

Presidential Address, 1992

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COLONISATION OF THE GLASGOW GARDEN FESTIVAL SITE THREE YEARS ON: IMPLICATIONS FOR RECORDING

I have been asked for how long I hesitated before accepting the honour of Presidency of this Society, bearing in mind the custom of there being a Presidential Address. My reply was, "not half a second – at the time, I had completely forgotten this responsibility". Once the revelation dawned, search for an appropriate subject became a recurring thought.

I felt that the occasion merited original work and, being an amateur field botanist, that had to be amateur field botany. By profession I have been a neuroradiologist, specialising in depth in a small branch of medicine. My inclination was therefore to do the same for this address and during last summer it gradually became apparent to me that an intensive study of the flora then colonising the site of the Glasgow Garden Festival was the most appropriate review that I could undertake. While doing so, I realised that this raised general issues of plant recording.

THE FESTIVAL SITE

To set the scene, the Festival was held in 1988 in abandoned dockland and quayside on the south side of the River Clyde (Fig. 1). The main area had been the very active Prince's Dock with a Canting Basin, the latter used by the ships to swing round to enable entry to an individual dock or return to the river. The extension of the site to the east took over the Mavisbank Quay.

When the dock complex became redundant it was taken over and the docks filled in with a view to housing, but temporarily let as the site of the Garden Festival. The area is just within v.c. 77 (Lanarkshire), for which I am Recorder.

The brochure stated that the Festival was part of a process of regeneration which was transforming the South Side of Glasgow. One million trees and flowering shrubs formed the backdrop to an ever-changing floral carpet of bedding displays and themed gardens. There were six theme sectors in the main section, arranged like the petals on a flower, interlinked by winding pathways and formal avenues. The effect was also likened to a Persian carpet.

There were gardens set up by commercial organisations, the National Trust for Scotland, botanic gardens and wildlife groups, and a series of ten International Friendship Gardens from as far apart as Finland, China, New Zealand and Mexico. The Canting Basin was used extensively for water-related activities and referred to in one of the maps as Princes Harbour.

Above all however, the Festival was about family fun with concerts, street theatre, exhibits, viewing tower, vintage trams and trains and play areas. The Director called it a festival in a garden rather than a garden festival (Fig. 2).

Immediately the Festival closed, work was begun in preparation for the further development of this 48 ha site. Some plants were sold, and others taken to form the basis of continuing feature gardens elsewhere. The bulldozers moved in again and although there were a few residual, almost intact borders and remnants, by 1990 practically all trace of the Festival had been removed and looking at the site in 1991 when the main area had largely returned to being waste ground, one could hardly imagine that it had ever been. In addition little hollows looked as though they had been like that for centuries with Compact, Hard, Soft and Jointed Rushes. (I was once told by a professional horticulturist that he wished I would stop pronouncing the scientific names of plants as though they were diseases!)

I did not record plants which were at the site of original planting or had simply spread in the neighbourhood. An example is that related to the waterfall which is still bordered by the planted material and the little pond at its base containing such species as Fringed Water-lily (*Nymphoides*

