Richmondshire Biodiversity Action Plan

Contents

1. Introduction
1.1 Caring for Richmondshire's wildlife
1.2 Richmondshire's Community Strategy 2003-18
1.3 What is biodiversity?
1.4 Why is biodiversity important?
1.5 The need to conserve biodiversity
1.6 The national framework
1.7 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan
1.8 Local Biodiversity Action Plans
1.9 Regional biodiversity

2. How does the Biodiversity Action Plan fit in with other schemes?
2.1 Planning context
2.2 Sustainable Development Strategy
2.3 English Nature Natural Areas

3. Protected sites
3.1 Sites of Special Scientific Interest
3.2 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

4. How was the plan drawn up?
4.1 The Richmondshire Biodiversity Action Plan
4.2 Criteria for the selection of local priority habitats
4.3 Criteria for the selection of local priority species
4.4 The Habitat and Species Action Plans
4.5 Guidance notes

5. What makes Richmondshire special?
5.1 An introduction to the natural history of the District
5.2 UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats occurring in the District
5.3 UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species occurring in the District

6. The next steps
6.1 Biodiversity Action Plan co-ordination and implementation
6.2 Baseline information
6.3 Survey and monitoring
6.4 Reporting
6.5 Review
6.6 Advice
6.7 Good practice
6.8 Contacts

Appendix 1 Richmondshire Biodiversity Action Plan steering group.
Appendix 2 Map of Richmondshire Biodiversity Action Plan area.
Appendix 3 Glossary of terms.
Appendix 4 List of acronyms.
Appendix 5 Useful addresses.
Appendix 6 Scientific and common names of species mentioned in the Biodiversity Action Plan.
Appendix 7 Bibliography.

Front cover photograph - Graham Megson.

1. Introduction

Photograph - Graham Megson.

1.1 Caring for Richmondshire's wildlife

If **keeping Richmondshire rich in wildlife** is important to you, then you can find out how it is planned to care for our special habitats and the species associated with them, in the following pages. It is not just the rare and threatened wildlife that this plan seeks to protect, commoner wildlife is important too. Around our towns, villages and homes wildlife contributes to the quality of our lives and through the Richmondshire Community Strategy, local people have strongly identified that protecting plants and animals is important to them.

1.2. Richmondshire's Community Strategy 2003-18

The Government believes that the community has a key role in setting its own agenda and this has led to the establishment of Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs), which produce Community Strategies to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of the community.

Richmondshire's Community Strategy has five themed aims of which one is 'How We Live Now and For Generations to Come'. A Partnership and Task Group is responsible to the LSP Forum, to feed in specialist knowledge and to deliver and progress this theme, which covers the areas of:

- More recycling facilities and information on how to minimise waste.
- Better transport links.
- To protect our plants and animals (biodiversity)
- To maximise on our environment by marketing Richmondshire as a good place to live, work and visit.

In line with Government advice, protecting biodiversity has been selected by the LSP as a priority - 'To protect our plants and animals (biodiversity)'.

Producing the Richmondshire BAP is the starting point to fulfilling the aspirations of the Richmondshire Community Strategy.

Quality of life is important to us all, and includes access to a decent home, work, education and health. It also means a healthy environment – clean air, clean water and a rich and diverse natural world.

In the UK the destruction of the countryside and the loss of wildlife has been such that a rich and healthy natural environment is no longer guaranteed. For example, 98% of wildflower meadows, and over two million Skylarks have been lost in less than a lifetime. We need to halt these declines and put back, where we can, what has been lost - not just in protected areas or nature reserves, but in the wider countryside too. Neither the scale of the task nor the urgency for action should be underestimated.

1.3. What is biodiversity?

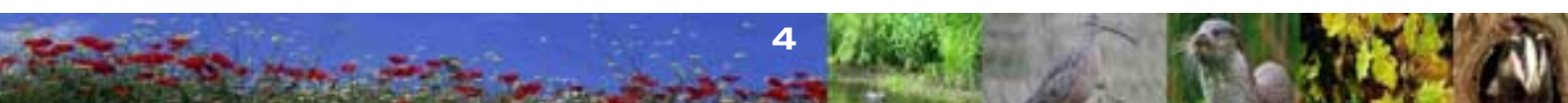
The term 'biodiversity' was coined at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. It comes from biological diversity and means the whole variety of life within the natural world which both surrounds and sustains us. This also includes us. It is not just rare species of animal and plant life but covers the entire spectrum of life. Biodiversity includes not only all species of plants and animals, but also their genetic variation, and the complex ecosystems of which they are all part.

1.4 Why is biodiversity important?

Biodiversity is vital to life and, in its simplest terms, enables life to exist on the earth. It provides the air we breathe, the food we eat, the materials we use and the medicines we take. These are all linked together in a complex web with every plant and animal having its own small part to play.

1.5 The need to conserve biodiversity

The world is losing biodiversity at an increasing rate, mainly as a result of human activity. The UK alone lost 100 species in the twentieth century, with many more species and habitats in danger. On a world scale the rate of loss is now recognised to be a cause for serious concern, requiring international action. Loss of biodiversity impacts upon mankind in a number of ways:



- Ecosystems – natural systems provide our basic life-support structures. These provide our soil, food and oxygen.
- The natural world provides pollution control, for example forests to fix carbon and flood control, for example lakes and marshes to absorb floodwater.
- Products – almost all of our food, fuel, medicines, cosmetics and construction materials are a product of biodiversity.
- Quality of life – the natural world offers enjoyment, health, spiritual enrichment, learning, cultural diversity and artistic inspiration.
- Economic development – thousands of jobs rely on our natural environment, including agriculture and eco-tourism.
- Knowledge – the pursuit of scientific discoveries.

As climate change is felt more and more, our plants and animals will be put under great pressure. Linear habitats such as road verges, railway embankments, river and stream corridors, ditches and hedgerows will become lifelines by which species that find themselves in the wrong place through climate change, might be able to shift their ranges and colonise new areas. Isolated sites, like many of our nature reserves, may become unsuitable for the plants and animals that they were designated to conserve. Gardens may also play an important role as multi-habitat zones linking together fragments and corridors of habitat, with the involvement of the public. Corridors and habitat 'stepping stones' should be encouraged throughout the landscape.

1.6 The national framework

As a result of the Rio Earth Summit, many countries agreed to take action to arrest the loss of biodiversity on a worldwide scale. The UK Government pledged to take action, and as a result the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) was published (UK BAP[1]).

1.7 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan

The UK BAP is the UK's initiative to maintain and enhance biodiversity. Through this plan, the Government committed itself to a process designed to conserve and enhance:

- The range and numbers of wildlife species and the quality and extent of wildlife habitats;
- Species and habitats that are internationally important or characteristic of local areas;
- Species and habitats that have declined significantly over recent decades.

Various central Government, and non-government organisations have taken responsibility to be the lead partners for each UK BAP priority habitat and species. Each action plan identifies key partners. At the local level, concerned organisations/individuals are welcome to consult the lead agencies over BAP matters.

1.8 Local Biodiversity Action Plans

However the Government recognised that biodiversity conservation would have to be delivered on a local basis, so a suite of county and district plans, referred to as Local BAPs (LBAPs) have been produced. The Richmondshire BAP is one such plan and closely links to neighbouring LBAPs. These plans are being developed to help foster action for UK priority species and habitats at a local level, but also to determine and take action for wildlife of local importance.

The aim of the LBAP is to:

- translate national guidance within the UK BAP to action at a local level;
- identify locally important habitats and species;
- develop local partnerships to help maintain and improve biodiversity and provide guidance on how to do this;
- raise local awareness of biodiversity and its importance;
- and set up effective monitoring systems.

The LBAP can help integrate biodiversity action into the decision making of statutory and non-statutory bodies at a local level. For example, planners can use LBAPs as Supplementary Planning Guidance, to influence planning decisions, both to avoid harming wildlife and to encourage the restoration of habitats through after-use conditions.

1.9 Regional biodiversity

Local BAPs are being prepared across the Yorkshire and The Humber Region, based on administrative boundaries and are at various levels of completion. They are complimentary to one another.

2. How does the Biodiversity Action Plan fit in with other schemes?

2.1 Planning context

Biodiversity Action Plans are not a statutory requirement of the Local Planning Authority.

However, the Local Government Act 2000 places a statutory duty on local authorities to prepare Community Strategies, and Biodiversity Action Plans have been recognised as examples of 'good practice'.

The planning process is a statutory process, which regulates and controls land use. As such the Local Planning Authority has a major role in conserving biodiversity.

The Richmondshire Local Plan December 1999 - 2006 contains relevant policies:

- Policy 18. To protect areas of special nature conservation value (including international sites, SSSIs and sites which provide an essential habitat for species protected by law).
- Policy 19. To protect Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SINCs).
- Policy 20. To protect habitats (including the broad habitats within the Tees, Swale and Ure corridors, upland areas shown on the proposals map and other features, sites and areas which are part of the network of nature conservation resources).
- Policy 21. Habitat creation and improvement.
- Policy 22. Landscape improvement initiatives.

Central Government's Planning Policy Guidance (PPG1) states that some issues may best be considered by preparing Supplementary Planning Guidance, and some Local Authorities have adopted their BAPs as such. Supplementary Planning Guidance should be consistent with existing Local Plan policies and may be a material consideration in determining planning applications.

The preparation and use of the Richmondshire Biodiversity Action Plan is an important part of the planning process because, in addition to providing information, it identifies specific and positive actions that can be undertaken to conserve the District's biodiversity. The BAP also supports some basic approaches to planning, such as:

- the precautionary principle
- no net loss of habitat
- like for like mitigation as a minimum requirement
- protection of SINCs
- the need for good ecological surveys
- the need to work with the Local Records Centre on baseline data, monitoring and reporting
- the importance of green space for quality of life.

The North Yorkshire Minerals Local Plan 1997 includes a nature conservation policy and an aftercare policy.

In addition to the planning system, there is a whole array of legislation that affects biodiversity.

2.2 Sustainable Development Strategy

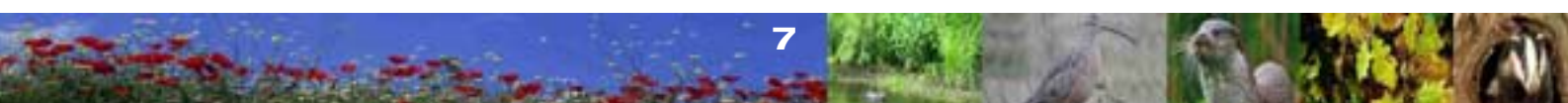
Richmondshire District Council has prepared a Sustainable Development Strategy, which was published in May 2005, and will be reviewed annually. Biodiversity conservation has strong links with sustainable development and the two documents will be mutually supportive.

2.3 English Nature Natural Areas

English Nature (EN) has divided the country into Natural Areas, based on the distribution of wildlife and natural features rather than administrative areas.

The following EN Natural Areas cover Richmondshire District:

- Yorkshire Dales
- Pennine Dales Fringe
- Vale of York and Mowbray



3. Protected Sites

Photograph - Graham Megson.

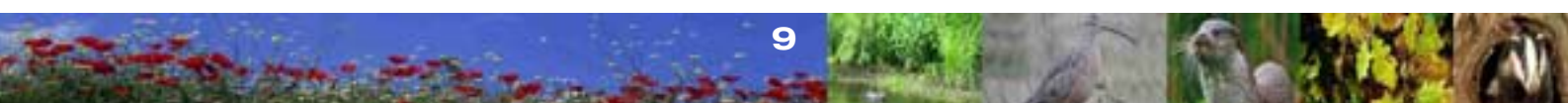
3.1 Sites of Special Scientific Interest

The best wildlife sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), are notified by English Nature, the Government's wildlife advisor with powers and duties to protect and enhance the natural heritage in England. SSSIs are shown on the English Nature (www.english-nature.gov.uk) and associated web sites, for example www.natureonthemap.org.uk, and www.magic.gov.uk.

3.2 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

A Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) is a non-statutory designation used to identify high quality wildlife sites in the county. Local Authorities have a responsibility to take account of sites of substantive nature conservation. SINCs are shown on the Richmondshire District Local Plan proposals map, but they are not necessarily sites that have public access. They are protected by a policy in the Richmondshire District Local Plan and are part of the planning system, in that they must be protected from significant effects of development. Partnership working with SINC owners is desirable to keep the sites in favourable condition for wildlife.

The Richmondshire BAP focuses on the whole district but recognises that SINCs are important biological units. The steering group recommends that all sites of nature conservation interest be surveyed (with landowner permission) through the independent SINC panel (SINC^2). The classification of SINCs is largely based on the national British Plant Community criteria known as the National Vegetation Classification (NVC) system. The NVC is a well-established national system for scientifically assessing and assigning plant communities to habitat types. The NVC tables are published in a series of books covering all of the main habitat types and these have been used for setting the criteria for the designation of SINC sites. However, NVC codes have not been widely used in the Habitat Action Plans in an attempt to avoid making the Plan too scientific.



4. How was the plan drawn up?

4.1 The Richmondshire Biodiversity Action Plan

North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) has led the Richmondshire BAP initiative, with support and funding from Richmondshire District Council (RDC) and English Nature. The initial task was to set up a biodiversity partnership and a steering group (Appendix 1). A wildlife audit covering known habitats and species formed the basis of the decisions made by the steering group on the selection of habitat and species priorities. Individual Habitat Action Plans and Species Action Plans were then drawn up.

The Richmondshire BAP covers the same area as the District Local Plan, a plan of which is shown in Appendix 2. It does not cover the Yorkshire Dales National Park, which has its own BAP.

This version is the first attempt at drawing together all the information that we have, assessing what needs the most attention and where we can contribute the most.

4.2 Criteria for the selection of local priority habitats

Although all species of wildlife are important, the BAP concentrates on priority habitats and species. Priorities were selected by the steering group, based on the following recognised criteria:

- Any habitat for which a UK BAP has been prepared that occurs in the Richmondshire District (excluding the National Park).
- Any semi-natural habitat that occurs in the Richmondshire District.
- Any habitat that is characteristic of the Richmondshire District.
- Any habitat that is locally distinctive within the Richmondshire District.
- Any habitat that supports a priority species and occurs in the Richmondshire District.

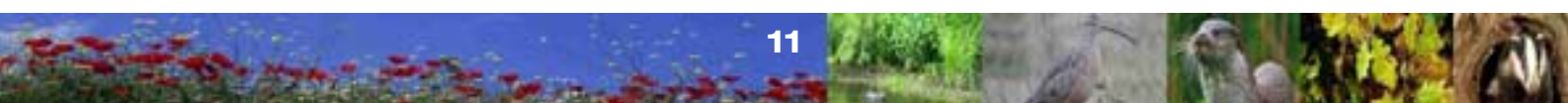
4.3 Criteria for the selection of local priority species

Priorities were selected by the steering group, based on the following recognised criteria:

- Any species (not including vagrants) that has recently occurred in Richmondshire, and for which a UK BAP has been prepared.
- Any species recognised to be of conservation concern (such as Red Data Book listing, nationally scarce or red / amber listed birds) and has recently occurred in Richmondshire.
- Any species that has statutory protection under European Directives or the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and has recently occurred in Richmondshire.
- Any species occurring in the District that is considered by experts to be regionally rare.
- Any species that is considered to be locally valued or distinctive.
- Any species that is considered likely to make a good flagship species for promoting action plans.

4.4 The Habitat and Species Action Plans

Individual Action Plans have been produced for twelve habitats (including associated species) and five species. In addition, four guidance notes have been prepared.



Priority habitats	Guidance notes	Priority species
Woodland	Farmland	Otter
Lowland wood pasture, parkland and veteran trees	Gardens	Water vole
Upland hay meadow	Development	Bats
Flood plain grassland	Non-native problem species	Black grouse
Upland calcareous grassland		Curlew
Species-rich grassland		
Upland heathland and Blanket bog		
Moorland edge		
Fen		
Reedbed		
Flowing water		
Standing water		

Each plan has been prepared by experts on the steering group and provides information on the current status, the reasons for decline, examines the national and regional response if appropriate and sets objectives, targets and actions which can be monitored over a five-year period.

The Richmondshire BAP aims to achieve conservation through targets based upon protection, enhancement and re-creation:

- The key means of protecting habitats and species are by protecting the existing resource at sites, often using designations such as: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Nature Reserve (NR). Such sites require favourable management, often through Management Agreements with the owners.
- Enhancement seeks to improve existing degraded habitat to a state of favourable condition for wildlife.
- Re-creation seeks to expand the resource.

4.5 Guidance notes

Four guidance notes have been prepared, with conservation tips for Farmland, Gardens, Town Development and Invasive non-native species.

Business and industry can use the BAP to identify wildlife priorities to be taken into account in their environmental management systems, such as ISO 14001. This is an audit that businesses can be accredited with, to demonstrate good environmental practice.

5. What makes Richmondshire special?

5.1 An introduction to the natural history of the District

The part of Richmondshire, which lies outside the National Park, has a wealth of wildlife habitats. To the west are the heather moorlands and hill pastures, and here limestone sometimes surfaces in craggy scars. On the flanks of the hills lie a series of old parklands with their ancient trees. Towards the east the meadows and pastures associated with livestock farming give way to arable farms, and on the eastern boundary sand and gravel extraction has left important stretches of still water. Across the District flow two fine dales rivers, the Swale and the Ure, forming wildlife corridors linking the hills to the sea.

Many different wild plants and animals, that bring pleasure to local people, depend upon the protection of these habitats. Whether it is the flocks of wildfowl on the lakes near the Swale, the returning Curlews to the moors and meadows, or the wild flowers in the woods, pastures and roadside verges, all these species need a healthy habitat to survive.

Several of these habitats are nationally important and contribute to the UK's dwindling wildlife. Those priority habitats that occur in Richmondshire include 3,738 ha (hectares) of Upland Heathland, 46 ha of Calcareous Grassland and 23 ha of Blanket Bog. There are also examples of Upland Oak Woodland, Upland Mixed Ashwoods, Upland Hay Meadows and Neutral Grassland.

With such a range of habitats it is not surprising that Richmondshire is home to many nationally important species. There are 17 species of nationally scarce plants recorded in the District including Alpine penny-cress and Spring sandwort growing amongst the lead mines, Yellow star of Bethlehem thriving on riverbanks, and the tiny fern Pillwort found at pond edges. The showy Globe flower and Meadow saffron are of local importance in the neutral grasslands.

The nationally scarce Northern brown argus butterfly occurs in the District and is dependent upon the Common Rockrose plant, which grows only in calcareous grassland.

Of Britain's most threatened birds, 22 species (the red list), breed in the district including Black grouse and Nightjar on the moorland edges, and one of the greatest concentrations of water birds in the country uses the lakes near the River Swale.

There are eight species of protected bat in the District, one building alone houses six different species. Otters use the rivers, including the River Tees on the northern boundary. The rivers and streams are also important for the White-clawed crayfish, which is threatened with extinction in many parts of the country. Atlantic salmon spawn in the River Ure.

5.2 UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitats occurring in the District

Table 1 gives priority habitat information. Column 1 shows which of the UK BAP priority habitats occur in the Richmondshire BAP area. Column 2 gives the Richmondshire BAP name for the habitat (this is sometimes different where broader habitat definitions have been used). Column 3 gives the SINC definition (using the NVC system) that most closely refers to the habitat.

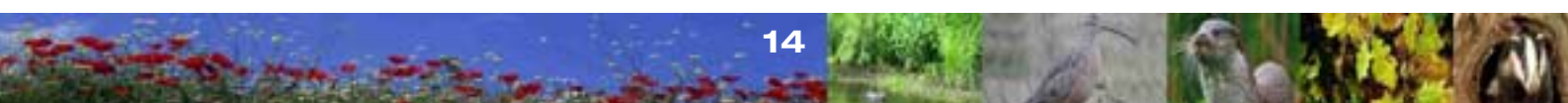


Table 1. Relationship between UK BAP priority habitats, Richmondshire BAP habitats and SINC habitat definitions using the National Vegetation Classification.

Richmondshire Local BAP habitat	UK BAP priority habitat	SINC Panel habitat types (including NVC types where known)
Ash woodland	Upland mixed ash woodland	Upland mixed ash woodland (W9) Lowland mixed ash woodlands (W8)
Oak woodland	Upland oakwood	Upland oakwood (W10, W11, W16, W17) Lowland oak/birch rowan woodlands (W10, W16)
Wet woodland		Wet woodland (W1-W7)
Other woodland types		Scrub (W21-25)
Lowland wood pasture and parkland	Lowland wood pasture and parkland	Parkland (MG6, MG7, W10 + more see UK BAP).
Farmland	Cereal field margins Ancient and/or species-rich hedgerows	Cereal field margins (No NVC) Arable weed communities (OV1-OV17) (No NVC)
Flood plain grassland (chiefly bird interest)	n/a for bird interest	Improved grassland (includes species-poor semi-improved grassland) (MG6, MG7, MG9, MG10)
Upland hay meadow Species-rich grasslands including metaliferous grassland	Upland hay meadow. Lowland hay meadow. Lowland calcareous grassland Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh.	Unimproved and semi-improved neutral grassland (species-rich) (MG1, MG3-MG6) Calcareous grassland (CG2-CG7, CG9 & CG10) Marsh and swamp (S5-S10, S12, S14, S15, S17-S23, S25-S28; M1/2 unlikely, M3, M10, M13, M16 M21-M23, M25-M27, M36) Wet grassland MG8, MG9-MG11, MG13),
Moorland edge including Upland acid grassland	n/a	Acid grassland U1, U2, U4, U5, U6, U20, M25
Upland calcareous grassland	Upland calcareous grassland	Calcareous grassland (CG2-CG7, CG9 & CG10)
Fens Reedbeds	Fens Reedbeds	Fen/Reedbed (S1, S3, S4)
Standing water	Eutrophic standing waters Mesotrophic lakes Aquifer fed naturally fluctuating water bodies	Standing water (includes reservoirs) (A2, A5, A7, A8-A13, A14?, A15, A16, A19, A20, A24)
Flowing water	Chalk rivers	Rivers and streams (A2, A5, A8-A12, A15-A18, S14, S22, S23 & S26) sub-heading for chalk streams
Upland heathland & Bog	Upland heathland	Upland heathland (H9, H10, H12, M16)
Gardens Town developments	n/a n/a	Urban/industrial (communities on unnatural /mixed strata) (No NVC).

