

## SURREY BOTANICAL SOCIETY

### RECORDING STRATEGY 2011-2019

#### INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the Society's recording strategy for Date Class 5 (DC5) which covers the period 2010-2019. The main objective of the strategy is to guide recording efforts to enable us to produce a *New Flora of Surrey*. The previous flora, J.E. Lousley's *Flora of Surrey*, was published in 1976, almost 40 years ago. Recording is confined to the Vice-county of Surrey, not the administrative county. This recording is running concurrently with that for BSBI's Atlas 2020 project, which will be 20 years after the *New Atlas of the British and Irish Flora* was published. The BSBI booklet "Recording the British and Irish Flora 2010-2020" sets out a national programme for botanical recording in this period. The SBS recording strategy has been designed to be compatible with this framework. The BSBI document is available on its website.

#### Recording Areas - Hectads

A key BSBI requirement is that from 2010 to 2019, all Vice-counties should aim to achieve at least sample coverage for all hectads, 10km squares within their boundary. In VC17 we are not making a special effort to record hectads on their own, as it is hoped that by recording in monads, 1km squares, throughout the VC, we will cover all of the hectads within VC17. In addition, the Field Meetings are being arranged so that we visit as many hectads as possible.

#### Recording within Hectads – monads and sites

Within hectads, the basic recording unit will be the monad, a 1 x 1km OS square, with a 4fig grid reference, and, where possible, representative sites such as footpaths, arable fields, rivers etc. should be included in the sampling. Records obtained in this way will be supplemented by information obtained from the continuing updates of Rare Plant Register (RPR) records.

#### LNHS

The LNHS recording area has traditionally been within a 20 mile radius around London. Therefore this also covers part of VC17. Recording is underway towards the production of a new Greater London Flora. Sampling is based on monads within hectads. We maintain close liaison with the LNHS and share information as appropriate. The current agreement is for the LNHS 10km coordinators to process the records for their squares and to send them directly to the relevant VCRs. Not all of the 10km LNHS squares in VC17 have coordinators, so in many cases, it might be simplest just to send your records to us, using our spreadsheet. VCRs will send all the records to Mark Spencer, LNHS Recorder. This direction of flow avoids duplication of records.

#### SITE RECORDING GUIDELINES

##### Rationale

SBS currently records in the field using habitat-based site definitions, e.g. a lake, woodland or roadside verge. This approach best meets our needs for reporting and analysis. The central grid reference of these sites are usually defined by 6 figures and any current analysis of records by grid square has to assume that all such site records are associated with the grid square within whose boundaries the centroid of a site is located. This is not always the case, as site boundaries rarely fit neatly within a 1km square. Now plant distributions need to be recorded accurately according to grid squares for the BSBI recording scheme, the Surrey RPR

and the New Surrey Flora. So we need to fit in our habitat based approach to site definition with an accurately mapped grid square distribution for a species. The way in which we propose to reconcile these issues is shown in the diagrams below. Monad recording must now assume a greater degree of importance than has hitherto been the case, but without losing all of the benefits of habitat based recording. In terms of numbers, there are 2106 monads in VC17, some of which have only a small percentage in the Vice-county.

We record for several reasons, including:

1. To show just where the species are, especially the important areas. This will aid re-finding them and their conservation
2. So that the monad maps reflect the accurate distribution of species
3. We enjoy recording

The rarer a species, the more accurately we need to know its exact site. If in doubt, give more detail rather than less. The table below is taken from the BSBI Recording Strategy booklet and shows the **minimum** level of recording needed. Grid references should be taken using modern GPS units and /or satellite images such as our online Virtual Map. If conditions are good, a 10fig can be given.

Resolution of Recording	10m/8figs	100m/6figs	1km/4figs
Nationally rare & scarce	✓	✓	
UK Priority Species e.g. Red List, BAP	✓	✓	
Vice-county rare & scarce	✓	✓	
Axiophytes – see below	✓	✓	
New Vice-county or new hectad records	✓	✓	
Re-finds of ‘extinct’ species	✓	✓	
All other species			✓

An axiophyte is a ‘worthy’ plant, one that occurs in good quality habitats. See BSBI website for more on this topic. Other information such as a description of just where a plant was found, its population size and whether or not it is thriving, is all useful.

