2021 but sales have been very poor; it takes a lot of time and effort to put it together, so something for consideration – do we need to produce a calendar?

As there were no meetings or shows in 2020, we missed out on face-to-face sales, but as the Covid vaccines are being rolled out quickly, we are hoping that we will be able to see other members 'in the flesh' again before the end of 2021. We have had some really nice positive feedback about our range of Merchandise, but if you have ideas for any other items that you think would enhance our list, please contact us on merchandise@eBPS.org.uk.

HORTICULTURAL INFORMATION ADVISER – Matt Busby

I received no enquiries during 2020. Most enquiries of this type are now received and dealt with via the Society's website. Sadly I feel I must step down from this role.

ARCHIVIST – Michael Hayward

The archive is still open for business, despite lockdown restrictions. The great majority of requests can now be answered from the digital collection of data and images, created over the last few years. Requests that need an article to be physically retrieved will unfortunately have to wait until the museum staff are able to be back in their offices.

Conservation work was carried out during the year on the eight volumes of press clippings put together by Charles Druery. This is one of the most important collections in the archive. Each page of each album was cleaned and then the pages interleaved to reduce further deterioration. A few of the articles clipped from newspapers are quite acidic and have browned significantly, but the gardening and horticultural press fortunately used a better quality of paper, so their ephemera have survived remarkably well.

I am looking forwards to working once again with the staff of the Botany Department at the World Museum Liverpool, as soon as the current situation allows.

CULTIVAR REGISTRATION WORKING GROUP – Roger Golding

I am hoping to provide a first rough draft of a Register of *Polypodium* cultivars by the autumn for discussion; progress has been delayed again, this time by the publication of Martin Rickard's *Polypodium* book, which has introduced a number of new cultivars and new names for old cultivars! Once again, if anyone is interesting in helping with this project, please get in touch.