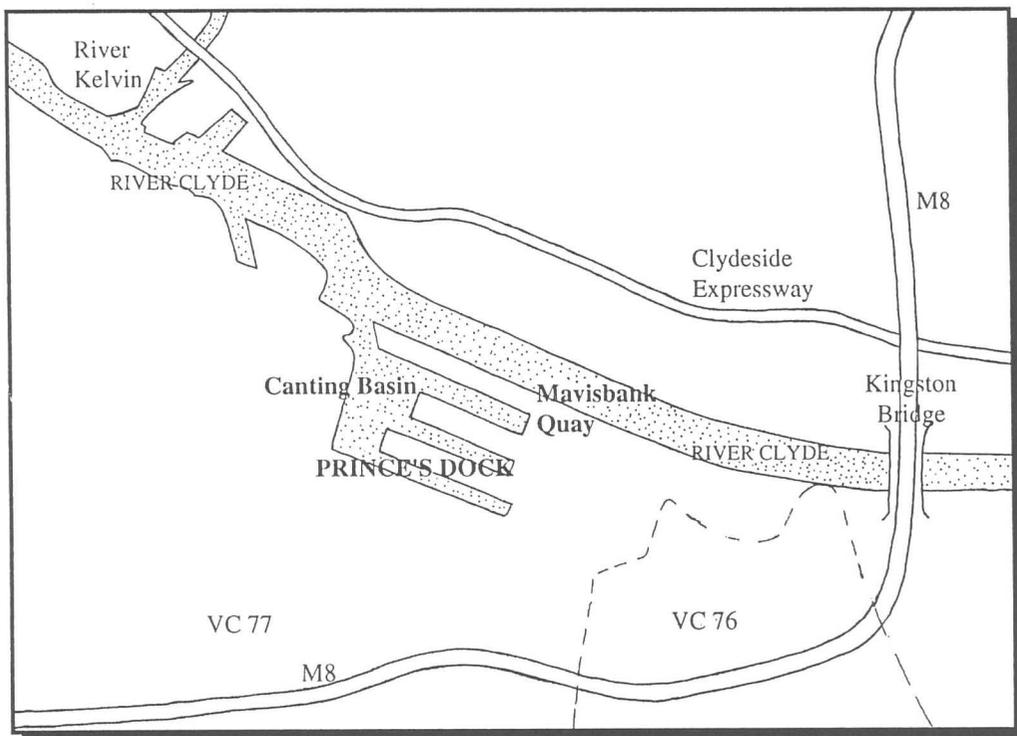


FIGURE 1. The site and environs of the Glasgow Garden Festival in its pre-festival state. V.c. 77, Lanarks.; v.c. 76, Renfrews.

peltata), Water-plantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*) and Bulrush (*Schoenoplectus lacustris*). From the waterfall a stream had been constructed which ran through a series of small ponds to the Canting Basin; again with residual plants such as Wild Angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*), Yellow Loosestrife (*Lysimachia vulgaris*) and Reedmace (*Typha latifolia*).

I was surprised to see the size of fish that local lads were catching in the ponds. They were very pleased to be photographed and asked if their photos would be in the papers. I said, "No, but I am writing an article about the site and might show the pictures in London". One asked, "Are you a famous author we should have heard about?"!!

There will be no point in any of you asking me afterwards what kind of fish these were. My family will tell you that I have a two-track mind, neuroradiology and field botany, and I do appreciate the great honour of being President of the two relevant national societies at the same time. The British Society of Neuroradiology, although a smaller organisation, presents their president with a medal and I take this opportunity of suggesting that you might so honour future Presidents with a badge of office that can be worn at the Annual and Exhibition Meetings and other Conferences.

THE PLANT RECORDING

As a result of intensive recording the total number of species came to 325, which I have divided into six groups (Fig. 3).

PLANTS ON THE SCOTTISH FIELD CARD

With regard to those plants which are on the Scottish Field Card (194 species), these in the main are those that might have been expected to have arrived by natural dispersal. However, some could