5.3 UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species occurring in the District

The following UK BAP priority species occur in the Richmondshire BAP area and are included as Richmondshire BAP priority species.

1. Pillwort
2. Spruce's bristle-moss
3. Common pipistrelle bat
4. Brown hare
5. Otter
6. Water vole
7. Bittern
8. Grey partridge
9. Nightjar
10. Turtle dove
11. Spotted flycatcher
12. Skylark
13. Song thrush
14. Bullfinch
15. Corn bunting
16. Reed bunting
17. Linnet
18. Tree sparrow
19. Great crested newt
20. Northern brown argus butterfly
21. Square-spotted clay moth
22. Angle-striped sallow moth
23. White-clawed crayfish
24. Depressed river mussel

6. Next Steps

Photograph - Whitfield Benson.

6.1 Biodiversity Action Plan co-ordination and implementation

The most important part of the BAP process is the co-ordination and delivery of projects based around the published actions, to achieve the action plan targets. This will require a high level of commitment from the partners. The co-ordination of BAP projects will require a degree of fund raising to initiate local projects.

6.2 Baseline information

The steering group has identified a lack of baseline data for some of the priority habitats and species. Where baseline data is patchy or absent, a true picture has not been established and without addressing this, the task of monitoring progress against targets is difficult. To assist in overcoming this problem it is hoped that a partnership will be set up between Richmondshire District Council and the North and East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre (NEYEDC) to hold relevant information and make it available for work involved with the BAP.

The NEYEDC has prepared species distribution maps for each priority species, based upon current data held by NEYEDC. Maps can be viewed on the North Yorkshire BAPs page of the website (NEYEDC[3]), with an on-line recording form to encourage members of the public to add to the database. See www.neyedc.co.uk/Richmondshire.html

The Swaledale Ringing Group and MoD have run a constant effort bird ringing scheme for the last twelve years at Foxglove Covert Local Nature Reserve (LNR). As well as providing baseline BAP data, the results have also been used to help monitor the Government's 'State of the Nation' headline performance indicator for woodland bird populations.

6.3 Survey and monitoring

The need for on-going survey work has been identified, to enable the biodiversity partnership to establish and monitor the status of both habitats and species. Although the Richmondshire BAP sets out to monitor biodiversity gain, there is no mechanism for measuring and recording biodiversity losses.

6.4 Reporting

BAP progress requires monitoring and reporting to the public, the BAP Steering Group and to the UK BAP. This will form a large part of the work of the steering group. Targets and actions for the individual action plans have been written so that they fit the national Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS), which is the approved system for reporting - www.ukbap-reporting.org.uk

6.5 Review

The BAP will need to be reviewed in the light of monitoring information. Whilst the plan will initially cover a period of five years it can be updated at any time.

6.6 Advice

If required, advice and expertise is available from local organisations such as the Rural Development Service (RDS Defra), Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), Linking Environment And Farming (LEAF), Forestry Commission (FC), Environment Agency (EA), English Nature (EN), Richmondshire District Council (RDC) and North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) amongst others.

6.7 Good practice

While the individual action plans have specific targets and actions, the following table gives a number of areas of good practice, which could apply to any of us.

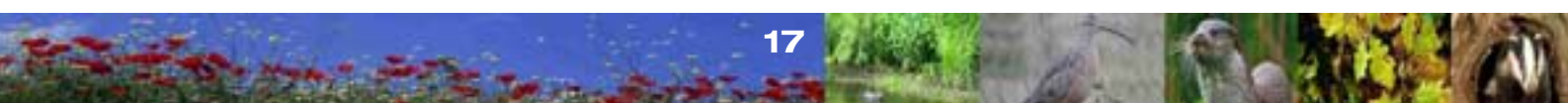


Table 2 – Good practice

Good practice	Rationale
Reduced disturbance.	Wild animals require freedom from disturbance, so that they can concentrate resources on breeding, foraging or resting. Care should be taken to minimise disturbance, for example when exercising dogs close to a concentration of birds (e.g. at a roost or where ground-nesting birds may be present).
Resist picking fungi and flowers.	Leave flowers to set seed and for others to enjoy and so that they can function as part of the food web. Picking and collecting can damage populations and, for some species, is an offence.
Environmental education.	Support the teaching of natural history, which is poorly represented in the National Curriculum. Young people also need to become stakeholders in the BAP process – understanding and taking responsibility for wildlife.
Giving records to the Local Record Centre	The North and East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre manages biological records for the region and welcomes data. See www.neyedc.org.uk
Careful siting of habitat creation schemes.	The creation of habitats, such as a pond or a wood, should not be undertaken until the site has been checked for existing wildlife interest. This ensures that a better habitat is not unintentionally lost.
Protection of migrating birds in southern Europe	Summer visitors, including the Richmondshire priority bird species Yellow wagtail, pass through the Mediterranean region where illegal bird shooting and trapping is a serious issue. Support could be given to organisations such as the RSPB who are fighting this.

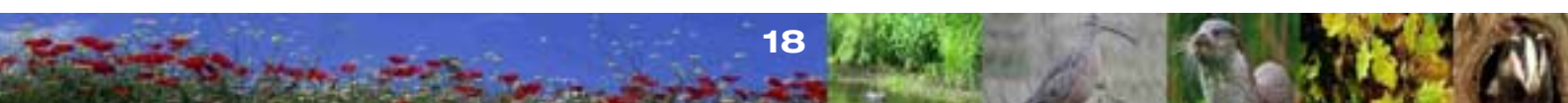
6.8 Contacts

If you believe you have something to contribute, we would be pleased to hear from you. For more information please contact:

Biodiversity Officer
Countryside Service
North Yorkshire County Council
County Hall
Northallerton
North Yorkshire
DL7 8AH
Telephone: 01609 780780
E-Mail us at:
ecology@northyorks.gov.uk

or

Planning Officer
Richmondshire District Council
Swale house
Frenchgate
Richmond
North Yorkshire
DL10 4JE
Telephone: 01748 829100
E-mail us at:
planning@richmondshire.gov.uk



Woodland Habitat Action Plan

Photograph - Graham Megson.

Our objectives for Woodland are:

To protect the ancient woodland resource.

To restore degraded ancient woodland sites and increase the number under favourable management.

To increase the amount of woodland in the District with new planting.

To promote the value of woods for nature conservation.

Introduction

This Habitat Action Plan (HAP) covers British woodland - both ancient native woodland and recent woodland. Ancient woods are those that have had continuous woodland cover since 1600. Some of these have a long history and have stood for many hundreds, if not thousands of years. Older woods are more valuable for wildlife because they have had longer to gain species of plant and animal. These are our ancient semi-natural woodlands and those of greater than 2 ha are recorded on the Ancient Woodland Inventory (AWI) (Carter[4]).

Planted conifer forests are less valuable for wildlife. In some instances conifers and some broadleaves such as Sycamore and Beech have been planted on ancient woodland sites so their soils, fungi and flowers are ancient and natural, even if the tree canopy above is not. There is an opportunity to revert these back into native species woodlands, such as Oak, Ash and Birch. These woodlands are referred to as Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) and are the second highest priority for action.

Recent woodland is woodland which has developed, for whatever reason, since 1600. The planting of new semi-natural woods is a lower priority. In some situations exotic tree species, including Beech, have been planted in earlier centuries as part of designed landscapes, and these should be taken into account.

The Forestry Commission's England Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) prioritises woodland conservation as follows:

- Ancient woods are effectively an irreplaceable resource and the absolute priority is to protect them.
- The restoration of PAWS.
- The planting of new semi-natural woodland.

The UK does not have many large tracts of woodland, which are required by specialised forest species such as Wild boar. Instead woods are fragmented and the proportion of woodland edge is quite high.

Management has had a strong influence on the character of woodland. Originally much woodland would have been managed as coppice for both timber and for charcoal. In the past century the requirement for these products has lessened and fast-growing conifer species grown for their straight stems and easier milling qualities have been preferred.

A wood, though, is not just a group of trees; there are many types, each with a range of plants and animals suited to particular conditions. Associated with all semi-natural woodland types are rich fungi, invertebrate and bird communities, and this is by far the greatest in ancient woods. The structure of woodland is important and features that are especially valuable are the age range, the number of post-mature trees, the amount of dead and decaying timber, clearings, flushes and streams.

Of key importance is the amount of woodland edge in favourable wildlife condition and woods are better where they have adjoining habitats such as scrub, hedgerows, grassland and wetland. Scrub is a key component either in association with woodland or in its own right.

Extensive areas of the District are wooded and support a good range of flora and fauna. The woodland floor, woodland streams and old trees are valuable for their ferns, mosses and lichens. One of the Government's national indicators of health is the woodland bird index, which monitors woodland bird populations.

This plan covers three UK BAP priority woodland habitat types:

Upland mixed ashwoods
Upland oakwood
Wet woodland

It also covers other woodland types such as lowland ash woodland, deciduous plantations, scrub and naturally re-generating woodland, but not recent coniferous plantations. A further UK BAP priority habitat termed Lowland broad-leaved woodland has been proposed nationally and wood cover much of this.

Ash Woodland

These woods occur mainly on lime rich soils and vary depending on whether they are on deep, moister soils or on thinner drier ones. Examples of both Lowland ash woodland and Upland ash woodlands occur. There is one Upland ash wood in the District, with the majority being Lowland ash woods developed on the deeper soils. Typically they have Ash and Downy birch as dominant canopy trees with Hazel dominating the under storey. They support a rich ground flora often dominated by Dog's mercury, with Common dog violet, Early purple orchid, Giant bellflower and Primrose.

Oak Woodland

These woods tend to be on more neutral to acid sites and can range from heavy clays to lighter sandy soils. They are dominated by Sessile oak, with Ash and Wych elm, and on the more acid sites, Silver birch, Rowan and Holly. The ground flora is often dominated by Bluebell, Bramble, Honeysuckle and Wood anemone.

Wet Woodland

As the name suggests, these are the very wet woodlands found where soils are waterlogged. Such woods are dominated by Alder, Downy birch and willow species. Very often they can appear to be scrubby in character with smaller, multi-stemmed trees rather than tall woodland. They can also have a complex and rich assemblage of plants and animals. Because of their nature, Wet woodland mainly occur as small patches within other woodland types, for instance around springs and flushes or along stream sides.

Other woodland types

Of the other woodland types, scrub is one of the most valuable, but is often perceived in a negative way. Shrubby woodland with Blackthorn, Elder, Bramble and Honeysuckle is required by Turtle dove (with nearby arable feeding areas). It is also important for other Species of Conservation Concern (SoCC) such as Linnet, Whitethroat, Yellowhammer, Tree sparrow and Tree pipit.

National status

Thousands of years ago the 'wild wood' covered most of the country, but today less than 0.08% of our remaining woodland is ancient. Woodland cover of all types is 11.6% in Great Britain (8.4% in England), compared to the European average of 30%.

Regional status

Woodland cover in the Region is 5.8% (some 92,000 ha) (The National Inventory of Woodland and Trees, 2002) but not all of this is ancient. This Region has 6,000 ha of the ancient woodland resource of England and Wales (some 6.7%) (Selman[5]).

Upland mixed ashwoods - 2,338 ha in the Region.
Upland oakwood - 2,946 ha in the Region.
Wet woodland - 343 ha in the Region.

Local status

Richmondshire District has a good woodland resource, which is an important part of the landscape. Many woods are close to towns and so are easily accessible to local people. There are 80 ancient woods over 2 ha in size in the District. These include examples for each of the woodland types mentioned above. At least 401 ha of ancient semi-natural woodland occur with a further 158 ha of Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) (Carter[4]). Our knowledge is lacking with regard to Ancient woods under 2 ha in size.

Upland mixed ashwoods - well distributed in the District.
Upland oakwood - only one wood in the District.
Wet woodland - rare in the District and locally distributed, especially along river edges.

Local examples:

- Hudswell Wood in Richmond (National Trust woodland with footpaths and interpretation boards).
- Clints Wood in Marske.

Legal status

- Forestry Act 1967 (as amended).
- Felling licences required from Forestry Commission (FC) under Forestry Regulations.

Priority species

Turtle dove	(UK BAP)
Song thrush	(UK BAP)
Spotted flycatcher	(UK BAP)
Marsh tit	
Willow tit	
Starling	
Hawfinch	
Bullfinch	(UK BAP)
Bluebell	
Wood barley	
Square-spotted clay moth	(UK BAP)
Angle-striped sallow moth	(UK BAP)

Status of associated priority species

- Turtle dove - national decline and on northern edge of its range in the District. Recent breeding at Foxglove Covert (up to three pairs), Feldom and Brompton on Swale.
- Song thrush - widely distributed. After a steady decline numbers has stabilised and may be increasing. Also occurs in gardens and other habitats.
- Spotted flycatcher - declining and now very scarce. Lost from Preston Spring Wood since 1992 and reportedly lost from other traditional sites. Also occurs in Lowland wood pasture and Parkland and gardens.
- Marsh tit – local populations thought to be stable, including at Foxglove Covert, Marne Barracks and Whitcliffe Woods.
- Willow tit – declining seriously with only one known site, at Marne Barracks. Winter visitor to Swale Woods.
- Starling – declining locally with evidence that the population at Preston has halved in ten years.
- Hawfinch – very scarce.
- Bullfinch - widely distributed, with locally good populations, e.g. at Foxglove Covert and Marne Barracks. Rather scarce elsewhere. Also occurs in gardens.
- Bluebell - an indicator of ancient woodland, where it can form an extensive ground layer. Found widely in suitable woods.
- Wood barley - a nationally scarce plant, occurring at two sites in the District.
- Square-spotted clay moth - little information but has been recorded near Leyburn.
- Angle-striped sallow moth - has been ‘caught at Catterick in recent years’. This is a species of low-lying heaths and mature birch woodland in higher areas.

Links to other action plans

- Lowland wood pasture, Parkland and Veteran trees HAP.
- Black grouse SAP.
- Bats SAP.
- Otter SAP.

Threats

- Clearance of woodland for other uses.
- Invasion by non-native plants, such as Rhododendron and Himalayan balsam.
- Increasing Rabbit and Roe deer numbers, Grey squirrels, grazing farm animals and high numbers of Pheasant.
- Woods becoming isolated as habitat corridors between them are broken.
- Decline in woodland edge and adjoining habitats such as scrub, that are in favourable condition for wildlife.
- Neglect of previously managed woods, for example coppiced woodland.
- Inappropriate management.

Requirements

- Ancient woodland is irreplaceable, so none should be lost.
- Management to maintain and improve the wildlife value of woodland.
- Reduction or removal of non-native species where appropriate, particularly Rhododendron.
- Traditional management, such as coppicing, where appropriate.
- Decaying wood of all sizes is important as habitats, notably for invertebrates and fungi.
- Protection from damage from sheep, Rabbit, Roe deer and Grey squirrel.
- Increase of woodland resource by 'halo-planting' around existing ancient woods.

Recent woodland can be enhanced for wildlife by undertaking the following:

- Management to encourage a diverse age structure.
- Leaving some over mature and dying trees after forestry operations.
- Creating diversity of habitat by leaving fallen and standing dead wood, managing rides, maintaining wet hollows, ditches, etc.
- Maintaining or creating undisturbed dense shrub layers.
- Providing bat boxes / bird boxes if no suitable sites are available.
- Re-establishing coppicing where there is a potential benefit to wildlife.
- Fencing against Rabbits and grazing stock.
- Protecting regenerating trees and planting native trees with tree guards.

Current local action

- The Forestry Commission (FC) has published its Forestry Strategy for England (1998) 'A New Focus for England's Woodlands'.
- The FC regulates timber harvesting through felling licences.
- The FC has produced Forest Practice Guides for different woodland types.
- FC National Inventory of Woodland and Trees published in 2001.
- Data collected as part of the Woodland Grant Scheme (WGS) documentation.
- FC financially supports surveys in their forests.
- Defence Estates (DE) is reverting PAWS to native woodland.
- Yorwoods has an advisor to assist owners of woodlands with free advice.
- Yorwoods maintains a database on woodlands in the District.
- The Royal Forestry Society Yorkshire Division runs a programme of educational woodland visits.
- DE has surveyed Ancient woodland sites on the Catterick training Area and has produced action plans. Work has commenced to enhance the Ancient woodland resource.
- Advice from Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT) on woodland management to benefit Otters.
- Ministry of Defence (MoD) is providing paths and interpretation in parts of the army training area.
- The Swale and Ure Washlands Project (SUWP) promotes Wet woodland and scrub and boundary habitats as priorities for re-creation on former mineral extraction sites.

Opportunities:

- The new English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) prioritises woodland management as follows ~ protection of ancient woods, restoration of degraded ancient woods and increasing woodland through new native species planting.
- Reversion of PAWS to semi-natural woodland. NB: This should be undertaken over a number of years to avoid moisture loss and the impact of increased light levels.
- Planting up of ghylls with woodland to improve habitat for Black grouse.
- The new EWGS will encourage woodland management planning, planting native and broadleaf mixtures and pay management grant to those satisfying the necessary criteria.
- FC Biodiversity Woodland Improvement Grant proposed to part fund specific projects contributing to BAPs.
- Wet woodland and scrub creation on former mineral extraction sites.

What you can do to help:

- Enjoy wild flowers in their natural place, without picking them.
- Leave fallen timber to decay rather than burning it.
- Woodland owners should control livestock and wild mammal populations to limit damage to acceptable levels.

Lowland wood pasture, Parkland and veteran trees Habitat Action Plan

Photograph - Graham Megson.

Our objectives for Lowland wood pasture, parkland and veteran trees are:

Ensure positive management of all key sites, to include wildlife as well as landscape and historic interest.

Increase the area of Lowland wood pasture in the long term, by reinstating the habitat on sites where it occurred historically.

Ensure the continuity of ancient trees and retain veteran trees wherever they occur.

Introduction

Lowland wood pasture and parkland sites are best expressed as country estates and should not be confused with the more familiar town parks. They have been around for a long time and are the result of particular types of management. Parkland usually involves grazing beneath large, well-spaced trees. Lowland wood pasture involves grazing within woodland.

A common feature of the medieval landscape of North Yorkshire was the deer park, which was a status symbol for the gentry. There were 67 in the North Riding, each between 40-80ha in size, usually developed on unimproved pasture and woodland and enclosed by boundaries. However, they were also economically important, used for hunting, pannage (pigs), rabbiting, grazing for horses, the location of dog kennels and a source of local materials such as Holly. Deer parks had their peak in the fourteenth century and many have disappeared in the intervening centuries, leaving only their outlines visible as hedge lines and boundary ditches.

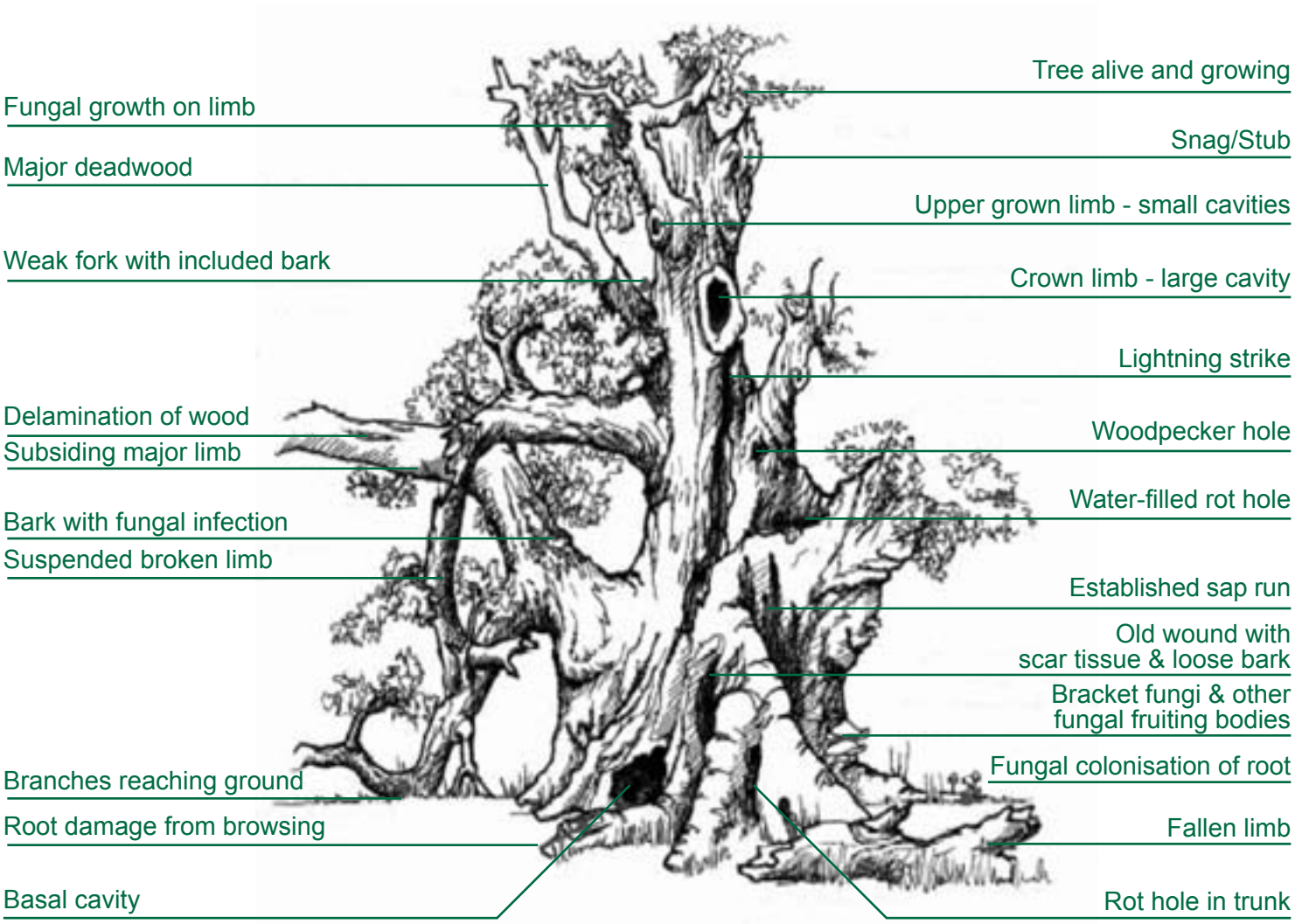
Lowland wood pasture sites and parkland sites are therefore of archaeological, historic, cultural and landscape importance. Many are referred to as deer parks because of their long history of managing deer. This habitat is a UK BAP priority.

