

ARCTIC PLANTS NOT YET FOUND IN BRITAIN

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In the rightly appreciative reviews that have so far been published of the welcome new *Flora of the British Isles* (Clapham, Tutin and Warburg, 1952), there does not appear to be any mention of the omission, even as addenda, of the two most important additions to the known British flora that have been made in recent years. These were *Koenigia islandica* L., a genus new to Britain, and *Diapensia lapponica* L., a family new to Britain; both are now considered "undoubtedly native on remote hills in Scotland" (Lousley, 1952). Both discoveries stirred public interest far beyond the British scientific press; that of *Koenigia* was announced in 1950 from material collected in 1934 (Burt, 1950) and that of *Diapensia* was made in 1951 (Blakelock, 1952). More detailed accounts of the *Koenigia* (Raven, 1952) and of the *Diapensia* (Roger, 1952) in Scotland have now been published, as have reports in *The Times* and elsewhere; the former plant has since been refound also in neighbouring localities (Raven, 1952) and the latter is abundantly confirmed (Roger, 1952). It has also been reported (Lousley, 1951; Ribbons, 1952) that *Homogyne alpina* (L.) Cass. has been confirmed as occurring in the British Isles, although the elder George Don's "reputed discovery" (cf. *Notes Roy. Bot. Gard. Edinburgh*, 3, 112-3, 1904) of it had latterly been taken with so little seriousness that the species is not even mentioned in recent floras. Further additions are reported or reviewed by Lousley (1953), some of which were actually made after the new flora was published last year; the reason for the lack in that work of any mention of the others was evidently that it was an excessively long time in the press.

These discoveries, like several of other species, make one wonder again how many more of these arctic, etc. plants, hitherto unsuspected as members of the native British flora, may still remain to be detected on remote Scottish mountains and isles in habitats that seem to fall within their normal range. It may be noted that most of these 'additions' are to a considerable extent 'open soil' plants growing best in the virtual absence of competition (Polunin 1939a, 1939b, 1941); and it may be suggested that other species, often of similar ecological requirements, which might possibly repay closer search of suitable habitats in these regions, may perhaps include (apart from some already recorded without confirmation but including the two marked with an asterisk of which there are old and very doubtful reports): *Equisetum scirpoides* Michx., *Botrychium boreale* Milde, **B. lanceolatum* (S.G.Gmel.) Rupr., *Sparganium hyperboreum* Laest. ex Beurl., *Agrostis borealis* Hartm., *Phippsia algida* (Solander) R.Br., *Trisetum spicatum* (L.) Richt., *Vahlodea atropurpurea* (Wahlenb.) Fries, *Carex brunnescens* (Pers.) Poir., *C. glareosa* Wahlenb., *C. mackenziei* Krecz., *C. rufina* Drej., *Kobresia myosuroides* (Vill.) Fiori & Paol., *Luzula confusa* Lindeb., *Salix glauca* L. s.l., *S. polaris* Wahlenb., *Arenaria sajanensis* Willd. ex Schlecht., *Lychnis apetala* L., *Stellaria calycantha* (Ledeb.) Bong., *S. crassifolia* Ehrh., *Ranunculus glacialis* L., *R. hyperboreus* Rottb., *R. pygmaeus* Wahlenb., *Cardamine bellidifolia* L., *Draba alpina* L., *D. nivalis* Liljebl., *Sedum annuum* L., *Saxifraga foliolosa* R.Br., *Potentilla nivea* L. s.l., **Rubus arcticus* L. s.l., *Astragalus frigidus* (L.) A. Gray s.l., *A. norvegica* Grauer, *Viola biflora* L., *V. selkirkii* Pursh ex Goldie, *Epilobium davuricum* Fisch. s.l., *E. hornemannii* Reichenb., *E. lactiflorum* Hausskn., *Cassiope hypnoides* (L.) D.Don, *Pyrola grandiflora* Radius, *Androsace septentrionalis* L., *Primula stricta* Hornem.,

Gentiana aurea L., *G. tenella* Rottb., *Pedicularis lapponica* L., *Veronica longifolia* L., *Pinguicula villosa* L., *Galium trifidum* L., *G. triflorum* Michx., *Petasites frigidus* (L.) Fries, and *Taraxacum lapponicum* Kihlm. Of all the accepted native arctic species not yet found in Britain, these are the 50 whose continental European (especially Scandinavian) ranges, with some other considerations, seem to allow them the best chance of occurring in the British Isles. What a delightful holiday sport to hunt for them in the lesser-known parts of Scotland or the accompanying isles!

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