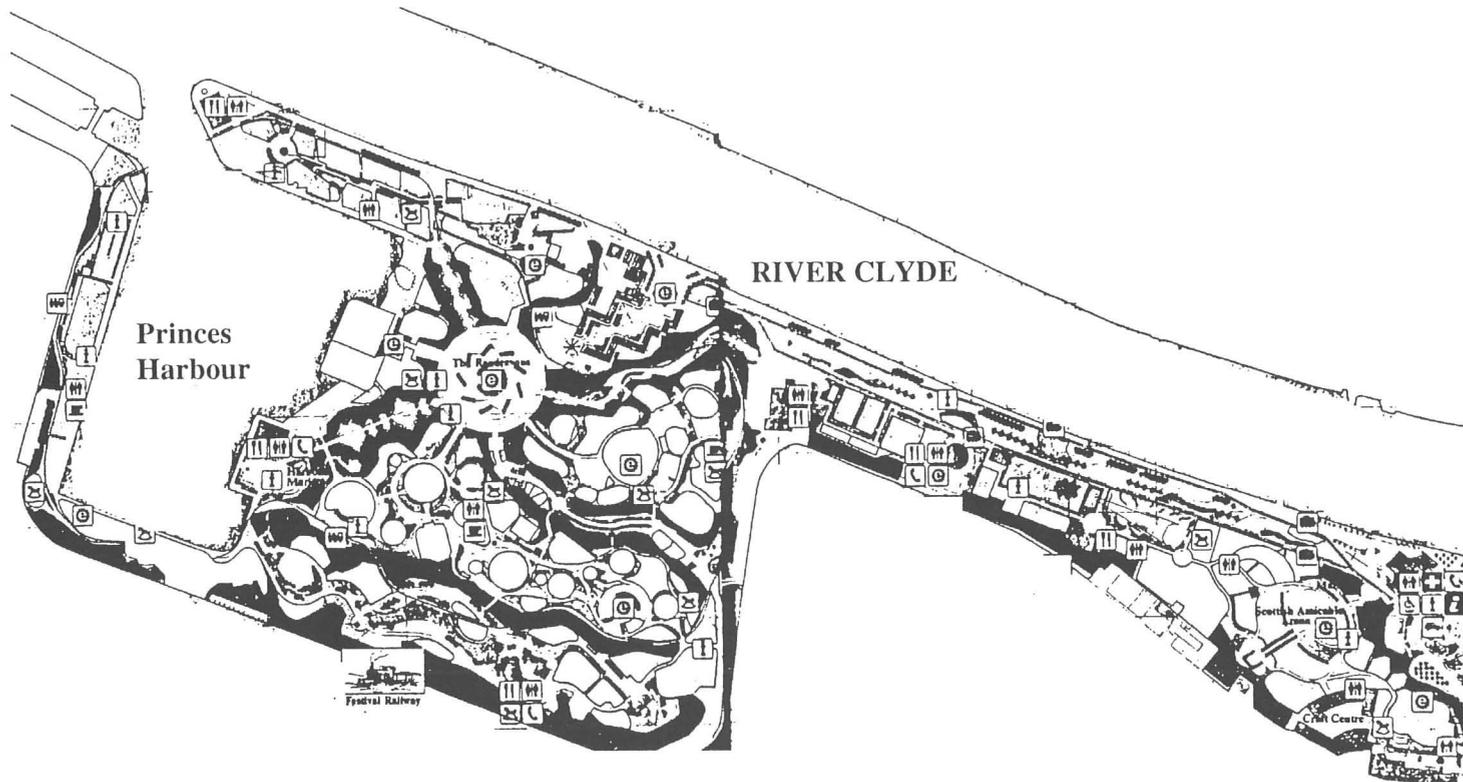


FIGURE 2. Schematic layout of the Glasgow Garden Festival.

1988 Garden Festival Site: plants recorded in 1991

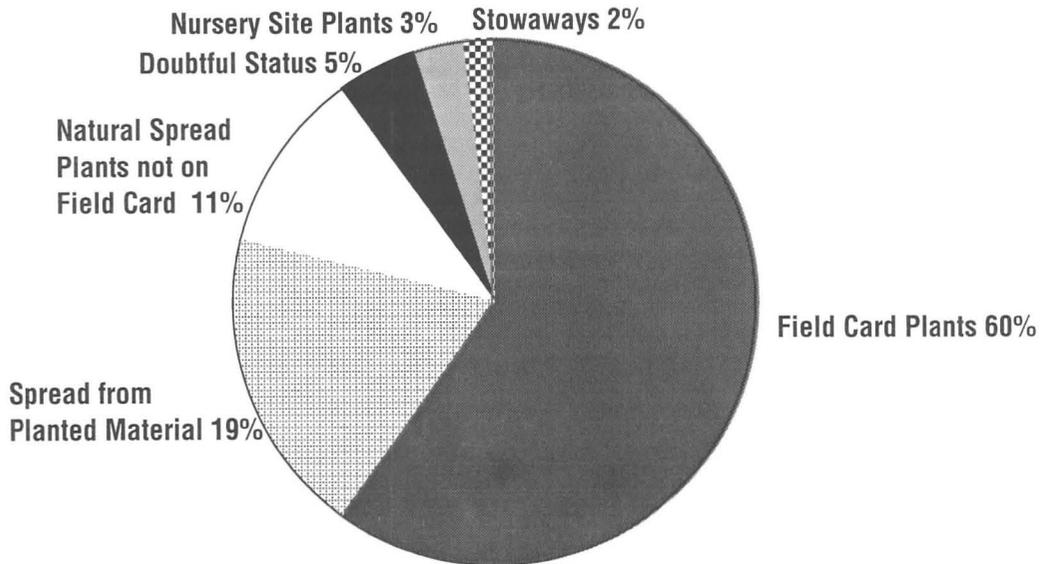


FIGURE 3. The results of plant recording in 1991 on the Glasgow Garden Festival site. 325 taxa were recorded in all.

perhaps more appropriately have been placed in one of the other categories. As examples of spread from planted or presumed planted material, I cite Hemp-agrimony (*Eupatorium cannabinum*) and Marjoram (*Origanum vulgare*), which, although common in other parts of the British Isles, are relatively unusual in the area. Perring & Walters (1962) give only one definite v.c. 77 record for each. When I tell you that on a bank were about ten plants of Greater Spearwort (*Ranunculus lingua*), you may well raise your eyebrows. Greater Spearwort had been planted in and by the pond at the base of the waterfall, i.e. diagonally about 100 m away, with a tree border between. How did it get to the bank? Water Dock (*Rumex hydrolapathum*) growing happily on the pebbly shore of the Canting Basin was almost certainly a feature of the planting along the stream, the seeds floating down. There is only one other site for this plant in the Glasgow area.

Although Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*) and Hare's-tail Cottongrass (*Eriophorum vaginatum*) are common in the neighbourhood, they obviously arrived at the site with peat.

PLANTS WHICH ARRIVED BY NATURAL SPREAD BUT ARE NOT ON THE FIELD CARD

By natural spread, at this stage, I simply mean plants not on the Scottish Field Card, which have colonised from the vicinity of the Festival Site or whose introduction has nothing directly to do with the Garden Festival.