Key characteristics are a long-established tradition of grazing, which may include deer, cattle or sheep and the continuity of generations of trees, with at least some ancient trees in the stage of die-back, known as veteran trees. Veteran trees are often trees whose lives have been artificially extended through the management of man, usually a history of pollarding. Many contain an abundance of dead or decaying wood and provide a range of cavities, hollows and rot holes which are colonised by fungi and invertebrates, as well as bats and birds. The Hawfinch is a declining bird linked to this habitat. As the creation of country estates and designed landscapes are from a past era, we are left with an ageing resource and one of the chief conservation challenges is to ensure a continuation of trees that can be managed to become the future veterans.

English Heritage (EH) conserves important parkland and designed landscapes for their historic value. Parks of national importance are recorded on the ‘Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England’, of which there are 40 in North Yorkshire. Many of the famous designed country estates also have impressive avenues of trees, some of which are now of considerable age.

This Plan also covers veteran trees that occur in other habitats, such as hedgerows, woodland and in fields. These ancient trees do not need to be native species to qualify. There will be good examples of Beech, Sweet chestnut and others.

The following diagram illustrates the main features of a veteran tree.



National status

Parkland within countryside estates is important in the European context. The figure of 10,000 - 20,000 ha is given in the UK BAP.

Regional status

This is a rich resource in the region, with famous examples such as Studley Royal. The English Heritage Register has 43 sites in North Yorkshire.

Local status

Richmondshire is particularly rich in parkland. OS maps show the following places as ‘park or ornamental ground’. The owners of these parks may all be able to contribute to conserving this habitat type and there are probably others.

Aske Hall at SE 177033 (Grade II English Heritage registered site).
Bolton Hall at SE 070895.
Brough Hall at SE 216980.
Constable Burton Park at SE 155915 (Grade 2 English Heritage registered site).
Cliffe Hall, Piercebridge at NZ 206153.
Clints, Marske at NZ 100008.
Danby Hall at SE 160870.
Dunsa Bank/Dunsa Manor at NZ 132094.
Easby Hall at NZ 186004.
Hauxwell Hall at SE 165935.
Forcett Hall at SE 172124 (Grade II English Heritage registered site).
Hartforth Hall at NZ 170064.
Hauxwell Hall at SE 163935.
Hornby Park (part) at SE 233936.
Jervaulx Park at SE 175855.
Middleton Lodge at NZ 223067.
Moulton Hall at NZ 225035.
Oran House at SE 252965.
Patrick Brompton Hall (Dalesend) at SE 221907.
St Nicholas, Richmond at NZ 181009(Grade II English Heritage registered site).
Sedbury Park at NZ 203050.
Spennithorne Hall at SE 138890.
Stanwick Park at NZ 185115.
Temple Grounds, Richmond at NZ 165008 (Grade II English Heritage registered site).

Currently there is little information on isolated veteran trees in the District, and it will be important for the BAP to address this. A fine example of an ancient tree is Nanny Tuck's oak, which is in West Wood on the Bolton estate in Wensley (viewable from a public right of way). The 'Redmire Oak' on Redmire village green is a locally valued veteran, which is dying. However, even in death it will be of value to wildlife, as it slowly decays, providing dozens of specialist micro-habitats for insects.

Legal status

- Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) can be placed on important trees by Richmondshire DC.

Priority species

Lesser spotted woodpecker Spotted flycatcher (UK BAP)

Status of priority species

- Lesser spotted woodpecker – with a national decline of 81% (Gregory[6]) and few local records, this is a SoCC.
- Spotted flycatcher – is declining locally in line with the rapid national decline. Many observers report its loss from traditional sites.

Links to other action plans

- Woodland HAP
- Bats SAP

Current action

- English Heritage has a register and a conservation programme.
- The Ancient Tree Forum (run by the Woodland Trust) has a national register of veteran trees.
- Individual details not known, but many of the parks mentioned above will be being positively managed.
- The Tree Council provides coloured ties for marking hedgerow trees to be left to grow into standards.

Threats

- Changes to traditional levels of grazing.
- Felling of ancient trees, due to public safety fears.
- Skewed age structure leading to a break in the continuity of old trees.
- Removal of dead wood.

What you can do to help:

- Leave fallen timber to decay naturally - even in our gardens this is important for wildlife.
- Report the whereabouts of veteran trees to the BAP steering group.

Upland hay meadow Habitat Action Plan

Our objectives for Upland hay meadow are:

No loss of existing resource.

Enhancement of all degraded Upland hay meadows, so that whole resource is in favourable wildlife management.

Introduction

Upland hay meadows are colourful, flower-rich meadows on neutral soils. They are a traditional part of the upland farm, being grazed in the winter and then left to grow over the summer before being cut late in the summer. Nutrient input is low, being reduced to occasional dressings of manure and lime. The hay is stored and used as winter-feed for stock. Due to the overall decline in traditional farming, the Upland hay meadows have greatly declined in number and it is now a very scarce resource. They are recognised as being of very high biodiversity importance.

Typical species are Meadow cranesbill and Wood cranesbill, with Sweet vernal grass, Yorkshire fog, Quaking grass, Pignut, Meadow buttercup and a variety of other herbs. Hay meadows are used by Lapwing and Curlew, and historically were well known for supporting breeding Corncrake (now locally extinct). Formerly a key breeding habitat for Yellow wagtail, but this bird is now extinct in the District.

National status

A recent report gave a total of 610 ha of good quality habitat in England (all in the Northern Pennines) (Selman[5]).

Regional status

This habitat is restricted to Richmondshire, Craven and the Yorkshire Dales National Park. With 96 ha in the Region the quantity is very small (Selman[5]) and most sites are less than 2 ha in size.

Local status

The majority of the resource is on Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It occurs notably at Richmond Temple Grounds and the SSSIs Gingerfields, Thowker Corner and Richmond Meadows. The District total is 7 ha.

Local examples

- Upland hay meadows can be seen from public rights of way at Thowker Corner and Richmond Meadows.
- Mill Field at Temple Grounds in Richmond has permissive access.

Legal status

Listed on Annex 1 of the EC Habitats Directive (where it is called Northern hay meadows), making it a habitat of European significance.

Priority species

Wood cranesbill

Globe flower

Yellow wagtail

Status of priority species

- Wood cranesbill – occurs on a number of sites.
- Globe flower – one large population and small numbers at 4 or 5 other sites.
- Yellow wagtail – recently extinct in the District as a breeding bird.

Links to other Action Plans

- Bats SAP.
- Curlew SAP.

Threats

- Increased use of slurry, inorganic fertilisers, herbicides and drainage to improve hay meadow yields.
- Conversion to silage, which is cut too early for wildlife and is excessively fertilised.
- Conversion to pasture, with heavier grazing and associated fertiliser increases.

Requirements

- Hay meadows should not be cut until after mid-July.
- Continuity of low input management.
- No inorganic fertiliser input.
- Appropriate grazing especially in autumn.

Current action

- Management agreements for SSSIs.

Opportunities

- Available options for conserving this habitat in the proposed Environmental Stewardship Scheme (ESS) organised by Defra.
- Promote the link to tourism in the District (and Region).
- Regional development plans to reflect the economic (tourist) value of hay meadows.
- Road verges could be considered in the Highways Authority verge maintenance policy.
- Link with the Dales Meadow Heritage project, funded by the Dales Millennium Trust to promote tourism.

What you can do to help

- Walk in single file through meadows and keep dogs on a lead.
- Report Upland hay meadows that you know about to the North Yorkshire County Council ecologist.

Upland Calcareous Grassland Habitat Action Plan

Photograph - Graham Megson.

Our objective for Upland calcareous grassland is:

To secure the favourable wildlife status of the current resource, through site designation and land management agreements.

Introduction

Upland calcareous grassland occurs on lime-rich soils situated above the upper limit of agricultural enclosure, therefore in Richmondshire, most examples occur above 250-300 m altitude. However, this habitat is also found within unenclosed moorland at lower elevations. Upland calcareous grasslands typically occur as components of habitat mosaics, which are generally managed as rough grazing land for domestic livestock. These upland vegetation types are relatively rare and support a range of uncommon species, as well as being an important visual part of the Upland landscape.

This habitat comprises various forms of grassland characterised by the prominence of 'calcium-loving' grasses and herbs. It is a UK BAP priority habitat.

National status

It is estimated that there are 10,000 ha of Upland calcareous grassland in England, out of an estimated total of approximately 22,000 - 25,000 ha in the UK. Particularly important areas for the habitat include the North Pennines and Cumbria in England.

Regional status

The regional audit (Selman[5]) does not differentiate between Upland calcareous grassland and Lowland calcareous grassland. However, it states that Cumbria and North Yorkshire contain the majority of limestone grassland in the UK.

Local status

The Regional audit (Selman[5]) lists the Richmondshire District as having 46 ha of calcareous grassland, which will be either Upland calcareous or transitional with lowland calcareous grassland communities. Some of this occurs as part of the mosaic of habitats of the Lower Swale Woods and Grasslands SSSI.

In addition, there are 33 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) containing a total of 26.5 ha of unimproved calcareous grassland and 10 SINCs containing 5.7 ha of semi-improved calcareous grassland (SINC Panel[2]).

Local examples:

- Preston Scar, which is accessible via a public footpath.

Legal status

Upland calcareous grassland is well represented in the SSSI and National Nature Reserves (NNR) series in the region.

A number of upland calcareous grassland types are listed on Annex I of the EC Habitats Directive. The UK Government has proposed 20 sites as candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSACs).

Priority species

Thyme broomrape

Limestone bedstraw

Common rock-rose

Northern brown argus

Status of priority species

- Thyme broomrape – occurs on two sites near Leyburn, one of which is a SINC. One colony has about five plants and the other about 30.
- Limestone bedstraw - on the edge of its natural distribution, this plant occurs at several sites in the west of the District.
- Common rock rose - an indicator plant for calcareous grassland which occurs at a number of sites.
- Northern brown argus butterfly – the northern counterpart to Brown argus. This butterfly occurs on two sites in the District, where its food plant Common rock rose grows.

Links to other Action Plans

- Upland hay meadows HAP.

Threats

- Neglect leading to scrub encroachment and succession to woodland.
- Overgrazing leading to reduced species diversity.
- Agricultural intensification leading to changes in diversity and community structure.
- Loss through quarrying of underlying limestone and other calcareous bedrocks.
- Extensive Rabbit grazing, burrowing and associated impacts.

Requirements

- Appropriate grazing levels.
- Absence of fertiliser input.
- Rabbit control.

Current local action

- The Lower Swale Woods and Grasslands SSSI is managed for favourable wildlife status, and this includes an extent of Upland calcareous grassland.
- Butterfly Conservation (BC) is surveying and monitoring Northern brown argus.

Opportunities

- Available options for conserving this habitat anticipated Defra's Environmental Stewardship Scheme (ESS) from 2005.
- Action for Northern brown argus to be co-ordinated by BC.

What you can do to help.

- Avoid picking wild flowers.

Species-rich grassland Habitat Action Plan

Our objectives for Species-rich grassland are:

All remaining examples to be under conservation management, leading to a status of favourable wildlife condition.

Doubling of the resource through restoration and re-creation.

Introduction

Upland calcareous grassland and Upland hay meadows are covered by their own HAPs. This action plan covers all of the other Species-rich and botanically important grasslands. These occur on a variety of soil types, leading to their categorisation as acidic, calcareous or neutral grasslands. A particular type also occurs on mine waste.

Of the UK BAP priority habitats Lowland meadow, is the main type in Richmondshire.

Lowland meadows that are species-rich in flowers are often referred to as agriculturally unimproved, semi-improved or old wildflower meadows. They have low input management (for example no chemicals) and sensitive grazing.

All types of unimproved grassland are a fragile habitat. Vulnerable to destruction and degradation, they have largely not been able to withstand post-war changes in agricultural practices and the resource has declined severely in the UK. It is estimated that agriculturally unimproved meadows and pastures had declined by 97% between 1930 and 1984 in lowland England and Wales (Selman[5]). Losses have continued during the 1980s and 1990s, and have been recorded at 2 -10% per annum in some parts of England.

Some remnants have survived as road verges. Others still occur in churchyards where there has been a continuity of low input management.

Metaliferous grasslands may be species-rich and are of conservation interest because the species are extremely specialised and examples are rare. These are communities that have developed on toxic mining spoil from earlier lead, silver, zinc, barium and fluorspar mining, and on river shingle bars where waste from historic ore dressing plants was released into rivers. Contamination levels vary depending upon the age and mineral content of the waste. This grassland type is also called calaminarian grassland.

Metaliferous grassland is typically Rabbit grazed and the most contaminated sites are sparsely vegetated, with metal tolerant species and rich lichen communities. Over time heavy metals are leached out allowing less tolerant species to seed in, eventually forming a closed canopy of grasses and later shrubs and woodland. This process is increased in areas of high rainfall and where grazing is absent. Characteristic plants include Spring sandwort, Alpine penny-cress, Sheep's fescue, Mountain pansy, Common scurvy grass, Wild thyme, Thrift and Moonwort. Sparsely vegetated sites are important for invertebrates.

Unimproved Acid grassland in the District occurs on the moorland fringe. It is not a priority habitat, although it is important for birds.

National status

Lowland meadow – recent estimates indicate a coverage of 5,000 to 10,000 ha of Crested dog's-tail – Black knapweed grassland in England and Wales, 1,500 ha of seasonally flooded (Meadow foxtail – Great burnet dominated) grassland and less than 1,000 ha of Crested dogstail – Marsh marigold grassland. These grassland types are only found in the UK (Selman[5]).

Metaliferous grassland is widespread in Britain but occurs on very small sites making it a rare habitat.

Regional status

The regional audit (Selman[5]) gives no figures for Lowland meadow or Metaliferous habitat.

Local status

The baseline is 1,106 ha of neutral and 72 ha of acidic grassland. There is likely to be some calcareous grasslands of a lowland nature or transitional with Upland calcareous grassland.

The Regional audit (Selman[5]) states that Richmondshire District has 94 ha of better quality, neutral grassland and 1,012 ha of poorer quality, neutral grassland (with the quality being based on the number of plant species present). Some of this will be on SINC sites.

There are 79 SINCs containing 76 ha of 'Unimproved neutral grassland' and 10 SINCs containing 192 ha of 'Semi-improved neutral grassland' (SINC Panel[2]) most of which is likely to be Lowland meadow.

Of the 72 ha of Unimproved acid grassland on 34 SINCs, the majority is likely to be on the Moorland fringe.

Information on SINC sites does not differentiate between Upland and Lowland calcareous grassland, however, we can assume that there is only the former in the District, and this is covered in the Upland calcareous grassland HAP.

Local examples:

- Good site examples of Lowland meadow occur at Thornton Steward churchyard and at Newton-le-Willows SSSI.

Priority species

- Burnt tip orchid
- Alpine penny-cress
- Spring sandwort
- Green-winged orchid
- Meadow saffron
- Globe flower

Status of priority species

- Burnt tip orchid occurs at two sites, both of which are SSSIs.
- Alpine pennycress and Spring sandwort occur on a few key metaliferous grasslands.
- Green-winged orchid has just one location.
- Meadow saffron is abundant on one SSSI and is scattered at six other sites.
- Globe flower occurs at three sites.

Legal status

None.

Links to other Action Plans

- Floodplain grassland HAP.
- Upland hay meadow HAP.
- Upland calcareous grassland HAP.
- Bats SAP.
- Curlew SAP.

Threats

- Habitat degradation through inappropriate management, including drainage, re-seeding, conversion to silage, fertiliser input, herbicide use and poor grazing regimes.
- Inappropriate cutting of road verges.
- Un-contained road salt piles on verges.
- Loss of habitat and habitat fragmentation due to land take, development, agricultural intensification and road building.

Requirements

- Low nutrient input.
- Grazing at appropriate levels and times.
- Sensitive cutting (verges and churchyards).
- Freedom from herbicide application.

Current local action

- North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) Road Verge Survey.
- SINC road verge management by the Ragged Robin conservation group, funded by the Council for the Preservation of Rural England (CPRE).
- Yorkshire Wildlife Trust Living Churchyard Project.
- The Swale and Ure Washlands Project (SUWP) promotes the re-creation of Species-rich neutral grassland.

Opportunities

- Available options for conserving this habitat in the Environmental Stewardship Scheme (ESS) organised by Defra, from 2005.
- Revision of County Council Highways Authority road verge maintenance policy.
- Implementation of projects by the NYCC Countryside Service Section.

What you can do to help:

- If you know of a flower-rich road verge, especially one that is being cut inappropriately, or has an un-contained pile of road salt on it, inform North Yorkshire County Council in writing.

Floodplain grassland Habitat Action Plan

Photograph - Graham Megson.

Our Objectives for Floodplain grassland are:

Maintain the extent and quality of remaining remnants of Floodplain grazing marsh.

Double the existing resource of Floodplain grazing marsh, for the benefit of birds in particular.

Introduction

Floodplain grasslands tend to be regularly covered by floodwaters, which drop rich silts, making these grasslands fertile. Most are pasture used for grazing livestock or meadows, for harvesting hay or silage, although small areas of rougher grassland may be present. They often have ditches that maintain water levels and wetter ones develop as rushy pastures.

The richer sites for wild flowers and invertebrates are the now scarce, unimproved and semi-improved neutral grassland types. Rushy pastures and areas that have been improved for agricultural use, by adding fertilisers, can be valuable for birds at all times of year. In fact, it is chiefly for its breeding bird interest, that this habitat is important, in particular, for waders and wintering wildfowl.

There have been severe losses of this habitat in the UK and this has contributed to a severe decline in breeding numbers of Snipe, Redshank and Lapwing. Between 1974 and 1999, the UK population of Snipe fell by 67%, Redshank fell by 63% and Lapwing fell by 41% (Gregory et al[6]). It has been reported locally that the early cutting of silage has led to falls in the numbers of Curlews successfully nesting. Floodplain grassland provides rich feeding areas for Starling, wintering wildfowl such as Wigeon and Greylag geese. The declining Yellow wagtail is associated with cattle grazed grassland.

The ditches within grazing marshes can be rich in plants and invertebrates.

Due to its importance for wildlife, this is a UK BAP priority habitat, called Coastal and Floodplain grazing marsh. Large blocks are of greatest value.

The flower-rich grasslands are covered in the Species-rich grasslands HAP. However, there are numerous grasslands that have a variety of uses from agricultural to municipal, which are less botanically rich, but which are used extensively for feeding by birds.

National status

The exact extent of Floodplain grazing marsh in the UK is not known but was estimated in 1994 to be about 300,000 ha. However, only 10,000 ha of this is species-rich.

Regional status

This region contains important areas of Floodplain grassland in the Derwent Valley and on the Humberhead Levels.

Local status

'The Grassland Inventory' (EN[7]) gives details of 'agriculturally unimproved lowland grassland' sites and the information is held as a readily accessible record. However, the Inventory does not sort sites by district, so Richmondshire sites cannot be quantified for the HAP. An EN Lowland Grazing Marsh dataset gives three mapped blocks of this habitat covering 67 ha at Spennithorpe and Jervaulx Abbey/Kilgram Bridge.

Although the criteria for the selection of North Yorkshire SINCs has bird criteria, which could be used for Floodplain grasslands, no sites have been tested in this way. There are currently no details on this habitat within the District.

Local examples

- Patrick Brompton Ings.
- The Floshes, which is a site between Wensley and Middleham, by the River Ure.
- Grassland by Skeeby Beck, east of Skeeby Village.

Legal status

- Environment Agency (EA), water companies, Internal Drainage Boards (IDB) and Local Authorities have statutory duties set out in the Water Resources Act 1991 and the Land Drainage Act 1991.

Priority species

- Lapwing
- Redshank
- Snipe
- Curlew (see Curlew SAP)
- Yellow wagtail
- Starling

Status of priority species

- Lapwing - declining both nationally and locally. Nests on Grazing marsh, set a side, and hill pasture.
- Redshank - declining both nationally and locally. Nests in wetland.
- Snipe - declining both nationally and locally. Nests in rushy pasture.
- Curlew - see Curlew SAP.
- Yellow wagtail - isolated pairs along River Ure. Marked decline in breeding and passage numbers.
- Starling - local decline matches national concern. Winter visitor in large numbers.

Links to other Action Plans

- Species-rich grasslands HAP
- Upland hay meadow HAP
- Flowing water HAP
- Water vole SAP.
- Curlew SAP.

Threats

- Agricultural improvement through drainage, ploughing, re-seeding, fertiliser treatment, nitrogen input, pesticide treatment, slurry application.
- Conversion to arable.
- The shift from hay-making to silage production, locally identified as adversely affecting Curlew breeding.
- Impoverishment due to heavy grazing pressure.
- Lowered water tables as a result of land drainage improvements.
- Flood alleviation engineering, surface and ground water abstraction.

Requirements

- Traditional agricultural management, including hay cutting or grazing, and withdrawal of herbicides and fertiliser use.
- Seasonally high water table.
- Diverse landform and vegetation structure, such as dykes, scrapes and rougher grassland.
- Flood defence works undertaken in an ecologically sensitive manner.
- Buffer zones around high quality sites.

Current local action

- A number of farms are in Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS) ten-year agreements – with options to manage and re-create this habitat on former arable land.
- Recent work by the RSPB, English Nature and the EA has investigated the potential of some Lowland meadows and Floodplain grasslands to create floodplain wetlands.
- The Swale and Ure Washlands Project (SUWP) promotes grazing marsh habitat re-creation on former mineral sites.
- The Ure Initiative includes actions for this habitat (see Flowing water HAP).
- The EA, water companies, Internal Drainage Boards (IDB) and local authorities have a statutory duty to further conservation during their work.

Opportunities

- Bird data for key sites to be collected and passed to the SINC Panel to be matched to SINC bird criteria.
- Available options for conserving this habitat are likely in the new Defra agri-environment scheme - Environmental Stewardship Scheme (ESS) – to be rolled out in 2005.
- Habitat creation as an after use of mineral extraction, but note the current constraint of limiting sites that attract waterfowl due to civil and military airfields and the bird strike issue.