### Recording in a monad

Different types of monad and habitat require different approaches. The main types are:

1. Urban and suburban areas: most records can just be given as 4fig GR, except for any distinct sites such as graveyards, parks or similar where a named site with a 6fig GR will normally be used.
2. Rural areas: ideally this will be site based, with records collected for defined sites and habitats, such as woods, ponds, footpaths, road verges, downland, heathland etc. It may not be necessary to visit every site in the monad but all different habitat sites should be covered and at different times of the year.

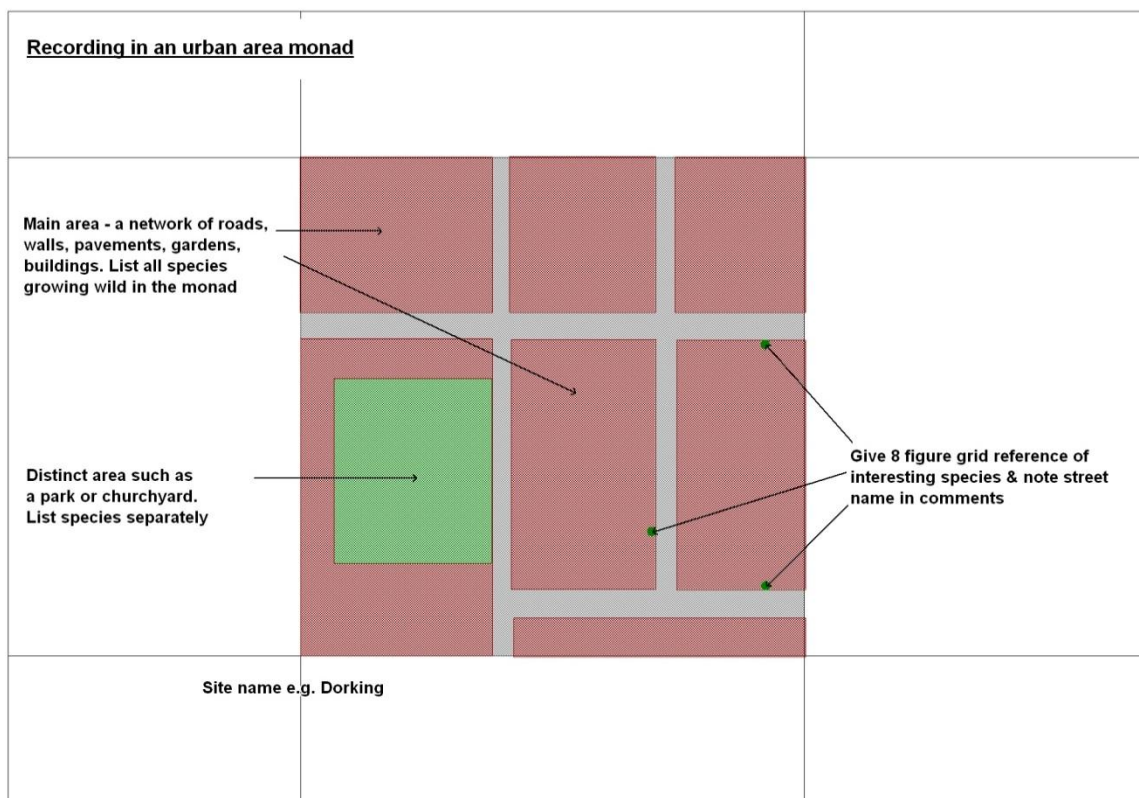
The diagrams below illustrate these approaches. Some monads could require more than one approach, e.g. those suburban areas on the edge of countryside.

### An urban monad, Diagram 1

There is no need to keep separate lists for the roads and streets in this type of monad. Just list what you see when walking about, taking a different route when walking to the shops, etc. It helps to have checked against a street map to see the limits of the monad, so that it is not necessary to carry a map. Using torn out pages of an old Surrey Street Map folded into A6, the same size as a field notebook, with the monad boundaries inked in for clarity, is a useful method. Note site details and grid reference of notable species and put information in the Comments field/column. We only need records for species 'in the wild', not species planted in urban flowerbeds. Gardens can be a good source of 'weeds'. Garden escapes should only be listed if they have either genuinely got out by themselves or have been dumped. In the former case, Status will be Casual or Established, in the latter, Planted, as man has put the plants there.

