Plant common name: **Green Alkanet**

Latin name: *Pentaglottis sempervirens*

Common family name: Borage

Scientific family name: **Boraginaceae**

Plant height: tall plant

Flowering period: April-July

Provides: pollen and nectar

Utilised by: long tongued bumble bees e.g. *Bombus muscorum, Bombus* *pascuorum, Bombus distinguendus, Bombus hortorum* and honey bees

Honey: no

**Green Alkanet**

Green alkanet is a tall perennial plant with bristly stems (uncomfortable to touch) and hairy oval to oblong leaves. The bright blue flowers, around 8-10mm in size, are spectacular with their pristine white throats leading to a long flower-tube. Nectar is secreted by the four-lobed base of the nectary which is hidden in the 7mm long flower tube by hairs near the entrance which also protect it from rain, and short-tongued insects.

Where I live, green alkanet flourishes near the ruins of an old croft where it covers half an acre and encroaches onto a bank on the edge of a forest. The foliage remains green all year and sometimes there is a second flowering in autumn. I see the flowers twitching with honey bees whilst noticing probing proboscises and deduce a good nectar source here.

**Pollen** under the microscope (x 400 magnification)

Colour: off white

Shape: mostly elongated -boat shaped-and oval

Size: very small grains, 13-15µm

Exine features: medium with no rods seen

Surface: undetermined

Number of apertures: 4

Aperture type/furrows: 1 furrow seen

Other features: none noted