What you can do to help:

- Notify North Yorkshire County Council of sites where wading birds breed or where flocks gather.

Upland Heathland and Blanket Bog Habitat Action Plan

Our Objectives for Upland Heathland and Blanket Bog are:

To undertake conservation management of Upland heathland and Blanket bog in Richmondshire.

To undertake restoration of Upland heathland which is not in favourable wildlife condition.

To establish viable populations of all of the associated species.

The two upland habitats, Upland heathland and Blanket bog are dealt with together as they occur close together and compliment each other, to produce the large tracts of land commonly referred to as moorland.

Introduction – Upland heathland

Upland heathland is a UK BAP priority habitat. This habitat tends to be found above the level of field enclosure (usually 250-300 m), where the rainfall is above 1,000 mm/year. It forms on shallow peat of less than 50 cm depth or on peaty podsol soils and is dominated by dwarf shrubs, such as heather. An important assemblage of birds such as Meadow pipits, Wheatears, breeding waders, Red grouse, Merlin and Hen harrier, and a diverse range of invertebrates, is associated with Upland heathland.

Extensive areas of wet or dry Upland heathland can occur, or the habitat can be found in a mosaic with acid grassland, blanket bog, flushes, rocky outcrops and acid scree - supporting Bracken, scattered trees and scrub.

The structure and composition of Upland heathland is strongly influenced by climate, topography and soil moisture conditions and also by management practices, especially grazing and burning. A long history of grazing has eliminated Heather from many heathlands and species-poor, grass dominant habitats have become widespread.

National status

Of the UK resource of Upland heathland (estimated 2.9 million ha), about 269,000 ha is in England, much of which is designated SSSI (for its national importance) and cSAC (for its European importance) (Selman[5]).

Regional status

This region holds about 76,000 ha of Upland heathland, which is 28% of the resource occurring in England (Selman[5]).

Local status

Richmondshire District has 3,738 ha of Upland heathland (5% of the Region's total) (Selman[5]). Much of this is within SSSIs and very little is within SINCs. Indeed, only six SINC sites contain this habitat - covering just 10 ha (SINC Panel [2]).

Local examples

- Preston Moor
- Hurst Moor
- Stainton Moor

Introduction – Blanket bog

Blanket bog, which is a UK BAP priority habitat, comprises a layer of peat more than 50 cm deep, covering the hill tops in areas of high, regular rainfall on slopes of up to 30%. Both actively growing and degraded Bogs are included in this plan because of their international significance. Post war drainage through the digging of grips has dried out and damaged many Bogs, as well as contributing to flooding problems in the lowlands.

Specialised plants are found, including Sphagnum mosses, sundews, Common butterwort and cotton-grasses. A variety of insects are associated with this habitat, it is important for breeding birds and is often managed for Red grouse or sheep. Subsidiary habitats include Bog pools.

National status

There is an estimated 1.5 million ha in the UK, with most found in Scotland (Selman[5]).

Regional status

The Yorkshire and The Humber region has approximately 53,000 ha, which is 3.5% of the estimated UK amount (Selman[5]).

Local status

The regional audit gives the Richmondshire District 23 ha of Blanket bog habitat. This is mostly within SSSIs and a good example occurs at Tranmire SSSI in Colsterdale (Selman[5]).

Only a tiny amount – some 1 ha – occurs within three SINCs and this is a mixture of the following three Bog types – Blanket Sphagnum bog, Dry modified bog and Wet modified bog,

Legal status

- Actively growing Blanket bogs are included in the EC Habitats Directive. Nesting birds are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Hen harrier and Merlin have special protection as schedule 1 species.
- With regard to Open Access, under the CROW Act, it is possible for local restrictions to be imposed through the introduction of byelaws where appropriate. These could be used to protect the biodiversity interest.
- With regard to Open Access, under the CROW Act, between 1st March and 31st July, or at any time in the vicinity of livestock, the legislation requires dogs to be on a fixed lead of no more than two metres.

Upland heathland and Blanket bog Priority species

- Heather
- Golden plover
- Hen harrier
- Merlin
- Short-eared owl
- Adder

Status of priority species

- Heather is widespread and abundant. More than any other species it epitomises moorland.
- The Golden plover is a wading bird that breeds on the high moors and winters in the lowlands. It is a species for which Special Protection Areas (SPA) are notified due to the importance of the UK population in European terms.
- The Hen harrier is a declining bird of prey, which has suffered greatly from past persecution. It predates Red grouse amongst other species. It is currently extinct as a breeding bird in the District, following the disturbance of a pair on Hurst Moor in 2002. Habitat in the District could support several pairs.
- The Merlin breeds on the high moors where it predates small birds. It is a rare breeder on Defence Estates land and neighbouring moors. It is vulnerable to disturbance and cold wet springs.
- The Short-eared owl nests on Heather moorland and preys largely on small mammals. Its status is local breeder in stable numbers.
- The Adder is the only snake in the District. It has been recorded recently at Bellerby Ranges and is considered to be much under-recorded.

Links to other Action Plans

- Moorland edge HAP.
- Black grouse SAP.
- Curlew SAP.

Threats

- Inappropriate grazing levels – both undergrazing and overgrazing.
- Spread of Bracken.
- Inappropriate burning regimes, including too frequent burning and a lack of burning in some areas.
- Drainage.
- Direct threats from clearance and conversion to other land-uses, notably forestry.
- Other damaging activities, such as arson.
- Atmospheric pollution, such as nitrate deposition, which can change the ecology of moorland habitats.
- Climate change is a potential future threat to this habitat.
- Recreational pressures, including erosion and disturbance, particularly when Open Access areas become public.
- Fragmentation, particularly of actively growing Bogs, isolates species.
- Illegal persecution of birds of prey, especially Hen harrier.

Requirements

- Appropriate management, including good structural diversity of Heather.
- Range of micro-habitats including bare ground, scrub, bogs and open water.
- Fire control, including control of accidental fires, arson and managed burns.
- Control of invasive plants where appropriate. Plants such as Bracken, Gorse and Silver birch can become dominant.
- Light grazing to control invasive species.
- Areas of bare ground.
- Moorland ponds – good for specialist invertebrates.
- Good working relationships with moorland managers, gamekeepers and users.

Current local action

- Most of the resource protected within SSSIs.
- Condition statements on favourable wildlife status are prepared for SSSIs by EN.
- Many moors are managed and keepered for Red grouse shoots.
- A number of moors are managed by the MoD.
- Research by Leeds University on identification of active as opposed to non-active moorland drainage grips.
- The Ure Initiative partnership, led by EA.
- The Moorland Association represents landowners.
- Management plans are being prepared and grazing restrictions implemented on MoD land.
- DE has undertaken comprehensive upland bird breeding surveys.
- Operation ‘Artimus’ Hen harrier project.

Opportunities

- Support of the Police Wildlife Liaison Officer (WLO) ‘Operation Artrimus’, to tackle Hen harrier persecution in the UK.
- Targets in the Ure Initiative strategic plan are relevant.

What you can do to help:

- Keep dogs on leads when crossing open country during the bird-nesting season.
- Avoid fire risk.

Moorland edge Habitat Action Plan

Our objectives for Moorland edge are:

Retain or restore as appropriate, the full diversity and extent of semi natural habitats typically found between the 'high moor' and enclosed improved grasslands.

Introduction

Moorland edge is not a UK BAP habitat, but is considered of conservation importance within Richmondshire District due to its value for some species of conservation concern. Upland acid grassland is also included in this habitat plan and is similarly not a UK BAP priority habitat.

Moorland edge habitat is not easily defined as in general it describes those habitats that are an intermediate zone between the 'true' moorland on the highest ground and the improved grasslands typically situated immediately around a farm holding. It includes rough grassland, scattered Bracken and scrub.

The Moorland edge has probably been derived from moorland habitats, which formerly extended further down the slope. Equally, the zone has been squeezed by habitat improvements and the enclosure of pastures from the base of the hill. Marginal hill pastures dominate it and much is enclosed in grazing allotments.

Acid grasslands occur on acid rocks such as sandstones and on superficial deposits such as sands and gravels. Acid grass swards can develop even over limestone in high rainfall areas, through leaching or in association with deposits of glacial till and boulder clay. Although the habitat is typically species-poor a wide range of communities occur in the UK.

National status

Estimates suggest that there is in excess of 1,200,000 ha of acid grassland in the uplands of the UK.

Regional status

The Moorland edge is widespread across the UK uplands and forms extensive tracts around the uplands of the North Pennines.

Local status

This is not a habitat that has been defined in survey terms and therefore is not included in quantified land use survey data. However, common knowledge suggests that it is widespread along the edges of the moorland blocks throughout the District.

Local examples

- The habitat occurs at Bellerby Moor (viewed from the road) and Downholme Moor (viewed from the road).

Legal status

None for the habitat. Black grouse and Brown hare protected by the Game Acts.

Priority species

Black grouse		Ring ouzel	
Grey partridge	(UK BAP)	Skylark	(UK BAP)
Curlew		Linnet	
Nightjar	(UK BAP)	Reed bunting	(UK BAP)
Lapwing		Brown hare	(UK BAP)

Status of priority species

- Black grouse – see Black grouse SAP.
- Grey partridge – Declining in the arable regions in the east, but probably stable on Defence Estate land in the west.
- Curlew – see Curlew SAP.
- Nightjar – rare breeder, with confirmed breeding at Foxglove Covert in 2002. Possible breeds at other sites on the Defence Estates ranges. Also breeds within coniferous woodland and Upland heathland habitats.
- Lapwing – locally common, but steep decline in numbers. Also occurs in arable habitats.
- Ring ouzel – may still breed in the higher western areas, but rapid national decline is reflected in local reports pointing to a decline and absence from traditional sites, e.g. gone from Preston Moor.
- Skylark – local decline in lowland areas matches the rapid national decline. Still plentiful in upland areas, with a minimum of 50 pairs breeding on MoD land. Also occurs in arable habitats.
- Linnet – serious local decline to match national picture. Small flocks seen in lowland areas, especially in winter. Also occurs in arable habitats.
- Reed bunting – has seriously declined locally but breeds at Foxglove Covert, Catterick Training Area, Marne Barracks and Middleham Bridge. Breeds in a number of habitats, including arable.
- Brown hare – widespread and stable population. Also occurs in arable habitats.

Links to other Action Plans

- Upland heathland and Bog HAP.
- Black grouse SAP.
- Curlew SAP

Threats

- Extensive areas have been lost, primarily due to agricultural and forestry intensification through activities such as drainage, re-seeding of grasslands and removal of native woods.
- Lack of management may allow non-desirable succession to occur, such as rank and species-poor grasslands. Natural succession to scattered scrub would be desirable.
- The statutory right of access may affect the Moorland edge on un-enclosed ground and is a potentially damaging issue for ground nesting birds and other disturbance sensitive species.

Requirements

- Full compliance with Environmental Impact Assessment Regulations (EIA 2002 Regs) for uncultivated land and semi natural areas.
- Retention and/or creation of a mosaic of scrub, grassland, heath, wetlands and arable plots.
- Retention of nutrient poor and poorly drained land.
- Stock grazing at appropriate stocking rates.
- Encouragement of more cattle grazing.
- Control of competitive plants such as Bracken.
- Planting of scrub and small woodlands.

Current local action

- Advice to farmers by several agencies (e.g. RDS Defra, EN, land agents, Forestry Commission) on agri-environmental and Woodland Grant Schemes (WGS).
- Active Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS) agreements.
- Implementation of the EIA 2002 Regs on uncultivated land and natural habitats. Defra seek to protect those habitats covered where they occur within the Moorland Edge.
- Advice given on the development of ESS conditions attached to hill farming.

Opportunities

- Implementation of the Environmental Stewardship Scheme (ESS) due 2005, by Defra, dependent upon sufficient applications achieving suitable scoring and signing up to the scheme.
- Value of the landscape to be used to promote the District, particularly for tourism.
- To raise awareness amongst all sectors, of the value of the Moorland edge to wildlife and the local economy.

Fen Habitat Action Plan

Our objectives for Fen are:

To increase the Fen resource through habitat creation, while maintaining all sites in a favourable ecological condition.

Introduction

Fens are areas of wet ground lying on top of peat, which receive water and nutrients from ground water as well as from rainfall. They are dominated by sedges and tall herbs and develop into scrub. In natural terms, Fen is a habitat that is balanced between the wetter reedbed and swamp and the drier grazing marsh and wet woodland and these often form a mosaic of habitats. Changes in water levels or in management such as grazing can change Fen habitat one way or the other. This habitat action plan also covers the other types of wet swamp, of which drier examples are referred to as tall-herb fens.

This Habitat Action Plan covers all types of Fen - such as basin and floodplain Fens, valley mires, and mires associated with springs, rills and flushes.

Fens can be described as 'poor-fens' or 'rich-fens'. Poor-fens occur mainly in the uplands or within lowland heaths. They are characterised by short vegetation with a high proportion of mosses. Rich-fens are mainly confined to the lowlands.

Fen habitats support a diversity of plant and animal communities, including a higher proportion of UK BAP species than any other wetland habitat. Some Fens can contain up to 550 species of plant and several thousand insect species, including dragonflies and aquatic beetles (UK BAP[1]). Many of the plant species require waterlogged conditions and this habitat is also good for amphibians, and birds including Reed bunting, Water rail, Barn owl, Snipe and Grasshopper warbler. Such conditions are also ideal for the Water shrew, a species of increasing conservation concern.

Most Fens date from the last Ice Age, some 10,000 years ago, when the Vale of Mowbray was covered with extensive wetlands including lakes, fens and reedbeds. Indeed, historic sources such as Sir Thomas Jeffrey's map of Yorkshire from the 1770's, show an abundance of wetlands. Sadly, the majority of these have been drained and lost.

Recent work has looked at the local extinction of plants in the Swale and Ure Washlands area. This has shown that Fen and other aquatic habitats have lost significantly more plant species and demonstrates that Fen is one of the habitats least resilient to change in the landscape.

The debris from the ice sheets is now quarried by sand and gravel companies for use in construction and gives an opportunity for new wetland creation. Unfortunately, of all the UK BAP habitats, Fens are one of the most problematic to restore, because of the need for two components – a layer of peat and a spring. However, the vision of the Swale and Ure Washlands Project is to significantly replace a variety of wetland habitats in the landscape by working with the mineral companies and other partners.

National status

The UK is thought to host a large proportion of the Fen surviving in the European Union. As in other parts of Europe Fen vegetation has declined dramatically in the past century.

Regional status

The regional audit (Selman[5]) only has data for Fen vegetation on SSSIs. It lists 78 sites distributed across the region with concentrations in the Yorkshire Dales, the North York Moors and the Humberhead levels.

Local status

The regional audit has no records for Richmondshire District. However, Fen occurs within 30 SINC sites (SINC Panel [2]), listed under four sub-habitat types:

Basin Mire	13.0 ha
Floodplain Mire	0.03 ha
Swamp	2.1 ha
Valley Mire	7.2 ha
Total	**22.3 ha**

Local examples

(none of which have public access)

- Kilgram Bog SINC.
- Friar Ings SINC (near Bellerby - developed in glacial hollows).
- Jervaulx Park SINC.
- Stubbings Nook SINC.
- Ravensworth Castle SINC.
- Crumma (MoD) SINC.
- Another site is Lyndale Bog, which has Fen vegetation on kettle holes.

Legal status

- Some Fens are notified SSSIs but none occur in the District.

Priority species

- Reed bunting (UK BAP)
- Birdseye primrose
- Tufted sedge
- Marsh helleborine
- Black bog rush

Status of Priority species

- Reed bunting - This UK BAP species has seriously declined in the District, but still breeds at Foxglove Covert, Marne Barracks, Catterick Training Area and Middleham Bridge. It also breeds in Reedbeds and other wetlands.
- Bird's-eye primrose - occurs on just two sites, one of which is a SINC. The population at a third site was destroyed by arable cultivation in 1989.
- Tufted sedge - a nationally scarce plant, recorded from one site in the District.
- Marsh helleborine – occurs on one site.
- Black bog rush – found on one site.

Links to other Action Plans

- Standing water HAP
- Reedbed HAP
- Water Vole SAP
- Bats SAP
- Curlew SAP

Threats

- Loss of area by drainage and conversion to agriculture or forestry.
- Small total area of habitat and critically small population sizes of several key species.
- Fragmented resource.
- Valley Fens susceptible to agricultural run-off.
- Drainage or abstraction of water from Fens or the surrounding area.
- Pollution, particularly nutrient enrichment leading to vegetation change.
- Lack of sustainable management allows drying and scrub encroachment.

Requirements

- Water level management to keep the soil surface wet.
- Light grazing of Fen plants to prevent tree incursion.
- Creation of new areas of open water within drying Fen systems.

Current action

- The Swale and Ure Washlands Project (SUWP) sees this as the main priority habitat for re-creation, focusing particularly on fen-meadow and seepage fens.
- Water Level Management Plans and local water quality is monitored by Environment Agency (EA).
- Advice to Fen owners on management, extension and creation is available from the UK BAP working group.
- The UK BAP working group monitors the population size and productivity of key Fen species.
- The EA has been encouraged to incorporate Fen protection, management or creation in its Catchment Management Plans.

Opportunities

- Habitat creation through mineral restoration schemes.
- Conservation options in agri-environment schemes.
- EA, RSPB and EN have produced a Wetland Feasibility Study for North Yorkshire to identify opportunities for the creation of Wetland.
- Partnership working with EA.

Reedbed Habitat Action Plan

Photograph - Graham Megson.

Our objectives for Reedbed are:

To establish and manage a number of small to medium sized Reedbeds in the long term.

To allow a proportion of new Reedbeds to succeed to Wet woodland over time.

Introduction

This habitat action plan covers Reedbed, which is a particular type of swamp habitat. Other types of swamp are covered in the Fen habitat action plan.

Reedbeds are swamps dominated by stands of Common reed with water levels at or above ground level. They are dynamic ecosystems and over time reed debris builds up and they change into Fen, Wet grassland or Wet woodland. As Reedbed, Fen and Wet Woodland are UK BAP priorities, then this natural process may lead to the need for hard conservation choices. The development of most natural Reedbeds has been held back by man's intervention. Conservationists consider this to be appropriate if Reedbed specialities, such as Bittern and Bearded tit, have established.

Reedbeds occur in most water conditions, including brackish waters, and on both peat and mineral soils. Although Reedbeds are large patches of Common reed, lake-side fringes and reed lined ditches are commonplace and provide a network of corridors and islands of habitat. Reed canary-grass is also an important habitat component of some ditch vegetation and is included in this plan. Habitat occurring in ditches is subject to disturbance where essential maintenance is carried out.

Reedbeds support a distinctive breeding bird assemblage, including Bittern, Marsh harrier, Bearded tit, Reed warbler, Sedge warbler, Reed bunting and Water rail and provide roosting and feeding sites for birds and mammals. Reedbeds can hold large roosts of Swallow, Sand martin and Starling. Many other specialist plants and animals are found in Reedbeds including many fish, of which the European eel is important, and some nationally rare invertebrates.

The UK BAP Reedbed plan aims to create a number of large Reedbeds, and in Richmondshire worked out mineral workings offer the best opportunity to contribute to this.

National status

The UK has 5,000 ha of Reedbed, not including those found along drainage ditches. Few large sites (over 20 ha) occur in the UK.

Regional status

The regional audit (Selman[5]) gives 400 ha of Reedbed in the Yorkshire and The Humber region, including four of over 20 ha in size.

Local status

The regional audit (Selman[5]) shows no record of Reedbeds in the Richmondshire District. There are 2 ha of 'swamp' in tiny quantities on 13 SINCs (SINC Panel[2]). Reeds along drainage ditches occur but have not been surveyed or measured.

Local examples

- A small Reedbed occurs by the River Ure downstream of Middleham Bridge.
- A patch occurs at Foxglove Covert LNR in Catterick Garrison.

Legal status

- None, although most of the UK's significant Reedbeds are notified as SSSI and some have European protection.

Priority species

Bittern	(UK BAP)
Reed bunting	(UK BAP)
European eel	

Status of priority species

- Bittern – has occurred as a rare winter visitor at Wensley, Richmond and Hornby Castle. A UK BAP species due to its rarity.
- Reed bunting – This UK BAP species has seriously declined in the District, but still breeds at Foxglove Covert, Marne Barracks, Catterick Training Area and Middleham Bridge. It also occurs in other habitats.
- European eel – local status un-clear but declining nationally (EA pers com).

Links to other Action Plans

- Standing water HAP
- Flowing water HAP
- Fen HAP
- Otter SAP
- Water vole SAP
- Bats SAP

Threats

- Loss of area through excessive water abstraction, land drainage and conversion to agriculture.
- Prolonged, deep flooding.
- Loss of linear Reedbeds along ditches through ditch maintenance.
- Lack of a register of sites.

Requirements

- Water level management to keep habitat in a favourable condition.
- Sustainable management of Reedbeds.
- Bitterns require large (20 ha) wet Reedbeds with open water and good lengths of open edge.
- Sustainable populations of fish are an essential element for some of the priority species, including European eels for Bitterns.
- Management for elvers.
- Good water quality.
- Retention of Common reed plants during ditch clearance work.

Current action

- The Swale and Ure Washlands Project (SUWP) promotes the re-creation of swamp type habitats on former mineral extraction sites, including 20 ha Reedbeds, smaller Reedbeds, tall-herb fen and Great fen sedge.

Opportunities

- Creation of Reedbeds through mineral site restoration schemes and as part of flood defense work. Scorton gravel extraction site is a potential site.
- Conservation of linear Reedbeds along ditch network.
- Options within the Environmental Stewardship Scheme (ESS) from 2005.
- Habitat creation within Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (SUDS).

Standing Water Habitat Action Plan

Our objective for Standing water is:

Increase the range and extent of water bodies and manage them and their adjacent habitat for the benefit of wildlife.

Introduction

This Habitat Action Plan covers still waters, such as lakes (defined as over 20 ha in area) and gravel pits, reservoirs, seasonal flashes and ponds. Some very slow flowing ditches that are species-rich are also relevant.

Open waters can be categorised by their nutrient status and this affects their wildlife interest. They can be nutrient poor (oligotrophic), having a narrow range of nutrients (mesotrophic) or nutrient rich (eutrophic). Large mesotrophic and eutrophic Standing waters are UK BAP priority habitats.