### Diagram 1

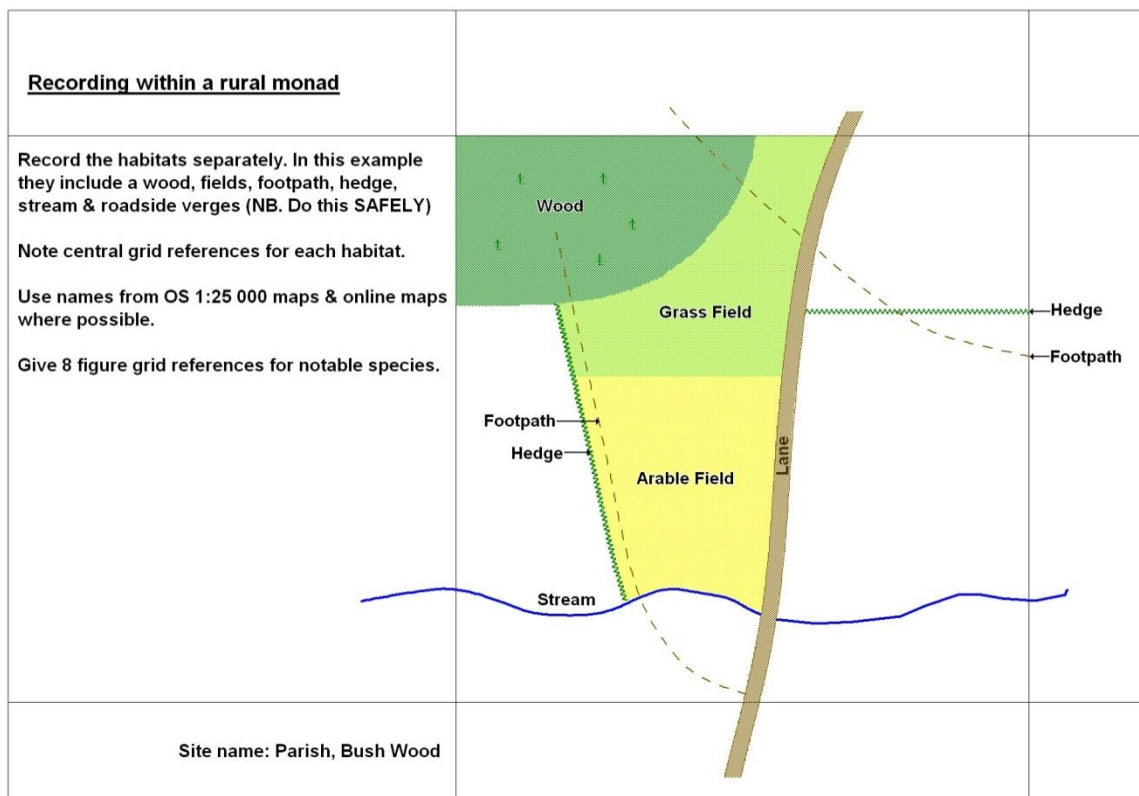
Site name and GR, for example, Dorking TQ1649



## Rural monads

The basic approach is shown in the following picture, **Diagram 2**. Variants on this will be illustrated in the diagrams that follow this. We name sites as follows: *Parish, Manor Farm, Field; Parish, Wey Navigation or Parish, Downs Road BP*

**Diagram 2**



Many sites will spread into adjacent monads. **Diagram 3** shows approaches that could be taken. The greater the overlap into a separate monad, the more important it is to record this separately. Whilst this could be described as a rather vague approach, we do have to be pragmatic.

Linear sites such as water courses and roads can be recorded in the way shown below, **Diagram 4**, dividing the site into monad sections. Common species can be listed under the 4fig GR and any notable or interesting species can have a 6 or 8fig GR, depending on rarity or interest.

## Recording large sites

There are two approaches that could be taken, see **Diagrams 5** and **6**. The method chosen partly depends on how the site is managed. Dividing a site into its monads has the advantage that these boundaries are always fixed, even if not directly obvious on the ground. Dividing a site into its management compartments can sometimes be easier and should help site managers, especially with conservation of notable species. Use of a site map is important and most site managers will have one and should be pleased to make this available. In any case it is always helpful to make contact with them, for exchange of knowledge, especially about rarities.