Of the 36 plants in this category some have been wind-blown, like Butterfly-bush (*Buddleja davidii*) and five species of Hawkweed (*Hieracium*). I was told by a referee not to bother coming down to the riverside at Kew, but to look for *Rumex obtusifolius* var. *transiens* in Glasgow – and at the site I made my first record.

Other plants have been bird-sown, such as five species of *Cotoneaster*.

Dense Silky-bent (*Apera interrupta*) was actually present at another part of the site while the area was still dockland and may have persisted, while Fodder Vetch (*Vicia villosa*) has been present for

six years across the river and one square down. Large Trefoil (*Trifolium aureum*) keeps appearing and disappearing at various sites in Glasgow.

The rarest species were Canadian Fleabane (*Conyza canadensis*) and Least Pepperwort (*Lepidium virginicum*) growing on otherwise bare, gravelly ground and both new v.c. records.

DEFINITE OR PRESUMED SPREAD FROM PLANTED MATERIAL

The complete list of 62 species is given in Table 1.

In the main the spread had been wind-blown on to bare ground produced by bulldozing or with soil shifted by the bulldozers.

There was only a single plant of some taxa such as *Achillea millefolium* 'Cerise Queen', *Anchusa azurea* and *Artemisia stelleriana* growing on bare ground and *Saxifraga paniculata* on a stony path.

Between two and five plants were noted of most species such as *Artemisia ludoviciana* and *Armeria maritima* growing on bare ground. What was Thrift doing in the centre of Glasgow unless from planted material? So although *Armeria maritima* is on the Field Card I have not crossed it off, recording it only as a cultivar. Milk Thistles (*Silybum marianum*) were on a soil heap; *Eryngium planum* was on a bank; one plant of *Hemerocallis* was on a soil heap and another was at the sheltered edge of a bare open patch; Japanese Wineberry (*Rubus phoenicolasius*) was at the edge and extending down on to the shore of the Canting Basin.

There were over 50 plants of Pearly Everlasting (*Anaphalis margaritacea*) scattered widely and about 50 also of Yellow Chamomile (*Anthemis tinctoria*) but with a more local distribution. By far

TABLE 1. DEFINITE OR PRESUMED SPREAD FROM PLANTED MATERIAL
ON THE GLASGOW GARDEN FESTIVAL SITE
Taxa (62 in all) not on the field card.

<i>Achillea millefolium</i> 'Cerise Queen'	<i>Hyssopus officinalis</i>
<i>Achillea ptarmica</i>	<i>Lamiaeum galeobdolon</i> subsp.
<i>Alchemilla mollis</i>	<i>argentatum</i>
<i>Anaphalis margaritacea</i>	<i>Lamiaeum galeobdolon</i> subsp.
<i>Anaphalis margaritacea</i> var. <i>revoluta</i>	<i>galeobdolon</i>
<i>Anchusa azurea</i>	<i>Leucanthemum</i> × <i>superbum</i>
<i>Anthemis tinctoria</i>	<i>Lychnis coronaria</i>
<i>Armeria maritima</i> cv.	<i>Lythrum salicaria</i> cv.
<i>Artemisia absinthium</i>	<i>Melissa officinalis</i>
<i>Artemisia ludoviciana</i>	<i>Mentha</i> × <i>villosa</i>
<i>Artemisia stelleriana</i>	<i>Narcissus pseudonarcissus</i> cv.
<i>Astilbe</i> cf. <i>japonica</i>	<i>Narcissus tazetta</i>
<i>Berberis</i> sp.	<i>Nepeta</i> × <i>faassenii</i>
<i>Borago officinalis</i>	<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i> var. <i>picta</i>
<i>Campanula medium</i>	<i>Polygonum bistorta</i> 'Superbum'
<i>Campanula persicifolia</i>	<i>Potentilla fruticosa</i> hybrid
<i>Carex pendula</i>	<i>Pulmonaria officinalis</i>
<i>Cornus sericea</i>	<i>Ribes sanguineum</i>
<i>Cotoneaster salicifolius</i>	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>
<i>Cotoneaster</i> × <i>suecicus</i>	<i>Rubus phoenicolasius</i>
<i>Dianthus barbatus</i> cv.	<i>Saxifraga paniculata</i>
<i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i>	<i>Senecio cineraria</i>
<i>Eryngium planum</i>	<i>Silybum marianum</i>
<i>Festuca brevipila</i>	<i>Spiraea douglasii</i> × <i>S. salicifolia</i>
<i>Geranium endressii</i> × <i>G. versicolor</i>	<i>Spiraea</i> sp.
<i>Geranium macrorrhizum</i>	<i>Symphoricarpos</i> cf. × <i>chenaultii</i>
<i>Geranium sanguineum</i>	<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>
<i>Geranium</i> × <i>magnificum</i>	<i>Tellima grandiflora</i>
<i>Geum</i> cv.	<i>Tolmiea menziesii</i>
<i>Hemerocallis</i> sp.	<i>Verbena rigida</i>
<i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i>	<i>Vinca major</i>
<i>Hosta</i> sp.	<i>Viola lutea</i> cv.