Nationally, mesotrophic lakes are uncommon being dependent both on the chemistry of the underlying rocks and a low level of pollution. They are very sensitive to changes in nutrient levels and fertiliser and other runoff can alter their status, making them more eutrophic. Thus in an intensively agricultural rural area, eutrophic waters are more common.

Mesotrophic waters tend to be spring fed and are characterised by clear water throughout the year. Algal blooms rarely occur and they have a number of characteristic aquatic and marginal plants. This is matched by a significant invertebrate interest, with a number of rare species. This type of water also supports the group of aquatic plants known as stoneworts, however, further survey and information is required on this group.

Eutrophic waters tend to have extensive algal blooms in summer. Larger sites often have considerable bird interest, including both breeding and wintering waterfowl.

All types can hold extensive areas of other habitat types and marginal habitats are important for wildlife, with both Reedbeds and Fens having dedicated Habitat Action Plans. It should be noted that some aquatic species are as dependent on the surrounding habitat as for the water body itself, such as amphibians and dragonflies. All sites need therefore to be considered and managed in the context of their surrounding land to ensure that their value is maximised. Water bodies and slow-flowing ditches tend to be under-recorded for plants and invertebrates.

Larger waterbodies are particularly well known for their value to waterfowl, including breeding birds, passage birds and wintering flocks. Ducks and geese are an important group, many of which move to Floodplain grassland or arable land to forage. Species include Whooper swan, Wigeon, Teal, Shoveler, Mallard, Gadwall, Pochard and Tufted duck. The Ruddy duck is an introduced North American species with an expanding population, which has become controversial due to its adverse impact upon the globally threatened White-headed duck in Spain and North Africa.

Ponds are largely eutrophic waters and are scattered throughout the District. Their wildlife interest also varies enormously depending on how much nutrient enrichment occurs. Farm ponds and village ponds that have large numbers of ducks and geese or are managed intensively for fishing tend to be very poor. Others can be rich in plants and invertebrates.

Many ponds also hold populations of amphibians, including Common frog, Common toad and the three newt species. Whilst Smooth newt and Great crested newt can occur in all water types, the Palmate newt prefers mesotrophic or more acidic conditions. Their distribution is therefore more restricted. Clusters of ponds are likely to be of more value for amphibians, than individual, isolated ones.

Seasonal ponds can also be of considerable wildlife interest, providing habitat for some rare invertebrates and can significantly enhance areas as part of a wetland mosaic. They can also be of value to amphibians, depending on the period they remain wet. A good assemblage of aquatic beetles, which are relict populations from the immediate post glaciation period, has been found in a kettle hole near Leyburn.

Work in the Swale and Ure Washlands Project (SUWP) area has shown that the loss of Standing water sites and the wetland habitats of Fen, mire and swamp, account for almost 40% of vascular plant extinctions. These are therefore priority habitats for re-creation.

While mineral extraction operations result in large waterbodies being created, the opportunity to make these into areas that have high value for nature conservation needs to be delivered. This action plan supports the pursuit of larger and more wildlife orientated restoration schemes, incorporating a range of appropriate BAP habitats.

The Little ringed plover has benefited from the increase in gravel pits and the Swale and Ure Washlands area holds a nationally important number of breeding pairs. The Ringed plover also breeds. Reed buntings breed around the edges of waterbodies. The Sand martin has declined due to the removal, for safety reasons, of vertical cliffs in quarries.

The creation of waterbodies that subsequently attract flocking birds, particularly gulls and wildfowl, is in conflict with aviation policy regarding bird strikes. Currently the proposed creation of waterbodies within 13 km of an airfield attract objections from the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA). In the District this potentially affects the Vale of Mowbray with its extensive mineral extraction industry and this issue needs to be addressed.

National status

This habitat is widespread in the UK.

Regional status

The regional habitat audit deals only with the two UK BAP priority habitats. It lists nine mesotrophic lakes and four eutrophic ones.

Local status

Water bodies in the District include a corridor of lakes formed after gravel extraction in the Vale of Mowbray, and these are especially important for waterfowl.

The SINC database lists Standing water as covering 54 ha within 21 SINCs (SINC Panel [2]). Calcium-rich water bodies are rare with an example occurring at Hornby Park.

Local examples

(most with no public access):

- Leyburn Quarry
- Aske Hall
- Burton Park
- Hornby Park (a calcareous water body)
- Brough Hall
- Jervaulx Park
- R Ure ox bow lake, west of Jervaulx
- R Ure ox bow lake, south-west of Leyburn
- Gillfield Wood
- Bolton Hall
- Broomer Rigg
- Spring Gill
- The Batts
- Bolton-on-Swale gravel pits.
- Scotton Hall
- Pinkers Pond, south-west of Middleham
- Ellington Pond
- Catterick fishing pond
- Scorton lake
- Smallways wetland - near Scotch Corner
- Forcett Park - a lake with good marginal vegetation
- Boston Reservoir on MoD land
- Cleasby gravel pit
- Thornton Steward Reservoir

Legal status

None

Priority species

- Pillwort fern (UK BAP)
- Wigeon
- Whooper swan
- Sand martin
- Reed bunting (UK BAP)
- Great crested newt (UK BAP)
- Stoneworts group

Status of priority species

- Pillwort - occurs at just one locality.
- Wigeon - regionally important number winters at Swale Lakes SSSI (peak winter count of 1,300 birds).
- Whooper swan – at least two regular wintering flocks.
- Sand martin - breeds in gravel pits and along the River Ure.
- Reed bunting - has seriously declined locally but breeds at Foxglove Covert, Catterick Training Area, Marne Barracks and Middleham Bridge. Breeds in a number of habitats, including arable.
- Great crested newt - occurs on MoD land.
- Stoneworts group – no information, some species reported to be present. Surveys required.

Links to other Action Plans

- Fen HAP
- Reedbed HAP
- Flowing water HAP
- Otter SAP
- Water Vole SAP
- Bats SAP
- Curlew SAP

Threats

- Pollution and nutrient enrichment (eutrophication), resulting from agricultural and industrial runoff and leaching.
- Impacts of invasive non-native species.
- Unsustainable water abstraction.
- Direct loss of ponds to development or agriculture.
- Inappropriate management and conversions to fishing lakes.
- Conflict between recreational pursuits, such as sailing, jet skis, water skiing and angling, and disturbance to breeding or roosting birds.
- Conflict with MoD and CAA bird strike policy.

Requirements

- Guidance on pond creation and management for wildlife.
- High water quality and water level management.
- Protection from pollution and buffer zones to intercept nutrient rich run off.
- Adequate water supply.
- A variety of water depths.
- A variety of aquatic and marginal sub-habitats.
- Complexes of pools (up to 400m apart and connected by good habitat) can help to safeguard against local extinctions.
- Temporary pools (some species are adapted to these conditions).
- Good quality surrounding habitat for species that leave the water, such as amphibians and dragonflies.
- Minimal disturbance from people and dogs - especially for breeding birds.
- Control of invasive non-native species of plant and animal.

Current action

- Six lakes created in 2003 around Scorton, as part of mineral extraction after use.
- Water bodies and buffer zones are included within Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS).
- Lakes and ponds are considered in water-level management plans produced by the Environment Agency (EA).
- Funding for pond creation work is available from Yorkshire Water.
- Morgan (Morgan[8]) has written an account of the use of gravel pits by waterbirds.
- UK BAP lead agency is developing a database on lakes.
- MoD undertake management including the creation of scrapes and standing water on the army training area and at Foxglove Covert LNR.

Opportunities

- Large scale wildlife focused habitat creation, including Standing water and other BAP habitats, at gravel extraction sites as part of restoration schemes.
- More water bodies to be positively managed for wildlife by angling clubs.
- Options under the proposed Environmental Stewardship Entry Level Scheme (ELS) and Higher Level Scheme (HLS).
- Wildlife pond creation on business premises.
- Creation of wildlife ponds as mitigation within development schemes.

What you can do to help:

- Gather up discarded fishing tackle and dispose of carefully.
- Report sightings of priority species to the North and East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre, e.g. ponds with spawning Common frogs or newts.

Flowing Water Habitat Action Plan

Our objective for Flowing water is:

Maintain and enhance the biological diversity of rivers and streams in Richmondshire

Introduction

This broad Habitat Action Plan covers the riparian corridors of any Flowing water, including rivers, streams and flowing ditches. In their natural unmodified condition rivers are dynamic systems that are continually creating, maintaining and eroding a complex of habitats, including both aquatic and bank-side ones.

The mosaic of features found in rivers and streams supports a diverse range of plants and animals, including mammals, birds, fishes and invertebrates. For example, riffles and pools support aquatic species, and eroding banks, shingle beds and sandbars are important for invertebrates - notably ground beetles, spiders and craneflies. Marginal and bank-side vegetation supports an array of plants and animals and is included. Rivers and streams often provide a wildlife corridor link between fragmented habitats in intensively farmed or urbanised areas. Many rivers have greatly changed through engineering works to control water flow and river catchments have been affected by changing land use.

Waterways are dynamic features. The River Swale is in its meandering phase and a number of ox-bow lakes have been formed in the floodplain. It is a very erosive river. Currently two meanders, near Kiplin Hall and near Swale Lakes SSSI (Bolton-on-Swale) are close to breaking through to create ox-bows. This natural process will impact upon current land use.

In the 1970s-1980s, gripping in moorland areas was grant aided and these drainage initiatives led to a change in the speed at which rainwater left catchments, increasing flood problems downstream. There are now some initiatives to reverse this by blocking the most active grips.

A considerable ditch network links waterways and drains both farmland and developed areas. Landowners have responsibilities for maintaining ditches in Richmondshire.

Since the privatisation of water companies in 1990 there has been a dramatic improvement in the quality of water in rivers, with fish returning to areas, which had been dead for over a hundred years. However, new European Union standards will mean that new ways of managing rivers will need to be adopted. This is because instead of just using chemical content and dissolved oxygen as a way of measuring the health of rivers, the Water Framework directive demands much higher standards of river management, including maintaining water flows and diversity of life, and the removal of hormone disrupting substances. The directive also applies to lakes, estuaries and ground waters which were previously not measured.

The management of river systems is best viewed holistically and the Ure Initiative (led by the Environment Agency), is undertaking this for the River Ure, which flows through the District between Wensley and the District boundary east of Jervaulx Park. The project includes the river corridor, together with its tributaries, ditches, and associated wetlands. It also covers the land from and through which the water drains. The project aim is:

> "To develop and implement a plan for the River Ure, which recognises all of the different interests and encourages sustainable management of the catchment for future generations."

The strategy (Ure Initiative[9]) includes many issues and actions that are relevant to the BAP, and has an aim to be compatible with BAP actions. The implementation of the strategy will deliver biodiversity benefits for the Richmondshire BAP within the River Ure corridor.

Key species include a number of fishes, with the European eel now of conservation concern due to severe declines reported by the Environment Agency. Typical birds include Kingfisher, Dipper, Sand martin and Grey wagtail. Both Little ringed plover and Ringed plover breed on gravel pits and shingle riverbeds in the Hambleton and Harrogate parts of the Swale and Ure Washlands area, and information is required on their status in the District.

Stoneworts could be important but require more research and a number of specialist invertebrate communities are associated with rivers and their deposits. Crustaceans and molluscs are valued and include our native crayfish and the Depressed river mussel. The Yellow star of Bethlehem is a plant that could be covered in a number of action plans, but is in this one as it grows on sandy river banks.

National status

This habitat is widespread across the UK. Whilst rivers in general are important habitats for a range of wildlife, only substantially unmodified examples or particular types of river are regarded as worthy of special status, such as SSSI designation. Chalk rivers are the only type specifically recognised as a UK BAP priority.

Regional status

This habitat is widespread in the region.

Local status

Three major rivers cut through the District – the River Tees, River Swale and River Ure. The River Tees is in good condition upstream of its confluence with the River Skerne. The River Swale and River Ure are good for wildlife. Numerous tributaries have good sections for wildlife, including Skeeby Beck, Marske Beck, Gill Beck (runs into River Swale), Clapgate Gill (supports White-clawed crayfish), Primrose gill (Dalton Village) and the down stream section of Bellerby Beck, (north of Newton le Willows). The SINC site database (SINC Panel[2]) gives a figure for Flowing water of 23 ha in 61 SINC sites.

Local examples

- There are riverside walks along all three major rivers – the Tees, Swale and Ure.

Legal status

- The Environment Agency (EA) has certain statutory duties. EA is responsible for designated 'main rivers', the Internal Drainage Boards (IDB) for certain other watercourses and local authorities for some others.
- All fresh water fish, especially the salmonids, are protected under the Salmon and Freshwater Fisheries Act 1975.
- In Yorkshire, an 8 m strip on either side of a watercourse has to be considered for flood defence.
- Both White-clawed crayfish and Otter are legally protected.
- The habitat of Water vole is legally protected and the Joint Nature Conservancy Council has recommended full protection from 2005.

Priority species

Spruce's bristle-moss (UK BAP)	Grayling fish
Yellow star of Bethlehem	European eel
Sand martin	White-clawed crayfish (UK BAP)
Atlantic salmon	Depressed river mussel (UK BAP)
River lamprey	Stoneworts group
Bullhead	

Status of priority species

- Spuce's bristle-moss – this species grows on tree roots and rocks in the flood zone of rivers. It occurs on many dales rivers with a District record at Wensley Bridge.
- Yellow star of Bethlehem – Yorkshire is a national stronghold for this species and it occurs on three SINC sites and four river bank sites.
- Sand martin – breeds in the District, e.g. near Middleham Bridge, but numbers thought to be declining due to loss of nest sites.
- Atlantic salmon – breeds in River Ure between Middleham and Wensley and at Jervaulx. Rarely found in the River Swale.
- River lamprey – occurs in both the River Swale and the River Ure.
- Bullhead – common throughout the District.
- Grayling – this fish breeds in both the River Swale and the River Ure.
- European eel – further information needed for this species which is now of conservation concern (EA pers com).
- White-clawed crayfish – occurs in both the River Swale and the River Ure in the District and probably in many tributaries, although few surveys have been undertaken.
- Depressed river mussel – recorded in the River Ure near Middleham.
- Stoneworts group – no information, some species reported to be present.

Links to other Action Plans

- Standing Water HAP
- Reedbed HAP
- Fen HAP
- Otter SAP
- Water vole SAP
- Bats SAP

Threats

- Wildlife interest may be secondary to flood defence and erosion control.
- Pollution from agricultural, industrial and domestic sources.
- Water abstraction direct from rivers – low flows adversely affect wildlife.
- Damage or disturbance caused by recreational use, such as trampling of vegetation.
- Invasive, non-native species. Problems include American mink (throughout), Signal crayfish (especially in the Ure downstream of West Tanfield and in the Tees), Giant hogweed (especially on the Tees and on the Ure downstream of Ripon), Japanese knotweed (on the Swale downstream of Catterick Garrison) and Himalayan balsam (throughout).
- Conflict between anglers and fish-eating predators, such as Otter, Goosander, Cormorant and Grey heron.
- Stocking of fish into water courses affecting the natural ecosystem.

Requirements

- Buffer zones between arable land and watercourses, especially for higher risk soils, and appropriate crops and cultivation methods to the site.
- Reduction of grazing adjacent to riverbanks to prevent erosion.
- Fencing to exclude stock from key banks.
- Identification of areas suitable for wetland restoration and creation, and subsequent delivery.
- Production and implementation of Catchment Flood Management Plans (EA statutory duty), to incorporate enhancement for biodiversity.
- Identification of areas suitable for flood water storage.
- Undertake sympathetic management of riparian trees and woodlands.
- Increase in the scale and scope of nature conservation after use for aggregate sites and maximising of biodiversity gain.
- Re-wetting of agricultural land using existing grants.
- Re-wetting of washlands on former quarry sites.
- Greater use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) in new developments.
- Compliance with and enforcement of Farm Waste Regulations 2004.
- Compliance with and enforcement of Nitrate Vulnerable Zones.
- Detection and remedy of point sources of pollution (EA statutory duty).
- Evaluation of river abstractions and ground water abstractions (EA statutory duty).
- Review and continue invertebrate monitoring.
- Surveying and research of gravel shoals for invertebrates, fish and breeding birds, and riparian woodlands for birds.
- Investigate and devise control programmes for invasive species.
- Assessment of levels of fish re-stocking and impacts upon wildlife.
- Assessment of abundance of key insect and plant species associated with fish.
- Survey of all fish species and their access to required sub-habitats.
- Research and reduce impacts of pollution, flow rates, physical barriers, re-stocking, etc. on priority fish species.
- Appropriate habitat improvements taking natural processes into account.
- Research, surveys and management to benefit Otter, Water vole, Water shrew and bats.
- Monitor water quality (used in Government's State of the Environment Report) (EA statutory duty).
- Identification and conflict resolution of adverse recreational impacts.
- Promotion of EA leaflet 'Best Farming Practice'.
- Identification of honeypot sites and collation of all projects planned in the river corridor.
- Dissemination of information and partner working.
- Promote management that allows for natural river processes, including erosion and meanders and allows the re-establishment of a natural floodplain.
- Management to enable elvers to pass into other habitats.
- Guidance for mineral industry on Sand martin breeding cliffs, which are preferable to artificial sites.

Current local action

- The Swale Regeneration Project has seen improvement along some stretches through its three-year project life (including grip filling and bank work).
- Research and monitoring undertaken and funded by the EA.
- The EA are responsible for the delivery of some water-level management plans, mostly for SSSIs.
- The Lower Ure Conservation Trust (LUCT) manages the Swale and Ure Washlands Project (SUWP).
- Operations such as water abstraction are licensed by the EA.
- Some stretches of river are actively managed by angling clubs, where they own the fishing rights.
- Some river stretches are SSSIs.
- The Ure Initiative partnership, led by the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust (YDRT).
- Abstraction licences are set until 2017, which includes the station at Kilgram below Thornton Steward.
- MoD has carried out Otter surveys and has created holts.

Opportunities

- Actions in the Ure Initiative strategic plan are relevant.
- Opportunities for habitat restoration may arise through Flood Defence Management Plans.

What you can do to help:

- Keep dogs under control.
- Dispose of discarded fishing tackle safely.
- Avoid pouring car engine oil, paint, etc down the drain.

Farmland guidance note

Why is farming important to biodiversity?

Farmland in the District is a very important land use and includes the key habitats of cereal field margins and Ancient and/or species-rich hedgerows, both of which are UK BAP priority habitats. Farmland is also important for arable weeds, bumblebees and farmland birds, which have all suffered serious national and local declines (UK BAP[1], Gregory[6]).

Since 1945 farming has undergone many changes, and the technological advances and the move towards production-orientated farming practices since this time have played a major role in the losses of natural habitat and the decline of some of the species in farmland habitats. However, many farmers manage their land not just for crop production, but also for its wildlife interest. This has included a reduction in the use of chemicals on farmland and recently the net loss of hedgerows in England has been reversed. Many farms include areas of good wildlife habitat, the best of which are designated as Sites of Important Nature Conservation (SINC). The long running Defra Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS), which pays farmers for income foregone if they undertake environmental works, has been very successful in both lowland and upland areas, with many farmers entering the ten-year agreements.

CAP reform

Some significant changes in farming policy are currently being implemented, Through European Union changes to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) in June 2003, there has been a move to un-couple crop production from subsidies, which is generally agreed will benefit the natural environment on farms and marks a significant change in agricultural policy. From January 2005 a Single Farm Payment will be made to farmers and will be dependent on a reasonable degree of environmental cross compliance detailed under Good Environmental and Agricultural Condition (GEAC). The Single Farm Payment will be phased in over eight years and will give farmers more freedom to follow the market.

Environmental Stewardship

Defra is planning a new agri-environment scheme, called the Environmental Stewardship Scheme, (which will replace both the CSS and the Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) scheme) to be in place by 2005. This will be made up of three levels of environmental good practice – an Entry Level Scheme (ELS), an Organic Entry Level Scheme (OELS) and a Higher Level Scheme (HLS).

The ELS and OELS applications will be automatically accepted providing they meet an area based points threshold and will be self-assessed. Examples include buffers around waterways and in-field trees, hedge and field margin management, winter stubbles and low nutrient input grasslands. The two entry-level parts of Environmental Stewardship represent a major change in agricultural policy with the intention of bringing about widespread and more wildlife friendly management practices on farmland in order to bring about biodiversity gains on a landscape scale. It is intended that the schemes should achieve at least 70% uptake across the country.

The Higher Level Scheme will be competitive and will have more advanced conservation options and applications will be scored on a points system. A Defra targeting statement will set the criteria for scoring. The existing ten-year CSS agreements will run their course and wherever possible will be renewed under the appropriate ESS.

Key agri-environment options

Key agri-environment options which may help biodiversity on farms:

- Wild bird cover
- Conservation headlands
- Hedgerow management
- Arable field margins
- Beetle banks
- Arable crops on livestock farms
- Rush management
- Rotational set-aside
- Non-rotational set aside

Nitrate vulnerable zones (NVZ)

Under the Nitrates Directive, Member States of the European Union are obliged to protect watercourses from the effects of agricultural nitrogen. In 2002 the areas affected were considerably extended, with parts of lowland Richmondshire being covered for the first time. Farmers are obliged to introduce 'action programmes' on agricultural land limiting fertiliser inputs to 170 kg/ha/yr of organic nitrogen, on all arable land. Defra has attempted to phase in reductions on other land, mostly grassland.

Within Richmondshire, the NVZs cover three areas covering approximately 9,490 ha, 475 ha and 6,325 hectares. In total approximately 16,260 ha of Richmondshire is covered.

What farmers can do to help.

For farmers owning semi-natural habitat designated as SINCs, these can be managed positively for their wildlife value. SINCs form important refuges for species, and islands from which restored and re-created habitats can be colonised. They may need to be buffered to safeguard them from adverse effects such as spray drift.