Diagram 3

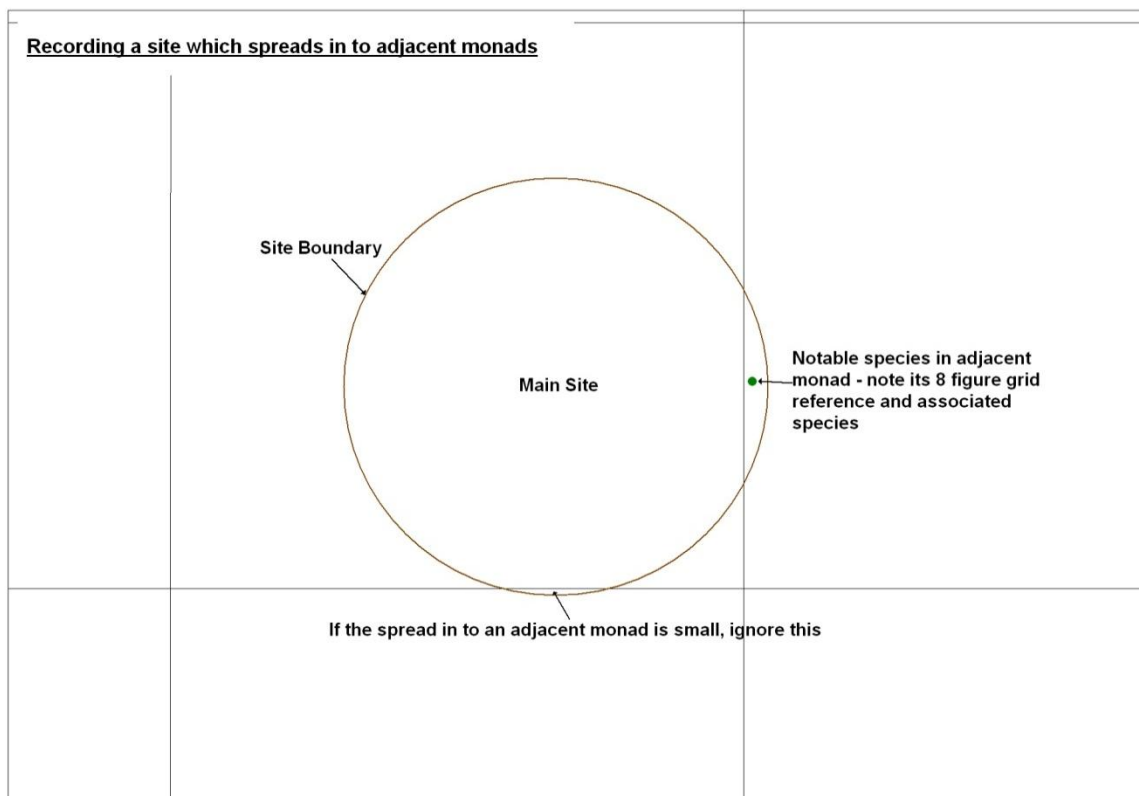