TABLE 2. TAXA OF DOUBTFUL STATUS ON THE GLASGOW GARDEN FESTIVAL SITE

<i>Angelica archangelica</i>	<i>Oenothera biennis</i> × <i>O. glazioviana</i>
<i>Aster</i> sp.	<i>Phalaris canariensis</i>
<i>Cotoneaster conspicuus</i>	<i>Rosa rugosa</i>
<i>Ligustrum ovalifolium</i>	<i>Rubus cockburnianus</i>
<i>Linum usitatissimum</i>	<i>Salix alba</i> × <i>S. fragilis</i>
<i>Lysimachia punctata</i>	<i>Salix discolor</i>
<i>Mimulus cupreus</i> × <i>M. luteus</i> × <i>M. variegatus</i>	<i>Solidago gigantea</i>
<i>Myosoton aquaticum</i>	

the most common plant in this category was Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria* cv.) which had been a feature of water-side planting but had spread to most parts of the site regardless of soil or moisture.

DOUBTFUL STATUS

Some of those on this list (Table 2) might have been from planted material but their introduction could equally well have been from other categories. 15 species were of doubtful status.

Japanese Rose (*Rosa rugosa*), White-stemmed Bramble (*Rubus cockburnianus*) and Early Goldenrod (*Solidago gigantea*) have been growing for many years in the neighbourhood. With regard to two plants of Garden Angelica (*Angelica archangelica*) growing well in from the river one can speculate fancifully. The plants grow on top of all the wooden piles near the mouth of the nearby River Kelvin (Macpherson 1984). The docks at the Festival Site were partly filled in with dredgings from the river. However as the seeds are more likely to float than sink to the bottom, then perhaps two were picked up as a bucket broke the surface!

Water Chickweed (*Myosoton aquaticum*) surprised me; one plant in a stony hollow at the edge above the Canting Basin, but then it can be an import and flourish on dry ground, as in London (Burton 1983). The *Mimulus cupreus* × *M. luteus* × *M. variegatus* was less than 2 cm high – the name being much longer than the plant! Flax (*Linum usitatissimum*) and Canary-grass (*Phalaris canariensis*) possibly came from bird seed.

'STOWAWAYS'

Plants whose introduction I presume to have been in soil round plants brought for display. I have excluded plants which are on the Field Card, such as those brought in with peat as mentioned above, or with woodland planting such as Wood Speedwell (*Veronica montana*) which leaves seven species (Table 3).

Although there was much planting in and along the waterfall and stream I cannot imagine that Orange Foxtail (*Alopecurus aequalis*) was brought intentionally, but there it was, one plant on the muddy edge – from whence did it come?

Free access was available to only one tiny part of the site in 1990 and on part of a bare trodden pathway there were six plants of Smooth Rupturewort (*Herniaria glabra*). 40 m farther on (in the next 1 km square) there were a further nine. In 1991 there were more than 50 plants. This species is even rarer than the *Alopecurus* in the British Isles.

I assume that Spiny Restharrow (*Ononis spinosa*) came with seed for sowing the grassy bank near the waterfall. Like the two mentioned above and Sulphur Cinquefoil (*Potentilla recta*), also in this group, this plant has not been recorded before in the vice-county.

TABLE 3. 'STOWAWAYS' ON THE GLASGOW GARDEN FESTIVAL SITE

<i>Alopecurus aequalis</i>
<i>Geranium pyrenaicum</i>
<i>Herniaria glabra</i>
<i>Melilotus indicus</i>
<i>Ononis spinosa</i>
<i>Potentilla recta</i>
<i>Rumex acetosella</i> var. <i>tenuifolius</i>



FIGURE 4. A personal 'Access' card designed by the author.

NURSERY SITE

In addition to the actual Garden Festival Site itself there is an adjacent area, connected by a short tunnel under the intervening road, in which plants were stored, either in containers or shoved into the ground while their sites were being prepared, or in some cases as substitutes to provide flowering colour throughout the season. It is an area of 3.5 ha.

It is still fenced off, but like most such pieces of ground, at least in Glasgow, if one searches one is bound to find a gap where someone has cut a way in!

With regard to the main site, the Security Officer became interested in my survey and kept asking if I had been to such and such a part where he had seen flowers – as opposed to weeds! At the Norfolk Recorders' Conference I suggested that we be issued with a card and that seemed to meet with general approval, but as none was forthcoming I designed my own (Fig. 4). Of course it has no official standing but never fails to impress.

