

Magnus Spence's herbarium in Stromness Museum, Orkney

Magnus Spence (1853-1919) assembled his herbarium in the late Nineteenth and very early Twentieth Centuries. The number of specimens in the herbarium is 918, comprising 556 species of vascular plants, seven algae and five bryophytes. The original total certainly included several more species of vascular plant. These are represented by specimens collected by Magnus Spence but now in Henry Halcro Johnston's (see below) herbarium in Edinburgh, and elsewhere; they appear to have been removed by Johnston. All except four of Magnus Spence's specimens were collected in Orkney, the remainder in Shetland. All but a handful were collected by Spence himself.

Spence named some of the specimens himself, others with the assistance of Arthur Bennett (1843-1929), a well-known botanist of the time who lived in Surrey.

In 1923-4 Henry Halcro Johnston (1856-1939), another eminent Orkney botanist, reorganised the collection, re-labelling all the plants according to the nomenclature of his time. Mainly he followed Spence's and Bennett's identification of species, though in some cases he re-determined them and in others, of critical species, followed the re-determinations made by visiting experts in previous years. There are cases also where Bennett, or another expert, or Johnston, decided they could not put a species name to a specimen that had earlier be named by Spence or someone else: Johnston gave these a genus name only. Apart from the re-naming, it is not clear how much reorganising Johnston did: the herbarium sheet numbers are the same as Spence's, but it seems likely that the ordering by family and the numbering of species are Johnston's.

A herbarium catalogue was compiled in February and March 2012 by John Crossley, Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (BSBI) Vice-county Recorder for Orkney, and revised by him in November 2018. The ordering of plant families and species is unchanged from that of Johnston. Revisions in 2018 mainly comprise some re-naming of critical taxa following further study and comparison with specimens held in other herbaria.

The catalogue is arranged as a table and comprises:

Column A. Herbarium sheet number

Column B. Family and species name, with authority, as given by Johnston in 1923-4.

Column C. Species name, with authority, up-dated to current synonymy in 2018. A small number of specimens have been re-determined by JC and others; the names of these have been highlighted in **bold type** in this column. Wherever possible, and in the great majority of cases, the naming of vascular plants follows 'Stace 2010' (Stace, Clive. A. 2010. *New Flora of the British Isles* (Third edition). CUP). Some variety names used by Johnston are not to be found in Stace, and in these cases synonyms were found in other recent publications, especially 'Sell & Murrell' (Sell, Peter and Murrell, Gina. 1996-2018. *Flora of Great Britain and Ireland*, volumes 1-5. CUP), the Flora Europaea dataset at <http://www.rbge.org.uk> or, failing these, monographs on critical plant groups published by BSBI. In a very few cases no synonym could be found; the 1920s were a time of unprecedented splitting of the British flora.

Synonyms for algae were taken from Guiry, M.D. & Guiry, G.M. 2012. *Algaebase*. World-wide electronic publication, National University of Ireland, Galway. <http://www.algaebase.org>

Synonyms for bryophytes were taken from Smith, A.J.E. 2004. *The Moss Flora of Britain and Ireland* (Second edition). CUP., and Paton, Jean A. 1999. *The Liverwort Flora of the British Isles*. Harley Books (Colchester).

Column D. Common name (English)

Column E. Collectors' names

Column F. Page reference for the taxon in *Flora Orcadensis*, Magnus Spence's flora of Orkney, published in Kirkwall in 1914.

Column G. Comments. These include comments entered by Johnston on his herbarium sheet labels, where especially pertinent, mainly the names of expert determiners, by Chris Metherell (on *Euphrasias* only) and by John Crossley