Farmers can contribute a great deal to the biodiversity of Richmondshire. Some ways of helping farmland wildlife require relatively little effort and expenditure. For example:

- Maintain a good diversity of habitats to encourage a range of wildlife.
- Maintain areas of unimproved pastures and meadows to provide a varied grass sward and range of insects. Manage permanent pasture to increase the range of plants.
- Cut silage or hay from the centre out, so that birds and mammals are pushed away from machinery and not trapped in a diminishing island of tall vegetation.
- Differential management of arable margins to include some tussocks and some tall herbage. Leave some uncut and un-grazed for nesting birds, small mammals and insects.
- Rotational cutting of cereal field margins.
- Retention of winter stubbles followed by the planting of low input crops, bird cover or a summer fallow.
- Grow low-input, spring-grown arable fodder crops such as cereals and root crops.
- Raise the water level in some fields to provide a rich source of invertebrates.
- Use of targeted rather than broad-spectrum pesticides.
- Ensure hedges are thick and well managed. Cutting of hedgerows every two to four years rather than annually and planting of new hedgerow trees.
- Wherever possible, apply herbicides by spot treatment or weed wiping.

Focusing on a particular species can be a good approach. Priority Farmland species are listed in the box below. Advice is widely available from appropriate organisations.

Some of the species that will benefit

Lapwing		Song thrush	(UK BAP)
Redshank		Linnet	(UK BAP)
Curlew		Tree sparrow	(UK BAP)
Snipe		Corn bunting	(UK BAP)
Grey partridge	(UK BAP)	Yellowhammer	
Turtle dove	(UK BAP)	Brown hare	(UK BAP)
Skylark	(UK BAP)	Bumblebees	
Swallow			

Advice

The following section gives information on the local status of the priority species and some tips on how to manage farmland for them. Local status is taken from the BAP species audit (Millward[12]), which gathered data - some of it anecdotal - from local experts. Very detailed information is available from the RSPB, which has produces a set of advice leaflets in partnership with the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) and the Game Conservancy Trust (GCT).

Lapwing – locally common, but steep decline in numbers (anecdotal). Also occurs in upland habitats. A ground nesting species preferring large open fields (Millward[12]).
Opportunity. Spring crops and permanent grassland with low chemical input for nesting and feeding areas. Short, tussocky sward. Create and retain damp meadows. Set-aside. Open areas in cropped fields. On arable land avoid nests during cultivation, hoeing or rolling and undertake all operations in the same week so that failed birds can re-nest.

Redshank – local breeder, but numbers declining. The Wisings site at Wensley is an important site (Millward[12]).
Opportunity. Retain boggy ground with short grassland with tussocks of sedges, rushes and grasses. Retain fringes alongside ditches or damp areas. Control rushes when covering over 30% by cutting at a suitable time of year and avoiding the wettest areas. Create wet areas. Delaying silage cutting until late June is probably not an economic option for farmers, however, wildlife friendly cutting from the centre out should be promoted.

Curlew – see Curlew SAP.

Snipe – local breeder that is regularly shot. Numbers stable on Defence Estate land but few breeding records from other upland areas (Millward[12]).
Opportunity. Wet areas, ditches and drains, unimproved pasture, moorland grip blocking, wet flushes, avoid large moorland burns.

Grey partridge – declining in the eastern arable areas. Numbers on the western side of the District, on Defence Estate land, probably stable. Ground nesting bird requiring rich invertebrate food source to feed chicks (Millward[12]).
Opportunity. Wild bird cover on set-aside, autumn brood rearing cover. Natural regeneration of rotational set-aside. Delay use of broad-spectrum pesticides. Bushy hedgerows, conservation headlands, grass margins, un-cropped grass margins, winter stubbles and beetle banks provide cover for nesting and invertebrate food. Cut hedges 1 year in 3. Small plots of wild bird cover in pastoral areas. Under sown cereal crops.

Turtle dove – has declined to the edge of local extinction. Three pairs bred at Foxglove Covert in 2004 and may breed at Feldom. Has bred at Scorton and Brompton-on-Swale in recent years (Millward[12]).
Opportunity. Set-aside with small plots of wild bird cover, natural re-generation of rotational set-aside. Arable field margins, conservation headlands, retain stubbles, rotational and wild bird cover options. Fodder crops or wild bird cover in pastoral areas, restore hay meadows.

Skylark – local decline in lowland areas matches the rapid national decline. Still plentiful in upland areas (Millward[12]).
Opportunity. Natural regeneration of rotational set-aside and grass cover. Delay use of broad-spectrum pesticides. On arable land include spring cereals or a spring break crop, retain weedy stubbles. Beetle banks. Implement wildlife friendly silage cutting, re-create hay meadow, introduce arable fodder crops in pastoral areas (avoiding existing good habitat and good landscape).

Swallow – population lower than a decade ago (based on anecdotal reports). Mixed reports from around the District, with declines in some places but good breeding numbers in others (Millward[12]).
Opportunity. Supply of nest sites in barns and outbuildings. Retain and create wet areas and retain fringes alongside ditches or damp areas. Reduced broad-spectrum pesticide applications from March. Conservation headlands, un-cropped cultivated margins, grass margins with red clover, permanent grasslands with low input, pollen and nectar mix.

Song thrush - widely distributed. After a steady decline numbers have stabilised and may be increasing (anecdotal). Also occurs in Woodland, gardens and other habitats (Millward[12]).
Opportunity. Good hedgerow management, including bushy hedgerows, cut 1 in 3 years. Copses, beetle banks, reduced pesticide applications from March, permanent grasslands with low input. Wet features such as damp grasslands and ditches. Small plots of wild bird cover.

Linnet – anecdotal evidence of a serious local decline. Local breeder in arable areas where winter flocks are often seen. Also occurs on the Moorland edge (Millward[12]).
Opportunity. Grass margins adjacent to thick hedges, over-wintered stubbles, Set-aside wild bird cover and feeding with corn tailings/wild birdseed mix. Conservation headlands and a variety of crops. Reduced pesticide applications from March. Provide seed-rich habitat in pastoral areas. Uncut verges and waste ground, areas of scrub including Gorse and Bramble.

Tree sparrow – has declined seriously, with a drop in submitted records. Nests colonially in holes and cavities. Nestlings require invertebrates (Millward[12]).
Opportunity. Grass margins adjacent to thick hedges, over-wintered stubbles, corn tailings/wild birdseed mix, conservation headlands, reduced pesticide applications from March, supply of nest boxes.

Corn bunting – now a very rare breeding bird, known only from the Scorton area (Millward[12]).
Opportunity. Grass margins adjacent to thick hedges, over-wintered stubbles, corn tailings/wild birdseed mix, conservation headlands, reduced pesticide applications from March.

Yellowhammer – common and widespread (Millward[12]).
Opportunity. On arable land - grass margins adjacent to thick hedges, over-wintered stubbles, Set-aside wild bird cover, feeding with corn tailings/wild birdseed mix. Conservation headlands, reduced broad-spectrum pesticide applications from March. Small plots of wild bird cover in pastoral areas. Hedgerows of differing sizes (some below 2m tall) cut 1 year in 3.

Brown hare – widespread and stable population. Also occurs in Moorland edge habitat (Millward[12]).
Opportunity. Conservation headlands, grass margins, permanent grassland, over-wintered stubble, thick hedgerows, coppices.

Bumblebees - some rare species were recorded in the District prior to 1959. Nationally, the common bumble bees are declining and this is likely to be the case locally (UK BAP[1], Millward[12]). Very important for pollination, particularly as they are active at lower temperatures than Honey bees.
Opportunity. Conservation headlands, un-cropped cultivated margins, grass margins with Red clover, permanent grasslands with low input, pollen and nectar mix.

What members of the public can do to help:

- Improve our knowledge of 'local status' by sending records of the above species to the BAP partnership or 'on-line' via the Local Record Centre website at www.neyedc.org.uk (click on Richmondshire).
- Follow the new Country Code when on farmland.
- Keep dogs on a lead during the breeding season (March – June).

Gardens guidance note

Photograph - Graham Megson.

Why are gardens important to wildlife?

Gardens and gardeners play an important role in caring for the wildlife of Richmondshire. This guidance note is designed to highlight some of the ways in which we can all contribute to biodiversity and perhaps even avoid unwittingly destroying valuable habitat or species.

In common with other urban greenspace, such as parks, churchyards, village greens, allotments and schools grounds, gardens provide a home and food source to a whole range of species, including some declining species, for example Song thrush, Bullfinch and Tree sparrow. Some stonework (such as Richmond Castle), brickwork and gravestones are important for flowering plants, ferns, mosses and lichens, as well as insects and spiders.

They provide a significant habitat resource for both species that live in or close to our towns and villages or those that use these urban greenspaces as part of a corridor linking the areas of more open landscape. With a little careful thought, the value of these important spaces to wildlife can be enhanced without effecting our enjoyment of our gardens – indeed we may derive considerable pleasure from watching the wildlife thrive.

Gardens of course, range in character from carefully manicured lawns, borders and shrubberies to unkempt or neglected areas. Whatever the style of garden you choose, there are things you can do to improve the value of your garden to wildlife. For example, by selecting plants and shrubs that provide a food source, you can improve the habitat for birds and insects and perhaps even attract new species to your garden.

The attractiveness of the countryside and the plants and animals it supports contribute significantly to the quality of life residents of Richmondshire enjoy. Hopefully, this guidance will provide some food for thought on what you can do to help maintain that rich diversity.

Responsible gardening - protected species

Birds, plants and animals in garden areas, just like the wider countryside, are protected and controlled by various pieces of legislation, some of which will be familiar, others less so. For example, bats, Badgers, Great crested newts and Water voles, all of which are protected by specific legislation, could reside or use your garden. Disturbing or causing harm to the species or their habitat is illegal. But help is at hand, and should you be concerned, English Nature will be pleased to give advice.

Perhaps less obvious is that to knowingly disturb nesting birds is also illegal. So care needs to be taken when for example, cutting hedges or removing shrubs and trees. The best time to undertake such work is in early spring before the birds have begun nesting or wait until after the young birds have fledged (not forgetting to get the appropriate approval if the trees or hedge are themselves protected).

Responsible gardening - improving habitat

There are many ways in which existing gardens can become more attractive for wildlife without major change. In many cases a slight change in how we manage our gardens can make a large difference to its wildlife value. Here are some simple ideas:

- Plant fruit trees, berry bushes and soft fruit. Avoid cutting fruit and berry bearing hedges and shrubs too early in the season, allowing the fruit and berries to provide autumn and winter food for birds.
- Leave seed bearing flower heads to mature and provide food for birds before winter pruning.
- Reduce the use of pesticides, including slug pellets, to a minimum - try alternative methods of pest control.
- Use varieties and a mix of flowers, shrubs and trees (native ones where possible) that provide a continuous supply of nectar, fruit and berries.
- Grow native climbers such as Ivy as shelter and nest-sites for birds and insects.
- Create a compost heap and buy only peat free compost.
- Set aside a small part of the garden to become ‘wild’ with less intensive management. Allow an area of lawn to develop into a wildflower meadow for plants and insects.
- Leave windfall fruit for foraging birds and insects.
- Leave fallen timber to decay and make log piles for hibernating toads, frogs and newts in damp corners of your garden.
- Feed the birds and provide fresh water.
- Provide nest boxes for birds, including House martins, bumble bees and bats or perhaps create a nesting site for the Mason bee using special bee bricks. Leave openings in barns and outhouses to give entry to nesting Swallows.
- Avoid cutting hedges during the bird-nesting season from April to July.

- Avoid introducing garden plant material (tubers, roots, seeds), including pond plants into the wild – some are very invasive, and avoid dumping cuttings in the countryside.
- Consider creating a wildlife pond - without Goldfish – advice on the design of wildlife ponds is readily available.
- If you have a cat, fit a collar with a bell – large numbers of wild animals are killed by cats.
- Avoid buying rockery limestone that may have come from limestone pavements, which are irreplaceable.

Some of the Richmondshire BAP species that will benefit from wildlife gardening:

- Song thrush
- Bullfinch
- House sparrow
- Swallow
- Swift
- House martin
- Smooth newt
- Common frog
- Common toad
- bumble bees
- Mason bee

Development guidance note

Benefiting wildlife through development

Introduction

This guidance note is designed to act as a prompt to those involved in the development process to consider not only those nature conservation aspects of projects that may have specific requirements, but also the wider issue of biodiversity.

Developers, and those involved in advising upon or regulating development, should be aware that some species and habitats are protected by legislation. Equally, they should be aware that as part of the planning process, specific requirements in relation to the assessment of nature conservation interests exist. But the opportunity to conserve and enhance the population and range of species and habitats (biodiversity) goes well beyond simply complying with legislation relating to protected species and habitats. With care, the development process can make a positive contribution to the rich and varied wildlife of Richmondshire and with it improve the quality of life for residents and visitors.

Bearing in mind that the best conservation option is to protect and manage existing good habitat and that enhancing degraded habitats and re-creating habitats are of secondary value, the BAP supports some basic principals related to the development process. These are protection of BAP habitats, for example Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), backing for the precautionary principle, which is to demonstrate caution when wildlife might be adversely affected, no net loss of habitat and a minimum mitigation level of like for like. The BAP also recognises the value of green space for the quality of life of residents and visitors.

Set out below, are some of the ways in which each sector of the development process can make a contribution towards that goal.

Ways in which the different sectors can help

Development Control Planning Officers

- Ask for ecological surveys to support planning applications well in advance, so that they can be undertaken at the correct time of year. Write in a request for survey findings to be passed on to the North and East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre (NEYEDC). Consider whether there needs to be a survey for the presence of bats when dealing with applications involving buildings.
- Consider preparing an advisory leaflet on planning and wildlife.

Developers and consultants

- Ensure that proper surveys of the site or buildings exist to verify the extent of any nature conservation interest and pass the data on to the NEYEDC Local Records Centre.
- Make sure that surveys are carried out at an appropriate time of the year, and if necessary repeated. For example, undertaking a survey of flora during the winter months on grassland will not provide the data required. Equally, be aware that some protected species (e.g. bats) occupy sites for only part of the year. Good information at the outset will reduce the risk of delays later in the process.
- Look for opportunities to conserve existing wild-space and to link areas of good habitat, for example by introducing hedging or planting between isolated tree groups to form a continuous corridor for wildlife or by protecting and strengthening existing landscape features such as old hedge lines, ditches, etc. Create new wild-space, such as scrub, rough grassland, ponds, bogs and species-rich hedges.
- Consider using hedging and planting to define boundaries rather than fencing or walls, particularly in areas that would provide continuous wildlife corridors thorough a site.
- For large schemes that will be landscaped at the end of their working period, such as mineral extraction and landfill, seek advice and design ambitious habitat creation schemes principally to benefit biodiversity. These to include significant Reedbeds, Species-rich grassland and Woodland as appropriate.

Landscape designers

- When planning landscaping schemes, specify native species of local provenance and include flowering plants, climbing Ivy, trees and berry producing shrubs.

Architects

- Buildings can be good homes for bats and birds without causing significant problems. Look to incorporate Swift bricks into the roofs of buildings, to be used by Swifts, and cavities to be used by bats. Swallows can be encouraged by providing a flat nesting platform or a ledge inside a building with easy access through an opening of 5x7 cm, and when converting buildings, Barn owls can be provided for by leaving access in to the roof spaces of out buildings.
- Consider the environmental advantages of designing buildings with 'living roofs', sometimes referred to as green roofs - made of thin soils, gravels, rocks, turf, etc. There are some excellent examples from the Canary Wharfe developments in London (further information on the website www.livingroofs.org.uk).

Engineers

- Incorporate bat cavities into bridge and other construction projects.
- Design schemes that include surface drainage rather than culverts, and consider Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (SUDS). Design balancing ponds that consider safety requirements while maximising marginal habitats such as bare ground, emergent vegetation and bank-side scrub. Ensure drains and gullies are designed to allow Common frogs, Common toads and newts to climb out.
- Consider the timing of operations that damage habitats, for example ditch clearance and schedule for the best time of year. Avoid drastic habitat damage, such as hedge removal, during the bird-nesting season and manage the richest wildlife road verges for their nature conservation interest.

Species that could benefit from wildlife friendly development practices:

- Bats
- Water vole
- Barn owl
- Kestrel
- Swift
- Swallow
- House martin
- House sparrow
- Great crested newt
- Common frog
- Common toad
- Smooth newt
- Mason bee

Guidance Note on Non-native Problem Species

Why some species are a problem for our wildlife

Introduction

The flora and fauna of Britain is constantly changing and has always done so. Sometimes this occurs naturally as a species extends its range and sometimes it occurs because people have introduced a species artificially. Because of this, Britain has accumulated a large and diverse assemblage of non-native species. Most of these are harmless but a small number are invasive and create problems both for humans and for our native wildlife.

These less welcome species need not necessarily be recent introductions, the Rabbit was originally introduced by the Normans about 1,000 years ago as a food source but is now widespread and abundant throughout Britain, causing problems to farmers, foresters and conservationists. Similarly the Romans introduced Ground elder, that bane of all keen gardeners, again as a food source. Such species though are now so widespread and have been here so long that they have become a stable and accepted part of our natural heritage.

Other, more recent introductions are very different. Biological invasion goes through four stages - arrival, establishment, spread and persistence. The high impact species are those that spread quickly and have the ability to persist.

These high impact species are aggressive invaders that colonise natural and semi-natural habitats creating major problems for our native plants and animals.

The best time to prevent problems is at stage 1 - arrival. If species are prevented from arriving or are quickly controlled as they try to establish, then later difficulties are avoided.

It is illegal to release non-native species into the wild in the UK. There is a huge cost to the taxpayer and others if expensive and time consuming control has to be carried out.

This action plan covers ten such introduced problem species. It also covers one native species - Common ragwort - which is toxic to livestock, particularly horses. It has therefore been included because it is affected by the way that we manage land.

This list is not exhaustive and there are many other species that can, in certain circumstances, also create problems. These are the ones that are presently considered to be the most harmful in the District.

- Himalayan Balsam
- Japanese Knotweed
- Giant Hogweed
- Rhododendron
- Australian Stonecrop (often known as Crassula)
- Water Fern
- American Mink
- Grey squirrel
- Signal Crayfish
- Floating Pennywort.
- Phytophera spp. (Sudden Oak Death fungus and Alder Root Disease).
- Common Ragwort

The problem species

Himalayan balsam
An annual plant introduced by the Victorians as an attractive garden plant. It is capable of rapid colonisation via its explosive seed, and when seed is transported by flowing water. Seeds germinate freely giving rise to dense stands along watercourses and in damp woodlands. Because of the density of plants, it can dominate native vegetation and shade it out. At present Himalayan Balsam is present along the banks of the Rivers Swale and Ure and some tributaries.

Japanese knotweed
In the UK all plants are female and its spread has been via vegetative propagation, from fragments of rhizome. It is an extremely aggressive competitor in open woodland, hedgerows and along waterways. It has colonised urban areas, particularly neglected sites such as churchyards, cemeteries and unused land. Once established it is very difficult to eradicate, even with herbicides, and requires special licensing to move off site. It is found scattered throughout the District. This species is listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Sec. 14 – Schedule 9 part 2) where it is an offence to cause it to grow in the wild.

Giant hogweed
Related to the common Hogweed, Giant hogweed grows up to 5m tall. This robust species seeds prolifically and has spread along many major waterways. It dominates open areas along river banks and occasionally seeds into urban areas. Its sap reacts with sunlight to cause blisters. This species is also listed in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (Sec. 14 – Schedule 9 part 2) where it is an offence to cause it to grow in the wild.

Rhododendron
Brought into Britain as a garden plant in 1763, probably from the relict Spanish population. This evergreen perennial prefers acid soils and has become widely established. Large areas of secondary woodland, parkland and heathland now support thriving populations. Virtually nothing grows under its canopy. It produces huge numbers of tiny, air borne seeds, roots freely where branching stems touch the ground and sprouts vigorously from cut shoots.

Water Fern
An aquatic fern, introduced to the UK as an exotic pond plant, which has escaped into wild ponds. It spreads rapidly across smaller ponds and ditches, completely covering the surface and blocking out light.

American mink
Originally farmed for its fur, animals escaped or were released into the wild, and a sizeable feral population has built up. The animal is distributed throughout most of the UK. Research has indicated that American mink is one of the contributory causes for the dramatic decline of the Water vole and may have an impact on other species e.g. waterfowl. It ranges along all main watercourses in the District and targeted trapping is recommended to maintain relict Water vole populations.

Grey squirrel
The Grey squirrel, introduced from North America in the nineteenth century, can have adverse effects upon the growth of various species of broadleaved tree, the native Red squirrel and songbirds. Grey squirrels cause tree damage through bark stripping, which affects tree vigour, form and health. They have been a contributory factor to the decline of Red squirrels, as they both carry a virus to which the Red squirrel is more susceptible and out-competes it in the search for food resources. Grey squirrels also actively take birds' eggs and affect breeding success. They could be a key factor in the decline of tree nesting birds, such as the Hawfinch.

The most cost-effective method of controlling Grey squirrels is the use of warfarin poison (full details are given in the Forestry Commission Practice Note 4 [revised April 2004]) but its use is currently under review by the EU Plant Protection Directorate and there is no timetable as to when a decision is to be reached.

Warfarin may not be used where Red squirrel or Pine marten (chiefly Scotland) populations are present. Cage trapping is an effective but more costly alternative and activities such as shooting and drey-poking (removing the nests where Grey squirrels breed) have a limited effect. Grey squirrel control should be considered where:

- Young or newly planted woodlands are being damaged or are likely to be damaged by Grey squirrel populations.
- Semi-mature woodlands are being thinned and the rise of phloem associated with increased growth is likely to attract bark-stripping activity.
- Populations of Red squirrel or songbirds are being adversely affected.

Signal Crayfish
Introduced and bred in crayfish farms for food, this species has escaped and been released into waterways and spread into many water catchments. Where it meets the smaller native White-clawed crayfish, it out competes it because it is a larger, more aggressive species. It also spreads Crayfish plague, a disease to which it is largely resistant but to which the native species is highly susceptible. This has been one of the main causes of the decline of the native crayfish and the reason for its inclusion as a UK BAP priority species. It can travel long distances over land so that it can even spread from isolated ponds.