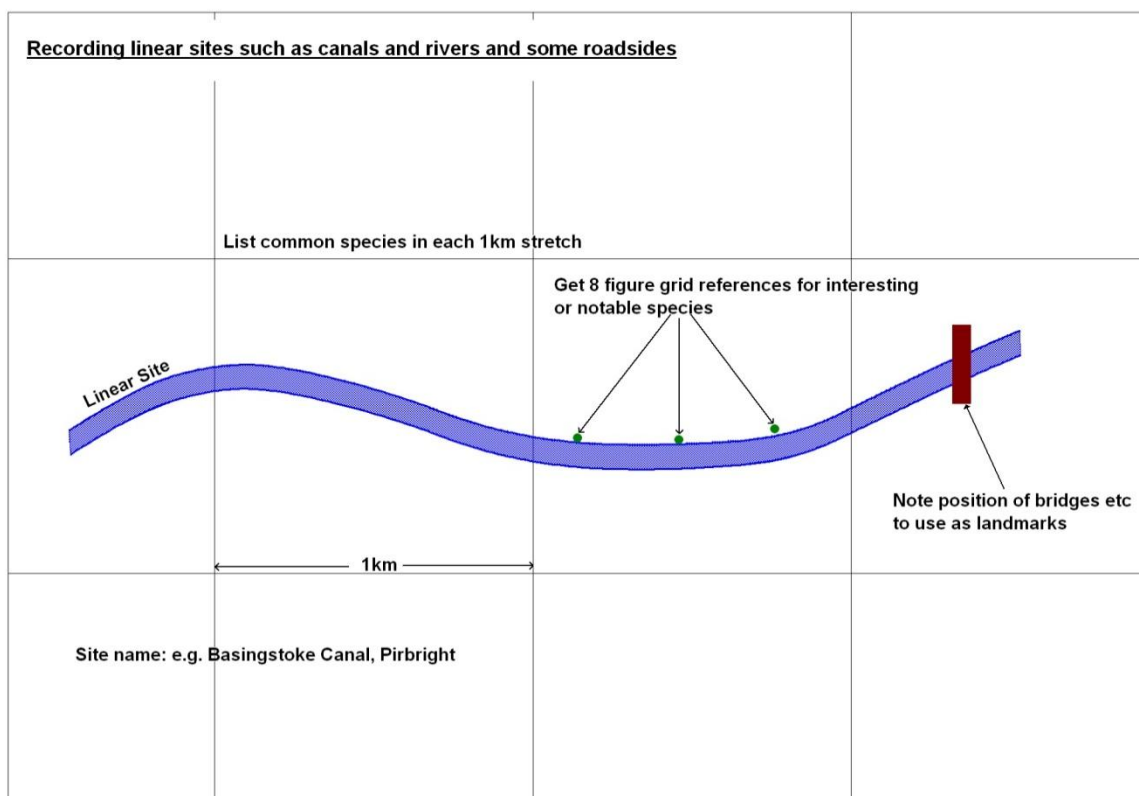
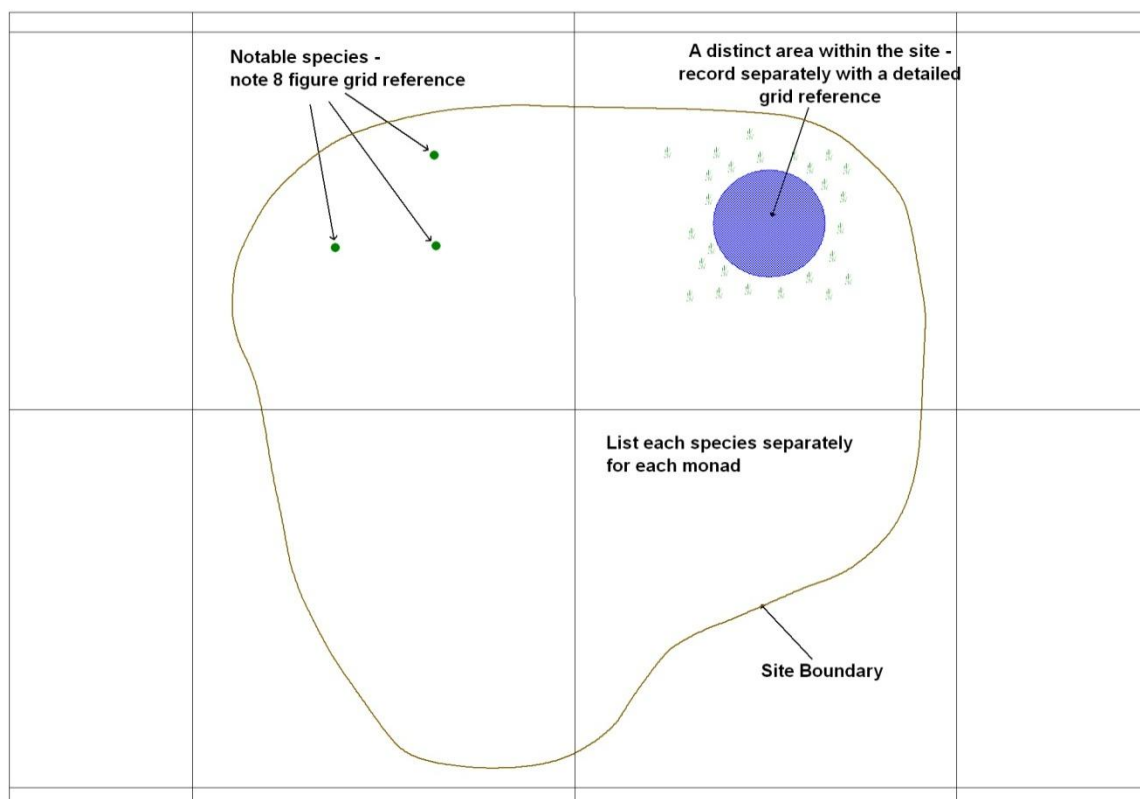