I have included the Nursery Site (Table 4) because it was very much part of the festival complex as far as plants were concerned and had eleven additions to what were seen elsewhere. *Agrostis scabra* we see in hundreds, if not thousands each year in Glasgow. *Crepis setosa* reached Glasgow in 1984 but as a casual only (Macpherson 1990). In both 1990 and 1991 there were at least 40 plants on the bank of the track as it dipped down to go under the road, with two plants having crept into the Garden Festival site. *Genista hispanica* had definitely spread from planted material as presumably had the *Hosta*.

I had nipped in during 1990 and the most interesting plant was a tufted, reddish sedge identified for me as *Carex buchananii*, a native of New Zealand and possibly new to Britain as a wild plant. In 1990 one flowering plant was present. In 1991, the colony had increased to four (Macpherson & Macpherson 1992) and a recent check showed that there had now been a further increase to six. This plant plus one small Sensitive Fern (*Onoclea sensibilis*), more or less hidden away among a group of *Cornus* which had been left over near the boundary wall, would qualify for my 'Stowaway' category.

TABLE 4. TAXA IN THE NURSERY AREA ON THE GLASGOW GARDEN FESTIVAL SITE

<i>Agrostis scabra</i>	<i>Hosta</i> cf. <i>nakaiana</i>
<i>Carex buchananii</i>	<i>Medicago sativa</i>
<i>Cichorium intybus</i>	<i>Mentha</i> × <i>villosanervata</i>
<i>Cotoneaster sternianus</i>	<i>Onoclea sensibilis</i>
<i>Crepis setosa</i>	<i>Solidago canadensis</i>
<i>Genista hispanica</i> subsp. <i>occidentalis</i>	

DISCUSSION

So now that I have all these records – what are the implications? What do I do with them?

With regard to those which have arrived by what could be natural dispersal I have no problem. I stroke off the Field Card and put a dot on my index card. However I cannot simply accept all that are printed on the Field Card without comment as some are very rare or absent from my vice-county, and had probably spread from deliberate planting, e.g. Marjoram and Hempagrimony.

The next 'acceptable group' is comprised of those not on the Field Card, but which I assume have not been deliberately brought to the site. Some are actually reasonably common in Glasgow and could have spread on to any suitable ground. These I have no hesitation in recording without comment e.g. *Brassica rapa*, *Heracleum mantegazzianum*, *Senecio squalidus*. With regard to rarities such as Canadian Fleabane and Least Pepperwort, which I assume 'fell off the back of a ship', I have noted the facts, done a drawing of their location and will monitor to see how long they persist as was the case with *Agrostis scabra* which we first saw as a single plant in 1973 and for which I now have eleven personal 1 km² records (Macpherson & Stirling 1988).

The other group not deliberately introduced are my 'stowaways'. I already know that *Herniaria glabra* and *Carex buchananii* are spreading and could easily become established if given a chance.

Of the vast majority of planted material, there is now no trace. With regard to the recording of those which have spread or been spread from Garden Festival planting there is more room for argument. I have filled out a card for those such as *Anchusa azurea*, and even added a dot. These should at least therefore always be available for reference.

What of these so-called aliens? How are they to be regarded?

For reference I selected books from my bookshelves more or less at random. In no sense is this an exhaustive review:

"Human borne seedlings do not seem to me to deserve much consideration. I am not convinced that we ought not to advocate definite action to prevent their settlement" (Raven 1953). A critical comment taken a little out of context, but which one might argue could apply at least to the Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*).

Or with disdain: "I almost immediately excluded aliens because they are coming and going in an endless stream, occasionally leaving a mark on our landscape as in the case of *Senecio squalidus*, but more often waifs and strays, left to perish on a dunghill" (Meikle 1953).

Or an intermediate view: "The alien flora is of little importance but must be accounted for as many of the familiar plants of the countryside had their introduction either as aliens or as garden escapes" (Dony 1976).

Or more tolerantly: "The British flora is changing whatever we do but all changes are not always for the worst, some constituting interesting additions to the British flora and not necessarily undesirable" (Brenan 1983).

A few years ago I met a fellow Scottish Recorder and reported that I had v.c. records of Chinese Ragwort (*Sinacalia tanguitica*) and Peach-leaved Bellflower (*Campanula persicifolia*), both well established, and which I would pass on. I was told not to bother as they would go straight into the waste-paper basket. *Campanula persicifolia* is also present at the Garden Festival Site, so do I consign the record, specimen and slide to the bin?

For some time I have had a certain reputation for recording 'non-natives' which can brighten up dull routine recording (Dickson 1991), and so appreciate the contents of the *New Flora of the British Isles* which states that "The aim is to include all taxa that the plant hunter might reasonably be able to find in the wild in any one year" (Stace 1991).

