

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

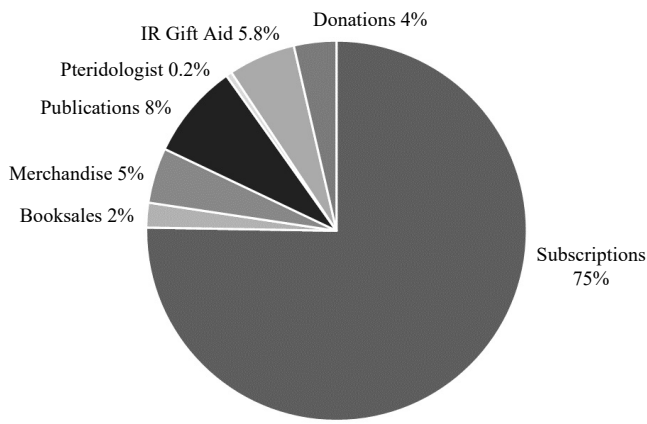
REPRESENTED BY		
Charitable Organisations Investment Fund (COIF)	50,991.99	£50,999.34
NatWest Bank & Others	£29,141.05	£29,334.38
Total Funds	£80,133.04	£80,333.72

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

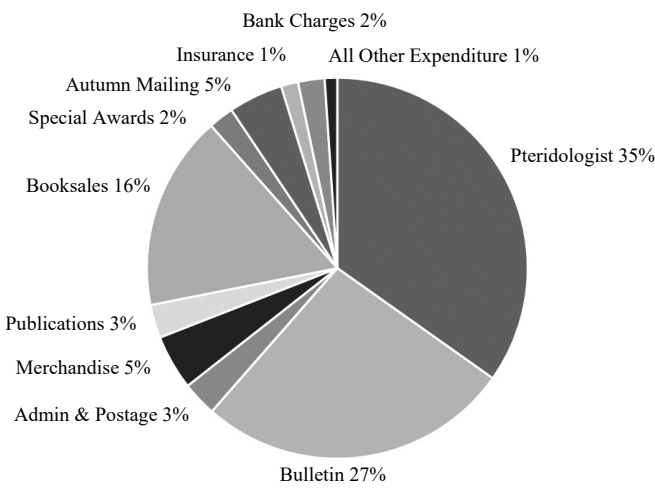
1. The accounts reflect the subscriptions received in the year.
2. Transaction charges are levied by NatWest and PayPal. All payments received via PayPal into the bank are net of the bank charges included here. Payments received via NatWest are received gross and the charges included here are levied separately.
3. The Society is now using internet banking as some service providers are no longer accepting cheques.
4. Promotion and advertising were reduced in 2021 due to the Covid-19 restrictions. There was a reduced number of shows and displays.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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 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@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 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.