

Data Entry Guidance

The following guidance was developed, and tried and tested by those working on the BSBI Scottish Computerisation Project. It is specifically written for MapMate, but some of the same principles will also apply to other recording applications.

Taxon

- When you enter records there will always be some for which there is no direct equivalent in MapMate's Species Dictionary. You might find it useful to compile a separate spreadsheet of these records, so you can take this up with others later.
- You may also wish not to enter *Hieracium* and *Taraxacum* records due to the extensive revision of the taxonomy and our understanding of it. These records could also be added to the separate spreadsheet (and sent to the relevant Referee for advice.)

Quantity

- Enter present "0" unless number given.
- For quantities other than an exact number ("rare", "widespread" etc), enter into Comment field.
- Use DAFOR if cards use DAFOR systematically but don't use "R" when the recorded has noted Rare in isolation, etc.

Stage

- Only enter "not recorded" if not recorded of course! If the card says flowering fruiting or vegetative etc then enter that.

Sites

- Always use a site name, if known, as well as the grid reference (and not just entering "@NN123456" as the point location). This allows any errors in the grid ref to be corrected, but also allows querying to search for occurrences of those names.
- However, where a record has a grid reference but no site name, and you don't know where the site was, there is little benefit from retrospectively adding the site.
- Always begin the Site field with the site name, followed by any simple descriptors, using agreed and consistent formats. Then put everything else in Comments field. For example "Rocks near shore, S of Kilmarie". Site Name: "Kilmarie, S of"; Comments: "Rocks nr shore". Simple descriptors would include nr, S of, W of, and road numbers (e.g. A898)
- With rivers & road numbers, put place name first then river or road, e.g. London, R Thames or Crianlarich, A82.
- Use your standard naming system, and set of abbreviations consistently.
- Although duplicate sites is not a serious problem as there is no limit to the number of sites you can create in MapMate, they are best avoided for tidiness. You

should minimise the number of duplicate sites by checking to see if the site already exists. In MapMate, type its grid reference in "Site" and hit return, then use any matching (pre-existing) site if listed.

- However, it's important not to try to second guess the site details when entering some one else's, perhaps old, data. If in doubt, create as a new site. You can still query records for sites based on part of site name, or for a 1km square, tetrad or hectad, or within irregular polygon drawn on screen.
- When creating sites using sitename@gridref in the Site field, watch out if the site is near the VC boundary. MapMate occasionally allocates the site to the wrong VC. Partly because the base map that MM uses was digitised at a crude scale (1:200,000), and the boundary can be 2 - 300 metres out. Also because for tetrad or 1km grid refs, if the centre of the square is outside the VC boundary MM tends to allocate the site to the other VC.
- **Habitat information:** If the entire site (1km square, tetrad etc) has uniform habitat cover then details can be included in the Site details, otherwise best to include as a comment.

Date

- **Normally** the exact date will be given and **should** be entered.
- **Only where exact dates not given:** use as narrow as possible date ranges.
- Unfortunately you can't enter "before 1950" or "after 1970" etc. Must use ranges.
- Take care to not enter two digit years in MapMate, e.g. "95" as this will convert to 2095!

Status

- Enter status (e.g. Alien, Established, Native, Planted etc) where this information is provided with record. Otherwise enter "Not recorded".

Recorders

- Preferably use BRC recorder name formats e.g. "McKean, D.R."
- When entering new recorders details, enter location "unknown" and no comment.
- If the VCR is in a group of recording botanists, enter their name first, then others.

Determiner

- If no determiner given, determiner = recorder.

Method

- Generally "Field Record/Observation" but if appropriate use "Published Record" or "Voucher Specimen (Herbarium Code)".

- If the standard Herbarium Code isn't already in MapMate's standard Method List you can add additional herbarium codes.
- It is also possible to add other Methods if required E.g. Pers. Comm., Individual Record Card.

Reference

- Enter a reference code or name which will correspond uniquely with the source of the paper record.
- Enter any information about the source of the published record.

Comments

- Don't include place names and simple descriptors – they should go in the Site Field, but all other information that you have not already entered in the Site Field should be entered here (e.g. On rocks nr shore).
- **Habitat information:** If the entire site (e.g. 1km square or tetrad) doesn't have uniform habitat cover then best to put habitat information from in Comments field.
- If you consider the record to be considered sensitive, note the word "SENSITIVE", along with the reason why in the Comments field of the records.

Useful Sources of help when entering data

(To link, position cursor over blue text, press CTRL and click):

gazetteer.co.uk

Gazetteer of British Place Names

OS Gazetteer

250,000 UK place names, returns grid reference and map link.

Old-maps.co.uk

Historic maps of Britain, highly flexible, with index and links to aerial photos etc.

OS grid ref to vice-county converter

Find the vice-county location

Streetmap.co.uk

Localities, grid references, postcodes etc. can be searched for and localised.

OS Get-a-Map

Can type in place names, grid refs or postcodes and it produces a detailed map.

NBN Gateway

Can map SSSIs, VC boundaries, etc against an OS backdrop (one at a time).

Jim McIntosh, November 2006