I do appreciate that there is a pecking order:

Native – whatever that is! Swann (1977) stated that no two botanists will ever agree about what constitutes a native species. It has been variously defined as: a species believed to have been in the country before man (Lousley 1953; Ellis 1983); part of the natural vegetation for a long time (Briggs 1990); in a natural locality to which it has spread by natural means from a natural source (Dunn 1905); immigrated without the aid of man (Lousley 1953; Ellis 1983; Dickson 1991; Stace 1991); arisen de novo in the country (Lousley 1953; Ellis 1983).

Non-native – unintentional introductions may be regarded as more interesting than those brought in intentionally. Some authors regard alien and introduction as synonymous while others limit introduction to deliberate acts.

Alien plants have been defined as species introduced by the intentional or unintentional agency of man (Lousley 1953; Ellis 1983; Crackles 1990); species introduced by man and now more or less established (Clapham *et al.* 1962).

Introduced alien – deliberately brought to the area for whatever reason (Dickson 1987).

Invading alien – unintentionally brought to the area or arriving in the area by natural means (Dickson 1987).

There is then the question of Naturalised vis-à-vis Established. Some authors make a distinction and regard Naturalised as a more important category: a species naturalised in natural habitats (Hyde & Wade 1934); species naturalised in a natural or semi-natural habitat (Lousley 1953). Others regard them as synonymous: a species which has become self-perpetuating (Stace 1991); an alien plant which has become completely established. Those who differentiate define Established Alien as persisting only in a man-made habitat (Hyde & Wade 1934; Lousley 1953); or in absence of competition from native species (Crackles 1990). The criteria have been widened to include an annual which persists or is repeatedly introduced (Ellis 1983).

Both Naturalised and Established are regarded as more important than Casual (Temporary; Ephemeral; Visitors). There is more unanimity regarding the definition of Casual, the general view being that it refers to a species which does not persist (Lousley 1953; Clapham *et al.* 1962; Ingram & Noltie 1981; Ellis 1983; Crackles 1990; Graham 1988). The terms Ephemeral Alien (Jermyn 1974) and Adventive (Fitter & Fitter 1967) have been used as synonyms for casual.

How long does a plant have to persist before it can be regarded as Naturalised/Established? The plants that I have recorded have persisted for two to three years. Lousley (1953) had suggested 25 years. I am unlikely to persist that long, so when may I put them into Plant Records?

What is an Escape and are all escapes equal? An escape has been defined as: of cultivated origin but not naturalised (Clapham *et al.* 1962; Ingram & Noltie 1981); originally from seed or plants thrown out with garden rubbish (Jermyn 1974); spread vegetatively or by seed from a garden (Stace 1991).

I present a classification of introductions in what could be regarded as a pecking order (Fig. 5).

Other terms used in the literature include:–

Indigenous – native born; originating or produced naturally in a country; opposite of exotic (Kirkpatrick 1983); Exotic – introduced from a foreign country; alien; not native to a country as a plant, etc; romantically – strange, rich or showy (Kirkpatrick 1983); Denizen – doubtful native in a

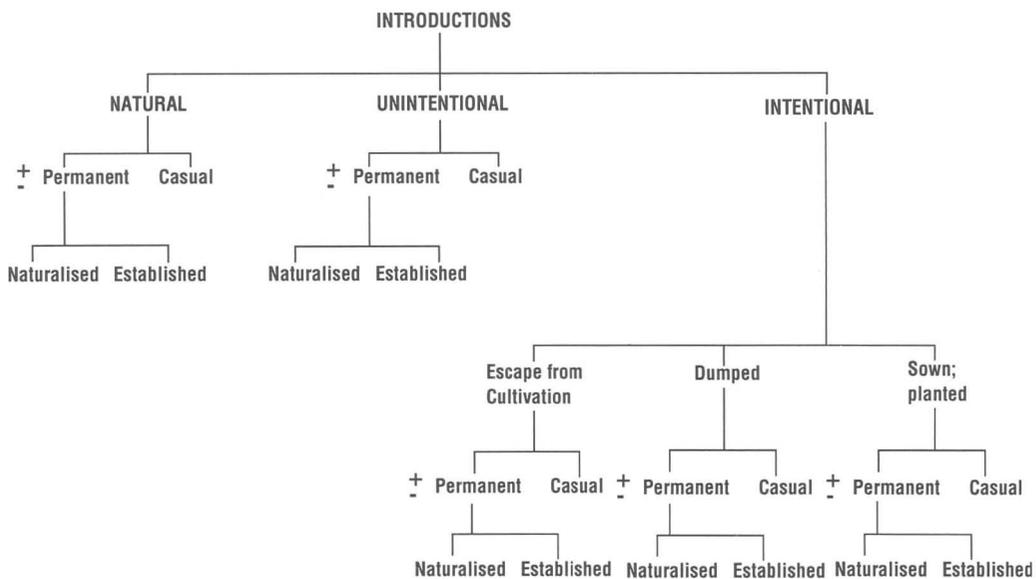


FIGURE 5. Different modes of introduction and permanency in (arguably) decreasing importance from left to right.