Phytophera spp. (Sudden oak death fungus and Alder root disease).
Sudden oak death is caused by the fungus, Phytophthora ramorum, and in North America oaks have been dying in the thousands in the last two years. The first UK outbreak was found in April 2002 in England and the first in an established tree was announced in November 2003. The disease was found on a non-native Southern red oak tree in Sussex. The disease occurs in garden shrubs such as Rhododendron as well as oaks. It has since been discovered at 17 horticultural premises in Scotland and 110 in England and Wales. The disease is characterised by the presence of cankers of red and black sap oozing from the trunk, usually low down. Foliage may change colour rapidly and uniformly as the tree dies suddenly, with leaves remaining on the branches. It is not known if European oaks are susceptible. On Rhododendrons there is brown discoloration of shoots, die back and leaf blight.

Alder root disease is caused by the fungus, *Phytophthora cambivora.* It is a lethal stem disease, which affects Alder trees and was first identified in 1993. On affected trees the leaves are normally small, yellow and sparse, and they frequently fall prematurely, leaving the tree bare. The base of a tree with severe crown symptoms often carries tarry or rusty spots sometimes occurring up to 2 m from ground level. These spots indicate that the underlying bark is dead. The disease has been found across Europe, but it seems to be at its worst in parts of the UK and France, where destructive epidemics are developing, resulting in thousands of trees dying each year. The majority of affected trees are on riverbanks or on sites subject to flooding from adjacent rivers (less so on smaller tributaries). However, the disease has also been found in orchard shelterbelts and in young woodland plantations. The Forestry Commission is carrying out research and the Environment Agency has produced local guidelines in an effort to limit its spread. Interestingly, some affected trees now appear to be recovering.

Australian stonecrop
A small aquatic plant introduced as an oxygenator for garden and fishponds. It is exceedingly vigorous and can quickly dominate ponds and adjacent damp ground to the exclusion of everything else. It is a scheduled species that must be reported to the Environment Agency (EA) if found. As with many of these species it can be propagated from the smallest of pieces so pulling it up is not likely to solve the problem and may make it worse. It can be un-intentionally introduced to ponds when releasing frogspawn from garden ponds.

Floating pennywort.
Another aquatic plant introduced for ornamental purposes that is extremely vigorous. It can grow at the rate of 0.5 m a day and if left will not only cover the pond but will spread up onto the marshy land beside it. It is a scheduled species that needs to be reported to the EA. Like Australian stonecrop and Water fern, even a tiny fragment left will spread again so control must be very carefully carried out and be very thorough. It can be un-intentionally introduced to ponds when releasing frogspawn from garden ponds.

Common ragwort
Although this note is titled Non-native problem species, mention needs to be made of one problem native species – Common ragwort. Being native, this species differs from the others in being part of a natural ecosystem and therefore having a number of associated species, including 30 invertebrate species, not least of which is the distinctive Cinnabar moth and 14 fungi. Many other species benefit from the supply of pollen and nectar.

Common ragwort is toxic to animals. When growing, animals avoid it but the main problem comes when it has been cut and allowed to dry. It then becomes palatable and will kill if a quantity is eaten in hay. The plant itself seeds prolifically but requires a light and open seedbed to germinate, so a well-managed grass sward will not be suitable. Overgrazing or poor management, however, will provide a suitable environment that will allow it to spread. It can be a particular problem on arable land that has been put into set aside or on badly managed pony fields. It is one of five species listed as a Noxious Weed in the 1949 Weeds Act and it is an offence to allow the plant to proliferate on your land and spread to adjacent property. The Ragwort Control Bill (2003) has recently been passed to strengthen this.

Methods of Control

Himalayan balsam
- Repeatedly hand pull or cut before seed is set.
- Spray very dense stands with Glyphosate where there is no underlying vegetation to damage. NB: An EA licence is needed for spraying near watercourses.
- Where not fully established grazing may be effective.

Japanese knotweed
- Spray repeatedly with Glyphosate. NB: An EA licence is needed for spraying near watercourses. It is advised that expert opinion is sought.
- Dig out and remove to a tip licenced to take it. It is an offence to dispose of it anywhere else.

Giant hogweed
- Cut flowering stem and burn on site or take to a tip licenced to take it.
- Dig up non-flowering stems and burn on site or take to a tip licenced to take it.
- Only handle wearing protective clothing.
- Seeking expert advice is recommended.

Rhododendron
- Cut stems, treat stumps with an appropriate herbicide to reduce re-growth, pull out stumps. Note that Rhododendron can provide good cover for Otter, so this should be taken into account.

Water fern
- Remove all floating plants and compost or remove to a waste disposal site. Repeat as necessary.
- Thoroughly clean footwear and equipment to avoid spreading it.

Australian stonecrop
- Cover stands with black polythene, leave until all plants are dead.
- Applications of Glyphosate may be appropriate, but a licence would be required from EA.
- Thoroughly clean footwear and equipment to avoid spreading it.

Floating pennywort
- Carefully hand-pull any plants that are floating or shallowly rooted.
- Spray any well-rooted plants with the appropriate herbicide.

Common ragwort
- Pull plants and dispose of at registered waste disposal site (do not compost).
- ‘Weedwipe’ in grazed pastures where plants are standing tall.

What you can do to help:

- Please do not release anything from your garden pond, out into the wild.
- Report sightings of all of the above species to the North and East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre (01904 557235).
- Further information on problem plant species and how to control them from the Centre for Aquatic Plant Management web site www.capm.org.uk
- Join a conservation task group to tackle invasive species colonisation.

Otter Species Action Plan

Our objective for the Otter is:

A stable breeding Otter populations present at carrying capacity, throughout all rivers and tributaries in Richmondshire District.

Introduction

The Otter is a flagship species that reflects the health of our rivers and wetlands. Although strongly associated with rivers and streams, it is only semi-aquatic and therefore terrestrial habitats, particularly woodland, are also important. It is a top predator in the food chain, preying chiefly upon fish.

Formerly widespread throughout the UK, the Otter underwent a rapid decline from the 1950s to 1970s, leaving fragmented populations and absence from much of England.

The Otter is a key target species in the UK BAP, with the Environment Agency (EA) and The Wildlife Trusts as joint Lead Partners. The Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (YWT) plays a major part in delivering the national BAP at regional and local level.

National status

Otters are now returning to many areas through natural re-colonisation, with the expansion of populations from Scotland, Wales, north and west England. This has been assisted in some parts by re-introductions, however these are not now necessary in the light of national survey results indicating natural recovery. The fourth national survey was recently completed and 34% of sites surveyed were positive, a 527% increase from 1979.

Regional status

Historically Otters were found throughout Yorkshire but by the 1980s were lost from much of the county, though a remnant presence survived. The YWT has recorded increases in Otter activity on the lowland stretches of the Rivers Ure, Swale, Nidd, Wharfe and Ouse in North Yorkshire, the Hull in East Yorkshire and more recently the Don, Aire and Calder in South and West Yorkshire.

Local status

Otters are present over much of the Richmondshire, though densities are not thought to have recovered to pre-decline levels and they are thought not to be resident on the upper Ure. The rivers and streams in the District represent important corridors for Otter dispersal.

Legal status

The Otter is listed under two schedules of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the CROW Act 2000). Schedule 5, makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly kill, injure, take or sell the animal or parts of it, or to damage, destroy or obstruct access to its resting places. Schedule 6 restricts certain methods of killing, taking or injuring. The European sub-species is listed as globally threatened on the Red Data List (Joint Nature Conservancy Committee, 1996).

The Otter is listed on Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, Annex II of the Bern Convention and Annexes II and IV of the EC Habitats Directive (EC/92/43). It is classified by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as ‘vulnerable’ due to the declining or endangered status of many of its populations.

Requirements

The linear nature of the rivers and streams used by Otters and the limiting factor of food availability within these habitats means that Otters can have very large home ranges. A male Otter may use up to 40 km of watercourse, including main river, becks, ditches, ponds, lakes, riverside woodland and wetlands. This use of a wide geographical area and a range of habitat types means that a river catchment-wide approach is essential to Otter conservation.

The Otter's main requirements are:

- Plentiful food supply: Species taken depend on season and abundance. Prey is primarily fish – minor species, coarse fish, European eels, Atlantic salmon and Brown trout (often small specimens). Amphibians and crustaceans, including White-clawed crayfish, may be important, while small mammals and birds are occasionally taken.
- Secure undisturbed breeding sites, with associated food resource, are essential if Otters are to establish and maintain sustainable populations.
- Good water quality, sufficient to support adequate food supply, and without pollutants which may accumulate in tissues and impact on breeding and life expectancy.
- Secure undisturbed lying-up sites. Otters use a variety of sites to lie up for short rests during feeding, or for longer periods during the day. These occur approximately every 1km of watercourse.
- Freedom from accidental mortality such as road deaths.

Current action

- Project delivery through the Water for Wildlife Project (WWP), formerly the Yorkshire Otters and Rivers Project, (YOARP), delivered by the YWT, if funding can be maintained.
- YWT advise and carry out habitat enhancement; advise and comment on wider Otter, river and wetland related issues, carry out and co-ordinate Otter and habitat surveys, provide a single point of contact for Otter records and issues affecting Otters.
- National surveys are undertaken every seven years, with the last one run by The Wildlife Trusts and the EA.
- Specific habitat work for Otters has been undertaken on agreement land under Defra Countryside Stewardship Schemes and by MoD.
- Conservation management, led by YWT and including involvement by Yorkshire Water, EA, FWAG, RDS (Defra), landowners and farmers.
- Research into mortalities, funded by EA nationally with EA as first contact.
- Collation of records by YWT, NEYEDC and EA.
- YWT investigates and seeks to minimise threats to Otters, such as road deaths and insensitive developments.
- Highways Agency has produced Otter guidelines for road developments.
- EA monitors and improves local water quality.
- MoD has undertaken surveys along water corridors and this will continue.

Links with other action plans

- Rivers and Streams HAP
- Woodland HAP
- Reedbed HAP
- Water vole SAP

Threats

- Pollution, impacting both directly on Otters and indirectly on food supply.
- Lack of prey, which may be affected by reduced water quality, poor in-channel and bank habitats, maintenance and flow regimes affected by land drainage.
- Degraded bank-side habitat.
- Accidental death, particularly on roads but also in traps.
- Development affecting rivers and bank-side habitat.
- Access and recreational disturbance, particularly an issue for breeding sites but this also affects watercourses where bank-side habitat is poor and human activity high.
- Persecution.

Opportunities

- Conservation options are available under the Defra Environmental Stewardship Schemes. The Otter is specifically mentioned in the targeting statements for some of the Joint Conservation Areas.
- Habitat enhancement opportunities as part of flood alleviation schemes, woodland management, etc.

What you can do to help:

- Report Otter sightings or dead Otters as promptly as possible to YWT or the EA.
- Use water wisely and use 'green' cleaning products.

Water Vole Species Action Plan

Our objective for the Water vole is:

To identify remaining Water vole populations in Richmondshire District

To contribute to the UK BAP by increasing the number of Water vole populations, to every site where habitat is suitable, through habitat work and possibly re-introductions.

Introduction

The Water vole, popularised by 'Ratty' in Kenneth Grahame's 'Wind in the Willows' is the largest species of vole in the UK. It was once a frequent inhabitant of the banks of rivers, lakes, ponds, ditches and dykes where the gentle 'plop' as it entered the water used to be a common occurrence. However, during the past century the Water vole population has witnessed an alarmingly rapid decline, leaving populations scarce and fragmented. The importance of Upland areas has recently been recognised. The Water vole is a priority species in the UK BAP, with the Environment Agency (EA) identified as the lead partner.

This dramatic decline is believed to be one of the largest of all current British mammals. The numbers have been in serious decline since the 1900's and more recently a survey by the Vincent Wildlife Trust (1989) revealed that Water vole populations were absent from 67% of areas occupied in 1989-90 survey.

The Water vole builds its nest in burrow systems on the banks of watercourses, ponds and lakes, and likes tall lush bank side vegetation. It is known to feed on over 200 species of plants, both terrestrial and aquatic.

There is no single overriding factor that is contributing to the decline, but a combination of several factors. However, the introduction of American mink (via fur farms) has been problematic for the Water vole. The Water vole's natural strategies for protection from predators are to hide in its burrow or dive into the water, however, American mink are small enough to follow it into the burrow and they can swim.

National status

Two national surveys carried out by the Vincent Wildlife Trust in 1989-1990 and 1996-1998 have shown that this decline has now developed into a serious population 'crash'. The second survey proved the further loss of 60% of occupied sites between 1990 and 1998.

Regional status

By 1998, the Water vole population in Yorkshire had crashed by 97%, from sites occupied in 1990.

Local status

There has been only one systematic survey in the District, of the statutory 'Main River' Ure by the Environment Agency in 1999/2000. Surveys have been carried out on the Swale catchment with positive records, including on certain tributaries, e.g. Bedale Beck. Reliance is on casual records, so the current status is unclear. Three recent records - on Clow Beck near Barton (2000), at Hornby (1996) and near Middleton Tyas (1996).

Legal status

Since 1998 the Water vole has received limited legal protection under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) in respect of Section 9(4) only. This makes it an offence to intentionally or recklessly: damage, destroy or obstruct access to any structure or place which Water voles use for shelter of protection; disturb Water voles while they are using such a place. A recent review has recommended giving full protection to the animal itself.

Links to other plans

- Rivers and streams HAP
- Standing water HAP
- Moorland HAP
- Floodplain grassland HAP
- Fen HAP
- Reedbed HAP

Threats

- Predation has dramatically increased following the release of the introduced American mink from fur farms
- Loss of habitat plays a very important role in the decline of the Water vole. The loss or damage of its natural habitat can wipe out entire populations. Poor habitat can increase the impact of predators.
- This problem is heightened by the isolation of suitable habitats from each other.
- Fluctuations in water levels caused by drought and/or flooding may have an adverse effect, directly or by increasing the risk of predation
- Simultaneous clearance with dredging of the waterside banks damages both habitat (which gives cover from predators) and food sources.
- Poisoning with rodenticides, due to confusion with Brown rat.

Requirements

- Conditions preferred (although Water voles may be found elsewhere) include slow flowing watercourses, less than three metres wide, around one metre in depth and without extreme fluctuations in water level, including canals. Also becks and rills within Upland rush pasture and some moorland grips
- Permanent water is essential during low flow periods in summer.
- Bank type required for burrowing is predominantly earth or clay with a stepped or steep bank (usually vegetated rather than bare).
- Dense stands of herbaceous vegetation provide cover. Sites excessively shaded by shrubs or trees are less suitable, though some willow provides a valuable food source.
- Water meadows and expanses of wetland with tussocks of grass, sedge, rush or Common reed can provide a more secure habitat than linear features in terms of refuge from predators.
- Ponds with suitable banks and habitat can be remote from American mink populations and provide valuable refuge areas of habitat.
- Protection of wetland habitat and wildlife corridors through the planning system.

Current local action

- National surveys every seven years undertaken by Vincent Wildlife Trust.
- Collation of records by YWT and regional data centre, NEYEDC.
- YWT give advice on habitat enhancement, advise and comment on Water vole and wetland related issues and carry out surveys.
- Some conservation management undertaken by organisations including YWT, EA, Yorkshire Water, FWAG, IDBs and landowners.
- The EA and English Nature have published a ‘Water Vole Habitat Management Handbook’ and English Nature has published 'Water Vole: Guidance for planners and developers’.
- The Yorkshire Wildlife Trust has also released an initiative 'Know your vole', to help promote the public’s ability to distinguish between the Water vole and the Brown rat and thus prevent unnecessary killings and poisoning.
- The Government has recommended full protection in the 2005 W&CA review.

Opportunities

- There are a large number of ditches in the District, which provide potential for population expansion if managed appropriately.
- Conservation options are available under the Defra Environmental Stewardship Schemes. The Water vole is specifically mentioned in the targeting statements for the Vale of Mowbray Joint Conservation Area.
- Design of wildlife ponds to provide suitable conditions for Water voles.
- Targeted American mink control.

What you can do to help:

- Report Water vole and American mink sightings to the North and East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre (NEYEDC).
- Avoid pouring toxic chemicals such as car oil and paint down the drain.
- Encourage ditches to be managed to benefit Water voles.

Bats Species Action Plan

Our objectives for bats are:

To ensure the maintenance of the full range of species at natural population levels within the District.

To improve the habitats available to bats.

Introduction

There are 16 species of bat in Britain, eight of which can be found locally. Each species has its own particular requirements, but as a group they may be found in all habitats. Most species do use buildings, so bats have a special connection with humans.

During the past century most species are thought to have declined, although there is now some evidence from the National Bat Monitoring Programme that some species are beginning to recover. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that 'bats are not as common as they used to be'. The secretive nature of bats and the difficulties this presented for their study prior to the development of sophisticated technology makes it hard to quantify the losses.

Bats feed on insects and in summer can often be seen hunting along rivers and woodland edges where insects are numerous. In winter, when insects are difficult to find they hibernate. Although summer roosts are mainly in warm locations, hibernacula are usually in cold places with stable temperatures, such as caves. This helps minimise heat energy loss, an important consideration for small mammals. Being long-lived animals they return to the same places year after year.

National status

Sixteen species of bat breed regularly in the UK with the greatest range of species in the south.

Regional status

Nine species occur within Yorkshire and The Humber Region, eight of which have been confirmed to live in North Yorkshire. These are Whiskered, Brandt's, Daubenton's, Natterer's, Common pipistrelle, Soprano pipistrelle, Noctule, Brown long-eared and Leisler's bats. There are historic records of Lesser horseshoe and Barbastelle bats and casual records of Nathusius' pipistrelle.

Local status

In Richmondshire there are no records of Leisler's bat, but the other eight Yorkshire species have been recorded. There are relatively few records in the District outside of the National Park, but this is likely to be due to under-recording. Recent research is showing that some parts of the District are particularly important for Brown long-eared and possibly Natterer's bats. At least one building in the District supports six species.

Legal status

All bats and their roosting places are fully protected under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Protection applies to roosts even when the bats are absent. Bats are also protected under Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994.

Associated species priorities

- Whiskered bat
- Brandt's bat
- Daubenton's bat
- Natterer's bat
- Common pipistrelle bat
- Soprano pipistrelle bat
- Noctule bat
- Brown long-eared bat

Status of priority species

- Whiskered bat – rare.
- Brandt's bat – rare.
- Daubenton's bat – rare.
- Natterer's bat – some key sites.
- Common pipistrelle bat – common and widespread.
- Soprano pipistrelle bat – largely unknown.
- Noctule bat – rare.
- Brown long-eared bat – some key sites.

Threats

- Loss of roost sites and hibernacula, both accidental and deliberate
- Reduction of food sources through the widespread use of insecticides
- Habitat removal and fragmentation of the landscape leading to disruption of commuting routes.

Requirements

- A variety of maternity and hibernation sites including houses, bridges, hollow trees, caves and tunnels.
- A mosaic of habitats to provide good sources of insects on which to feed, especially trees, hedges, unimproved grassland and freshwater.
- A network of wildlife corridors and habitats to allow bats to move between feeding, roosting and hibernation sites.
- Building works to be planned and timed to avoid disturbing bats and destroying or obstructing roosting places.
- Better understanding of bats and their requirements.
- Monitoring of bats - ideally each roost owner to count their own bats and pass the information to the North Yorkshire Bat Group (NYBG).

Current local action

- NYBG holds records of all known bat roosts within the county and provides advice to householders, landowners and others in conjunction with English Nature (EN).
- The Bat Conservation Trust (BCT), with the support of Government agencies and volunteers, runs the National Bat Monitoring Programme to monitor changes in populations of various species.
- NYBG organises public events to foster a public understanding of bats and their conservation.
- Developers wishing to carry out works which would impact on bat roosts are required to obtain a licence for such works and to provide suitable mitigation measures to enable bat populations to be maintained. The Local Planning Authority is required to consider bats as part of the planning process.
- North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) surveys all bridges prior to maintenance work.
- MoD undertakes bat surveys prior to all ancient tree and roof work.
- MoD has developed a bat box programme at Foxglove Covert LNR.

What you can do to help:

- Report roosts, including date and time to NYBG.
- Include bat friendly features when carrying out repairs to buildings.
- Plant night scented garden plants to attract insects on which bats feed.

Black grouse Species Action Plan

Our objective for Black grouse is:

To support the UK BAP, the North Pennines Black Grouse Recovery Project and the Yorkshire Dales conservation effort by increasing its geographical range within the District through land management.

Introduction

The Black grouse is a species that requires a mosaic of upland habitats, including Upland heathland, meadows, rush pasture, wooded ghylls and woodland edge. These habitats often come together on the Moorland edge.

Originally the range of Black grouse was more widespread and included a range of heathland and fringe woodland sites, with woodland edge habitat being particularly important. The management of new or existing woodland close to existing or potential occupancy areas is therefore a critical factor in the consideration of Black grouse populations.

To sustain a viable population the requirement is for a mixture of mature woodland such as Scots pine and Silver birch, and a scrub layer (e.g. Hawthorn and Sallow) providing a patchwork of young and widely spaced trees with a well-developed understorey of Heather and Bilberry and open, herb-rich, boggy areas which support a diverse invertebrate population

Males gather at traditional lek sites during the spring, usually around dawn. Lekking attracts female birds, which after mating disperse to raise the young on their own. The Black grouse is a game bird, related to the much commoner Red grouse. Historically it was much more numerous and its geographical spread included sites much further south than its present distribution, including the Derbyshire Peak District and Wales. Formerly it was extensively shot as a game bird on Upland shooting estates.

National status

The UK population has declined in range by 28% (between 1968 – 1972 and 1988 – 1991) and the population has declined by 75% (between 1986 and 1996). A population estimate of 25,000 lekking males in 1990 fell to an estimate of 6,510 lekking males (some 800 in England and 150 in Wales). The Game Conservancy Council figures for 2004 are 900 in England and 250 in Wales.

Regional status

Occurs in the Northern Pennines in Northumberland, County Durham, Cumbria and North Yorkshire. The North Yorkshire population is at the southern edge of the species' range in England. Management work to provide suitable habitat has been undertaken in Upper Nidderdale (Harrogate District) and in the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

Local status

A small population occurs on the Catterick Training Area. The North and East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre (NEYEDC) hold six records ranging from 1988 to 1996. Four of these refer to the Feldom population (1988 – 1996), one is a 1988 record from Leyburn Moor and one is a 1989 record from Wathgill. However more recently 4 -12 lekking males have occurred on the MoD estate.