Diagram 4



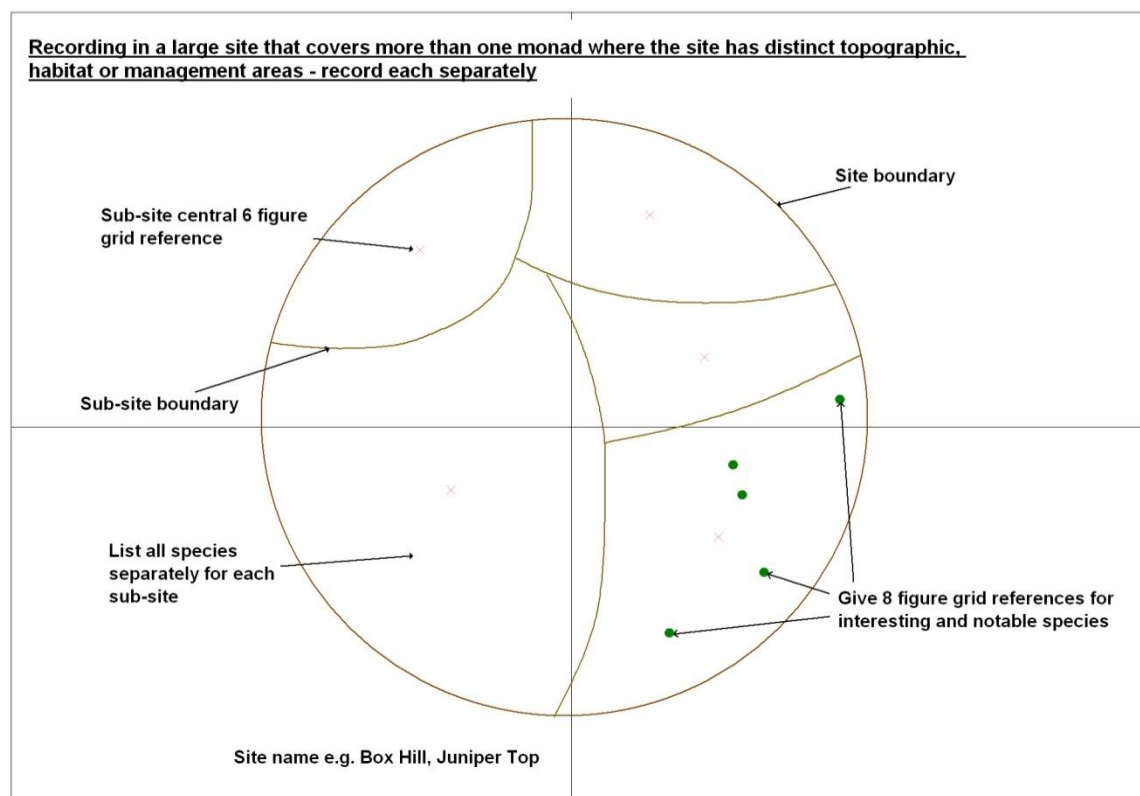
## Large sites that spread over several monads

