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## Plants in relation to ox-bows north of the River Kelvin

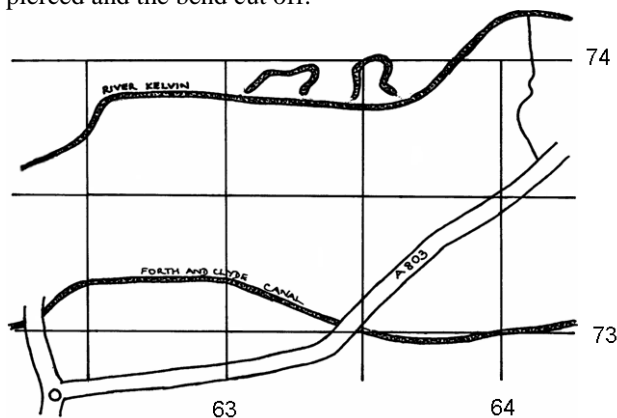
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To the west of the outskirts of Kirkintilloch the River Kelvin forms the boundary between the vice-counties 77 & 86 (Lanarkshire and Stirlingshire). Within one kilometre of the town there are two ox-bow pools (NS6373) to the north of the river, representing the original channel, before it became straightened out. For recording purposes, the area remains within Lanarkshire. The most northerly arc is within 165 metres of the most northerly part of VC 77 (Fig. 1). A river bend returning almost upon itself is referred to as an ox-bow (an ox-bow being a collar for a yoked ox). An ox-bow pool or lake is formed when the neck is pierced and the bend cut off.



**Fig. 1.** Ox-bows north of the present course of the River Kelvin (NS6373). Numbers refer to Ordnance Survey Map 1km squares.

In June 2008 we conducted a botanical survey, based on the Lanarkshire half of the pools and the adjacent banks. A total of 105 taxa was recorded. In the easterly pool we found the dominant vegetation to be water horsetail (*Equisetum fluviatile*), while reed canary-grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*) was prolific in that to the west. In general, there is little open water. Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*) was common on the banks of the pools. Of those in, or at the water's edge, the two species which we found of most interest were greater spearwort (*Ranunculus lingua*) and tufted loosestrife (*Lysimachia thyrsoiflora*). Other notables were bogbean (*Menyanthes trifoliata*), mare's-tail (*Hippuris vulgaris*), water plantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*), wood clubrush (*Scirpus sylvaticus*) and yellow water-lily (*Nuphar lutea*). Oval sedge (*Carex ovalis*) was on a bank and water (*C. aquatilis*) and bottle (*C. rostrata*) sedges were in the water. Rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*) was dominant in the ground within the arc of the

easterly pool with common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*) giving an overall brownish colour within the other. We recorded also in those small parts of the northern bank of the River Kelvin which are in Lanarkshire.

In contrast to recording elsewhere in the Greater Glasgow area, there were only three aliens. At the end of the easterly ox-bow we saw the accidental pineappleweed (*Matricaria discoidea*) and on the river bank were the hortals dame's- violet (*Hesperis matronalis*) and sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*).