natural habitat (Watson 1870; Lousley 1953); an alien species growing in a natural or semi-natural community (Lousley 1953); species growing wild but originally introduced as cultivated crop or herb (Graham 1988; Crackles 1990); native elsewhere in Britain but not in the area (Hall 1980); Adventive – a plant growing unaided but not yet permanently established (Hyde & Wade 1934); not deliberately introduced (Crackles 1990); self-sown or bird-sown garden plant (Briggs 1990) or even Colonist, a category implied in the title of this address – doubtful native in a man-made habitat (Lousley 1953); native elsewhere in Britain but not in the area (Whitehead 1976); species which grows only on man-maintained habitat (Lousley 1953; Graham 1988); alien which is established (Jermyn 1974); synonym of Adventive which is a synonym of Casual (Fitter & Fitter 1967).

So is Pineappleweed (*Matricaria discoidea*) more acceptable, having been brought in unintentionally, than Oxford Ragwort (*Senecio squalidus*) which was actively brought to this country; and that in turn more acceptable because it escaped over the garden wall than Dotted Loosestrife (*Lysimachia punctata*) which was thrown out and is now all over the West of Scotland? It has been recorded in 70 of the 90 *Flora of Glasgow* tetrads. All three plants are on the Garden Festival Site. If I stop to think about it, yes, I agree with the pecking order, but while recording never give it a thought.

I wish to make a comparison. After the Ice-age Britain was:–

- a. wholly or mainly a bare area available for colonisation by plants (Heslop-Harrison 1953); and
- b. a land available for colonisation by people.

As there were no people initially in the British Isles all here now are descendants of those who were native elsewhere. The British Isles have been populated by waves of tribes: Iberians, Celts, Picts, Angles, Saxons, Normans and so on. In the eyes of the Iberians the Celts were invasive intruders, in the eyes of the Celts the Anglo-Saxons were incomers and so it went on. There is even the question of being alien to a district. In the cities people are more readily absorbed into the community but in the Highlands it is often said that families need to remain for a couple of generations before they cease to be Incomers! There is also antipathy in parts of Wales to 'white settlers'. In contrast many people in England more or less regard Great Britain as synonymous with England and therefore include the Scots and Welsh as English! In spite of the above no-one would quibble if most if not all of us claim to be natives of the British Isles. I feel that this may have something to tell us about our attitude to plant status.

With regard to plant distribution within the British Isles some Floras define Alien as not native to the area under discussion, although it may be native in other parts of the British Isles. What are the geographical limits to which this would apply? If a plant is gradually extending into Scotland from England by natural dispersal, are the offspring which cross the border into Scotland to be regarded as aliens? Or, to narrow it down, if a plant arises from seed blown on to suitable ground in Glasgow from a neighbouring so-called native habitat are we allowed to call it Native in Glasgow, in the *Flora of Glasgow*. Certainly 'Alien' would not seem to be appropriate. In other words are the boundaries not rather arbitrary? Even if the term Alien is acceptable for the newly arrived, in general, after one or two generations of people, or rather more in the case of plants, the term is not appropriate.

There is therefore an obvious diversity of opinion regarding the definition of terms or even of their acceptability. "The various terms are not easily, precisely defined as different botanists use them in different ways" (Briggs 1990). "In assessing the status of many species, no two botanists would ever agree, judgement is so much a matter of personal opinion and many of the terms used are themselves arbitrary" (Petch & Swann 1968).

As a further example of differing terminology I present these definitions of Introduced Plant – brought accidentally or intentionally (Clapham *et al.* 1962); deliberately sown or planted (Fitter & Fitter 1967); deliberately brought for whatever reason (Dickson 1987); deliberately sown or planted or garden escape (Graham 1988); brought by man but apparently naturalised (Ingram & Noltie 1981).

Some Presidential Addresses end with such statements as: Further work along the lines of my talk would be a suitable project for the Society (and that is usually the last one hears of it – like my access card and possible Presidential Medals!).

I am going to be more positive and ask if I may set up a little sub-committee with a view to producing agreed unambiguous British Terminology. It should be less controversial than the *English Names of Wild Flowers* which, although many in Scotland object to, I have, with two exceptions (did you notice one in my address?) been prepared to accept for the overall good.

The requirement for clear knowledge of status without ambiguity is clearly indicated by the story of the young man from the West of Scotland who went into a London establishment that he would not have patronised had he known its reputation. He chatted to a young lady for some time and eventually she leant forward, touched his arm and said "You do realise that I am a Call Girl?" He leant back – "Now is that not a co-incidence – I'm from Tiree".

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