**Diagram 5:** For example: Farnham Park SU8348, SU8448, SU8347 and SU8447 and Farnham Park, Named Pond SU845475



## Diagram 6

For example: Bookham Common, Compartment A, TQ127569, etc

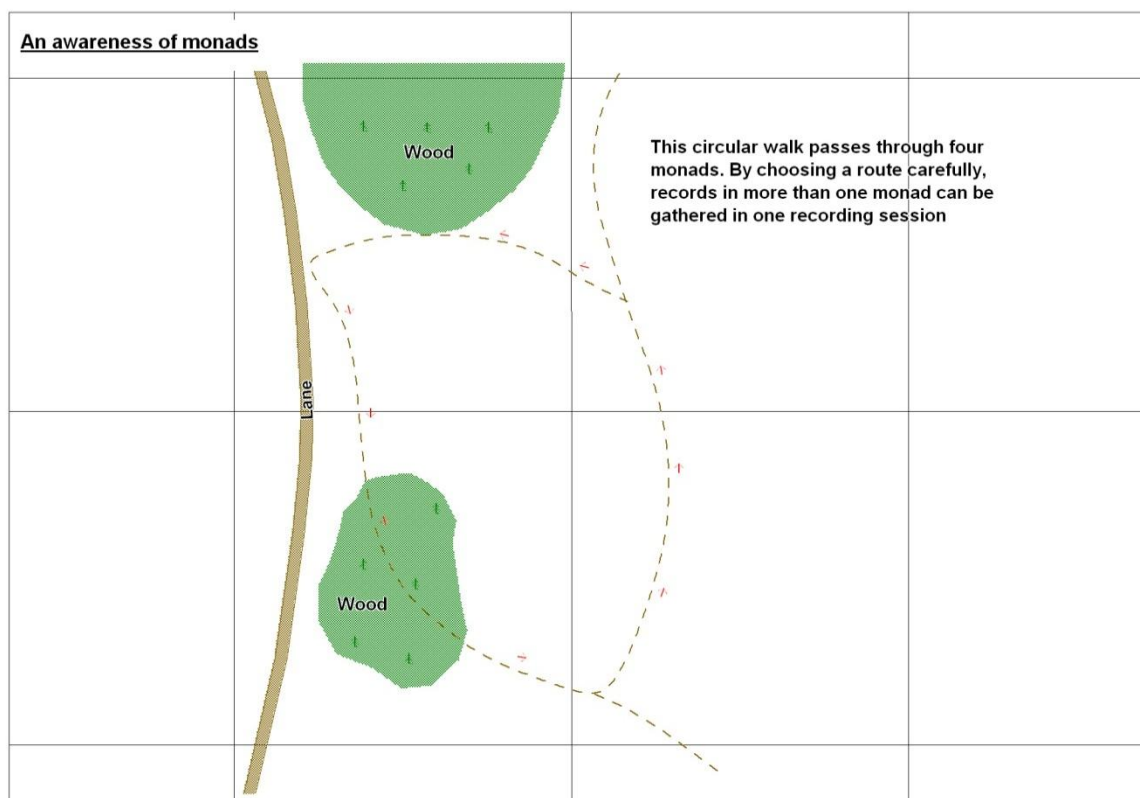


One possible way of resolving site and monad recording for the situation in **Diagram 6** is to record all the compartments that lie wholly in a monad first and then record the overlapping ones afterwards. This way separate monad and compartment lists can be compiled without it being too onerous.

### An awareness of monads

It is going to take a lot of work to record all our 2000 plus monads, so when out and about recording, do think about routes and situations that may allow one to gather records from more than one monad. **Diagram 7** illustrates such a situation, which can be very productive.

### Diagram 7



### Recording lists

Records can be sent to us in two ways; as MapMate entries or as lists using our spreadsheet format, available with instructions, as a download from our website. It would be helpful if lists could be sent in as soon as they are ready, so that they can be digitised. It may usually be necessary to visit sites more than once. We would prefer not to have duplicate species in any one year, as this adds unnecessary clutter to our lists. So whilst it is very good practice to list all species seen on each visit, to cover for species missed the first time, only send records new at each subsequent visit in the same year, with the date recorded.

### A note on Status of species:

All records should be given a Status. The categories we use are Native, Established, Planted, Casual or 'Unknown' if the status is difficult to determine. The use of 'Not recorded' should be used only if the status was not recorded but remember that by not noting status, useful information is lost.

Surrey Botanical Society Recording Strategy, 2010 - 2019, revised 2014

**Equipment:**

Notebook; GPS; hand lens; field identification guides; self-sealing polythene bags and small plastic pots, both for collecting specimens for identification later and a 1:2500 OS map or street map, depending on the type of habitat. Some Street Atlases have the grids as 1km squares, which is very helpful. A print of a satellite image with grid lines marked can also be useful, particularly in open areas where the junction between wood and grassland is not always accurate on OS maps.

**Verification of taxa:**

Use should be made of referees, either some of our own members or the BSBI referees – see BSBI Yearbook

**Recording opportunities:**

As well as targeted recording occasions, do think of ways in which one can combine a non-botanical visit somewhere, say walking with friends, shopping or seeing a relative, with a spot of botanical recording. It is surprising what can be achieved in this way.