Legal status

The Black grouse is a game bird and as such is covered by the Game Acts (close season is 11 December to 19 August). It is listed in Annex 2/2 of the EC Habitats Directive and Appendix 3 of the Berne Convention (to be protected from exploitation and managed to keep populations out of danger). It is on the red list of Birds of Conservation Concern and is a UK BAP priority.

Threats

- Absence of the optimum mosaic of habitats, lost through changing land management practices.
- Shooting of birds, particularly where there is no positive conservation management.
- Poor productivity due to habitat changes, predation and spring weather conditions.

Requirements

- Positive conservation steps on Ministry of Defence (MoD) land and shooting estates where it occurs, including voluntary shooting bans and appropriate habitat creation and management. Providing a habitat of mixed, uneven-aged woodland to provide winter food.
- Maintaining and extending wet areas and flushes to encourage Cotton grass and insect diversity.
- Ensuring heterogeneous Heather stands to produce an uneven-aged sward and encourage regeneration of Bilberry, Heather, grasses and sedges.
- Keeping vegetation low at track edges to encourage lekking males.
- Maintenance of above through reductions in livestock densities.
- Creation of small-scale diversity with tall vegetation for nesting cover and short areas for lekking. The latter can also aid chick survival in wet weather (Calladine[10]).

Current local action

- The MoD is an active partner in the North Pennines Black Grouse Recovery Project. Ongoing works on Catterick Training Area include the planting of new native woodland, re-structuring of existing plantations, stocking reductions on acid grassland and heathland and annual surveys. These will continue.
- There is currently a voluntary shooting ban on MoD land.

Opportunities

- Options may be available under Defra's Environmental Stewardship Scheme (Higher Level Scheme), to be rolled out in 2005.
- Defence Estates to promote Black grouse conservation on MoD land.

What you can do to help:

- Bird watchers to follow the RSPB Code of Conduct and to avoid disturbing leks.

Curlew Species Action Plan

Our objective for Curlew is:

To maintain the range and population of Curlew in the District.

Introduction

The Curlew is a characteristic moorland bird, well loved for its bubbling song in spring and early summer, which epitomises the upland landscape. Nesting at high altitude, the damp upland and northern moors are its traditional haunts in the breeding season. The Curlew breeds in a variety of upland habitats including Upland heath, Moorland edge, Floodplain grasslands and Upland hay meadows. They occasionally use arable and silage fields, although this is only a small proportion of the population. Curlews select rough ground with tussocky vegetation for nesting from April to July. Adults feed on ground invertebrates, and chicks on surface invertebrates. Damp pastures and silage fields are required for feeding.

During the twentieth century the Curlew colonised lowland regions and occupied agricultural habitats such as pastures and cereals. This expansion ceased some forty years ago (Gibbons[9]). In most areas Curlew normally move to the coast to spend the winter in estuaries, along shorelines and in flood plains, but interestingly some birds spend much of the winter in the area around Bellerby in Richmondshire.

The designation of the Lovely Seat-Stainton Moor SSSI and the East Nidderdale Moors SSSI is partly due to the important assemblage of moorland breeding birds, which includes Curlew.

The abundance of this charismatic bird is an important feature of the District and thus contributes economic value through tourism. This is re-enforced by the fact that it lends its name to the Richmondshire District Council publication 'The Curlew'.

National status

The New Atlas of breeding Birds (Gibbons et al[9]) reports a population estimate of 33,000 – 38,000 pairs in Britain and 12,000 pairs in Ireland, which is 35% of the estimated European breeding population. For this reason much of its northern moorland breeding grounds have been designated as SSSIs.

Regional status

The Curlew occurs in regionally important numbers in the Region's uplands and is cited as a characteristic bird in the Natural Area profiles for the North York Moors and Hills Natural Area and the Yorkshire Dales Natural Area.

Local status

Widespread and abundant as a breeding bird. It is possible that the economic need for early silage cuts may be having an adverse effect on the part of the population that breeds in fields. 'Wildlife friendly' harvesting from the centre of the field outwards could be promoted.

Legal status

- The Curlew is protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- With regard to Open Access, under the CROW Act, it is possible for local restrictions to be imposed through the introduction of bye laws where appropriate. These could be used to protect the biodiversity interest.
- With regard to Open Access, under the CROW Act, between 1st March and 31st July, or at any time in the vicinity of livestock, the legislation requires dogs to be on a fixed lead of no more than two metres.

Threats

- Destruction of nests in meadows through spring silage cuts.
- Disturbance, particularly likely following Open Access rights from 2005.

Requirements

- Defra and farming organisations to explore mechanisms, including new grant schemes, to enhance the breeding success of ground nesting birds in silage fields. Silage fields are an important feeding habitat for the Curlew population.
- Code of practice for walkers, etc. to protect breeding moorland birds from disturbance.
- Avoid the conversion of open moorland and rough, damp grassland to improved grassland.
- Cattle grazing of unimproved grassland to produce a more tussocky sward.
- Damp areas and wet flushes as feeding areas for chicks.

Current local action

- Participation in Countryside Stewardship options for Heather moorland and upland pastures enhances conditions for Curlews and other ground nesting birds.
- MoD undertakes regular surveys of Curlew numbers on all Moorland edge land holdings and these will continue.

Opportunities

- Options may be available under Defra's Environmental Stewardship Scheme (Higher Level Scheme), to be rolled out in 2005.

What you can do to help:

- Landowners and farmers:
  On Moorland – avoid conversion of Moorland to improved grassland.
  Graze to achieve a mosaic of taller tussocky vegetation and shorter grassy areas.
  Undertake small scale rotational burning of heather, avoiding burning of bog areas.
  Restore wet areas by blocking active grips.

  On unimproved pasture – avoid applications of fertiliser.
  Use light stocking densities from April to mid-June.
  Graze cattle from late summer.

  Hay meadows – retain or restore some unimproved hay meadows rather than total harvest.

  Wet areas – retain or re-create flushes, bogs and damp grassland by minimising new drainage and blocking ditches and grips.

  Tree cover – avoid planting trees or scrub close to nesting fields, Curlews need an open landscape.

- Walkers:
  Keep dogs on a lead during the breeding season.

Appendix 1
Richmondshire Biodiversity Action Plan Steering Group

Julia Birkinshaw	North Yorkshire County Council
Rachel Bowles	Richmondshire District Council
Andrew Craven	English Nature
Major Tony Crease	Catterick Garrison Conservation Group, MoD
John Drewett	North Yorkshire Bat Group
David Elliott	Richmondshire District Council
Rachel Ford	Richmondshire District Council
Martin Fuller	Environment Agency
Mark Hewitt	Foxglove Covert, Wildspace Officer
Robert Goodison	RDS Defra
Val Hepworth	Yorkshire Gardens Trust
Sylvia Jay	Water for Wildlife Project
Jack Lynas	Farmer
Phil Lyth	FWAG
Robert Masheder	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust
Graham Megson	North Yorkshire County Council
Sir Anthony Milbank	Landowner
Deborah Millward	Ecological consultant
Lord Bolton	Landowner
Mark Owen	Ecological consultant
Moira Owen	Defence Estates
Councillor Gina Ramsbottom	Richmondshire District Council
Will Richardson	Yorwoods
Simon Warwick	Swale and Ure Washlands Project
Tom Wheelwright	Moorland Landowners' Association
Julie Williams	Hanson Aggregates

Appendix 2
Map of Richmondshire Biodiversity Action Plan area.

The Richmondshire Biodiversity Action Plan

covering that part of the district outside of the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

Appendix 3 - Glossary of terms.

Animal

Any species belonging to the Animal Kingdom, including mammals, birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians, insects, etc.

Arable weeds

Wild flowers, often annuals, that grow in regularly disturbed soil in an arable environment. This does not include pernicious weeds such as thistles and goosegrass.

Biodiversity

The variety of life. The term embraces the full range of habitats, species, and the variation found within species (including genetic variation).

Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP)

A plan to conserve or re-create biodiversity. The term may be used to describe the whole process by which this happens, or sometimes a document that sets out how this is to be achieved.

Distribution

The extent of a species' range.

Ecosystem

A community of inter-related organisms.

Eco-tourism

The generation of income through 'green' tourism, such as wildlife holidays, bird watching.

Habitat

A type of landscape (e.g. Wet woodland) characterised by particular communities of vegetation and animals.

Habitat Action Plan (or HAP)

One of two sorts of plans contained within the BAP document (see also Species Action Plan). A plan geared towards the conservation or re-creation of a particular habitat.

Habitat Regulations

The Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994, known as 'The Habitat Regulations', are UK regulations passed to deliver the EC Council Directive 'The Habitats Directive'. They refer to planning, land use, land management and environmental regulation, with emphasis on the roles of Local Authorities (called Competent Authorities). The Regulations are the basis of the Natura 2000 series of sites known as SPAs, SACs and cSACs. The Habitats Regulations aim to protect site of European Community (EC) importance.

Invertebrate

Any animal lacking a backbone. This group include insects (e.g. butterflies, moths, flies, bees, wasps, beetles) and non-insect invertebrates (e.g. worms, molluscs, crustaceans such as crayfish).

LNR

Local Nature Reserve. A site designated by the Local Authority under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act. A Local Nature Reserve has an educational as well as a wildlife remit.

National Vegetation Classification (NVC)

A system for surveying habitats and allocating them to a recognised scientific type. The NVC is a nationally accepted system.

Phase 1 habitat survey

A nationally recognised system for allocating land into broad habitat types.

Phase 2 habitat survey

More detailed habitat survey than phase 1, based on individual sites.

Range

The area across which a species can be found.

Richmondshire Biodiversity Action Plan

The Richmondshire Biodiversity Action Plan is the plan that leads the process by which action is taken locally to conserve wildlife. It includes those habitats and species for which Richmondshire has a special responsibility under the UK BAP.

Riparian

The corridor of habitat along a water course.

SINC

Site of Interest for Nature Conservation. A non-statutory site designated by the Local Authority for its nature conservation interest.

SSSI

Site of Special Scientific Interest. Nationally important site given legal protection by the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), as amended. SSSIs are designated by English Nature.

Species

A taxonomic group into which a genus is divided, the members of which are capable of interbreeding. For example, the blackbird (*Turdus merula*) and song thrush (*Turdus philomelos*) are related. They are in the same genus so share the genus name *Turdus*. However, they are different species and so have specific second names.

Species Action Plan (or SAP)

One of two sorts of plans contained within the BAP document (see also Habitat Action Plan). A plan geared toward the conservation of a particular species.

Sustainable development

Actions to be taken to promote sustainability. Sustainability has been described as "the ability to meet our needs without compromising the needs of our children".

UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP)

The BAP for the United Kingdom. The UK Government has produced 391 SAPs and 45 HAPs, which detail actions necessary for a wide range of the country's habitats and most threatened plants and animals.

Appendix 4 - List of acronyms.

AP	Action Plan
AS	Arable Stewardship
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BARS	Biodiversity Action Reporting System
BBS	Breeding Bird Survey
BCT	Bat Conservation Trust
BC	Butterfly Conservation
BTCV	BTCV
BTO	British Trust for Ornithology
BW	British Waterways
CA	Countryside Agency
CAP	Common Agricultural Policy
CAMS	Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy
CBC	Common Bird Census
CFMP	Catchment Flood Management Plans
CPRE	Council for the Protection of Rural England
cSAC	candidate Special Area of Conservation
CSS	Countryside Stewardship Scheme
DE	Defence Estates
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EA	Environment Agency
EC	European Community
EH	English Heritage
ESELS	Environmental Stewardship Entry Level Scheme
ESHLS	Environmental Stewardship Higher Level Scheme
EN	English Nature
EU	European Union
EWGS	England Woodland Grant Scheme
FC	Forestry Commission
FCE	Forestry Commission England
FE	Forest Enterprise
FWAG	Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group
GCT	Game Conservancy Trust
GEAC	Good Environmental and Agricultural Condition
ha	hectare
HAP	Habitat Action Plan
IACS	Integrated Administration and Control System
IAW	Inventory of Ancient Woodland
ICT	Invertebrate Conservation Trust
IDB	Internal Drainage Boards
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
JNCC	Joint Nature Conservancy Committee
km	kilometre
LBAP	Local Biodiversity Action Plan
LEAF	Linking Environment And Farming
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LUCT	Lower Ure Conservation Trust
MoD	Ministry of Defence
NCC	Nature Conservancy Council
NEYEDC	North & East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre
NR	Nature Reserve
NS	Nationally Scarce
NT	National Trust
NVZ	Nitrate vulnerable zones
NYBG	North Yorkshire Bat Group
NYCC	North Yorkshire County Council
OELS	Organic Entry Level Scheme
OS	Ordnance Survey
PAWS	Plantation on Ancient Woodland Site
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance
Ramsar	The Ramsar Convention is an international agreement to establish important bird areas, signed in Iran.
RDA	Regional Development Agency
RDB	Red Data Book
RDC	Richmondshire District Council
RDS (Defra)	Rural Development Service
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SAP	Species Action Plan
SEPA	Scottish Environment Protection Agency
SINC	Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
cSAC	candidate Special Areas of Conservation
SoCC	Species of Conservation Concern
SPA	Special Protection Area
spp	species
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SUWP	Swale and Ure Washlands Project
TPO	Tree Preservation Order
UK	United Kingdom
UK BAP	UK Biodiversity Action Plan
WIGS	Woodland Improvement Grant Scheme
WGS	Woodland Grant Scheme
WLO	Wildlife Liaison Officer (Police)
WT	Woodland Trust
WTs	Wildlife Trusts
WWP	Water for Wildlife Project
YDRT	Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust
YHBF	Yorkshire and Humber Biodiversity Forum
YNU	Yorkshire Naturalists' Union
YOARP	Yorkshire Otters And Rivers Project
YW	Yorkshire Water Services Ltd
YWT	Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

Appendix 5 - Useful addresses

Ancient Tree Forum c/o Woodland Trust
Autumn Park, Dysart Road, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG32 6LL.
Tel: 01476 581111
Fax: 01476 590808
http://www.woodland-trust.org.uk/ancient-tree-forum/

Army Training Estate North
Wathgill, Downholme, Richmond, North Yorkshire, DL11 6AH.
Tel: 01748 875505
Fax: 01748 875512

BTCV
3, 5 & 7 Leake Street, off Lawrence Street, York, YO10 3BR.
Tel: 01904 644 300
Fax: 01904 644 302
http://www.btcv.org/

Buglife-The Invertebrate Conservation Trust
170A Park Road
Peterborough
CAMBS
PE1 2UF
Tel: 01733 760881
Fax: 01733 760884
http://www.buglife.org.uk/

Butterfly Conservation
Manor Yard, East Lulworth, Wareham, Dorset, BH20 5QP.
Tel: 0870 7744309
Fax: 01929 400210
Email: info@butterfly-conservation.org
http://www.butterfly-conservation.org/index.shtml

English Nature
Leyburn Office, Asquith House, Leyburn Business Park, Harmby Road, Leyburn, DL8 5QA
Tel: 01969 623447
Fax: 01969 621298
E-mail: leyburn@english-nature.org.uk
http://www.english-nature.org.uk/

Environment Agency
Coverdale House, Aviator Court, Amy Johnson Way, Clifton Moor, YORK, YO3 4UZ
Tel: 01904 822565
Fax: 01904 693748
E-mail: enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk
http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/

Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group
Racecourse Lane, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 8BR.
northyorks@fwag.org.uk

Forestry Commission
Wheldrake Lane, Crockey Hill, York, North Yorkshire, YO19 4FF.
Tel: 01904 448778
http://www.forestry.gov.uk/

Foxglove Covert Local Nature Reserve
Wathgill, Downholme, Richmond, North Yorkshire, DL11 6AH.
Tel: 07754 270980

The Limestone Pavement Action Group
c/o Cumbria Wildlife Trust
Plumgarths, Crook Road, Kendal, Cumbria, LA8 8LX.
Tel: 01539 816300
Fax: 01539 816301
Email: info@cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk
http://www.limestone-pavements.org.uk/

The Mammal Society
2b Inworth Street, London SW11 3EP.
Tel: 020 7350 2200
Fax: 020 7350 2211
Mail: enquiries@mammal.org.uk
http://www.abdn.ac.uk/mammal/

North and East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre (NEYEDC)
5 College Street, York, YO1 7JF.
Tel: 01904 557235
Fax: 01904 557236
Email: info@neyedc.co.uk
http://www.neyedc.co.uk/

North Yorkshire Bat Group
3 Victoria Row, Eppleby, Richmond, North Yorkshire, DL11 7BE
Tel. 01325 718133
Email: mail@drewettj.freeserve.co.uk

North Yorkshire County Council
Heritage Team, Countryside Service, County Hall, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 8AH.
Tel: 01609 780780.
Fax: 01609 532558.
Email: ecology@northyorks.gov.uk
www.northyorks.gov.uk

Oxford Bee Company Ltd
Ark Business Centre, Gordon Road, Loughborough, LE11 1JP.
Tel: 01509 261654
Fax: 01509 643465
Email: info@oxbeeco.com
http://www.oxbeeco.com/

PLACE
York St John College, Lord Mayor's Walk, York, YO31 7EX.
Tel: 01904 716753

Plantlife International
14 Rollestone Street,
Salisbury,Wiltshire, SP1 1DX
Tel: 01722 342730
Fax: 01722 329035
e-mail:enquiries@plantlife.org.uk
www.plantlife.org.uk

The RSPB
The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL
Tel: 01767 680551
E-mail: wildlife@rspb.org.uk
www.rspb.org.uk

RDS Yorkshire and the Humber North Team, Defra Leeds,
Government Buildings, Otley Road, Lawnswood, Leeds, LS16 5QT.
Tel: 0113 230 3789
Fax: 0113 230 3963
General enquiries email address:
enquiries.yorkshumber@defra.gsi.gov.uk
or Robert.Goodison@defra.gov.gsi.uk.
http://www.defra.gov.uk/

Richmondshire District Council
Swale House, Frenchgate, Richmond, North Yorkshire, DL10 4JE
Tel: 01748 829100
david.elliott@richmondshire.gov.uk
www.richmondshire.gov.uk

The Swale and Ure Washlands Project
c/o North Yorkshire County Council
Heritage Team, Countryside Service, County Hall, Northallerton, North Yorkshire, DL7 8AH.
Tel: 01609 780780.
Fax: 01609 532558.
Email: suwp@luct.org.uk

The Vincent Wildlife Trust
3&4 Bronsil Courtyard, Eastnor, Ledbury, Herefordshire, HR8 1EP.
Tel: 01531 636441
Fax: 01531 636442
Email: vwt@vwt.org.uk
http://www.vwt.org.uk/

Water for Wildlife (formerly Yorkshire Otters and Rivers Project).
Hollybush Conservation Centre, Broad Lane, Kirkstall, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS5 3BP.
Tel: 0113 278 1940
Email: yorksotters@cix.co.uk
http://www.yorkshire-wildlife-trust.org.uk/

Wildlife Crime Officer
pc1038 Mark Rasbeary
Leyburn Police Office, The High Street, Leyburn, North Yorkshire DL8 5AQ.
Tel: 0845 6060247
Mob: 07980 988287
Fax: 01969 625044
Email:
mark.rasbeary@northyorkshire.pnn.police.uk

The Wildlife Trusts
The Kiln, Waterside, Mather Road, Newark, Nottinghamshire, NG24 1WT.
Tel: 08700 367711
Fax: 08700 360101
http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/

The Woodland Trust
Autumn Park, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 6LL.
Tel: 01476 581135
http://www.woodland-trust.org.uk/

Yorkshire Naturalists' Union
Mr J A Newbould, Stonecroft, 3 Brookmead Close, Sutton Poyntz, Weymouth, Dorset, DT3 6RS.
Email: janewbould@aol.com
http://www.ynu.org.uk/

Yorkshire Wildlife Trust
10 Toft Green, York, YO1 6JT.
Tel: 01904 659570
Email: yorkshirewt@cix.co.uk
http://www.yorkshire-wildlife-trust.org.uk/

Appendix 6 - Scientific names of plants and animals
(Given in order of appearance in the BAP).

English name	Scientific name
Introduction	
Curlew	*Numenius arquata*
Alpine penny-cress	Thlaspi caerulescens
Spring sandwort	*Minuartia verna*
Yellow star of Bethlehem	*Gagea lutea*
Pillwort	*Pilularia globulifera*
Globe flower	*Trollius europaeus*
Meadow saffron	*Colchicum autumnale*
Northern brown argus butterfly	*Aricia artaxerxes*
Black grouse	*Tetrao tetrix*
Nightjar	*Caprimulgus europaeus*
Otter	*Lutra lutra*
White-clawed crayfish	*Austropotamobius pallipes*
Atlantic salmon	*Salmo salar*
Spruce's bristle-moss	*Orthotrichum sprucei*
Common pipistrelle bat	*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*
Brown hare	*Lepus europaeus*
Otter	*Lutra lutra*
Water vole	*Arvicola terrestris*
Bittern	*Botaurus stellaris*
Grey partridge	*Perdix perdix*
Nightjar	*Caprimulgus europaeus*
Turtle dove	*Streptopelia turtur*
Spotted flycatcher	*Muscicapa striata*
Skylark	*Alauda arvensis*
Song thrush	*Turdus philomelus*
Bullfinch	*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*
Corn bunting	*Miliaria calandra*
Reed bunting	*Emberiza schoeniclus*
Linnet	*Carduelis cannabina*
Tree sparrow	*Passer montanus*
Great crested newt	*Triturus cristatus*
Northern brown argus butterfly	*Aricia artaxerxes*
Square-spotted clay moth	*Xestia rhomboidea*
Angle-striped sallow moth	*Enargia paleacea*
White-clawed crayfish	*Austropotamobius pallipes*
Depressed river mussel	*Pseudanodonta complanata*
Yellow wagtail	*Motacilla flava*
Woodland	
Black grouse	*Tetrao tetrix*
Sycamore	*Acer pseudpplatanus*
Beech	*Fagus sylvatica*
Oak	*Quecus sp*
Ash	*Fraxinus excelsior*
Birch	Betula sp
Hazel	*Corylus avellana*

Beech	*Fagus sylvatica*
Oak	*Quecus sp*
Ash	*Fraxinus excelsior*
Birch	*Betula sp*
Hazel	*Corylus avellana*
Sessile oak	*Quercus petraea*
Dog's mercury	*Mercurialis perennis*
Common dog violet	*Viola riviniana*
Early purple orchid	*Orchis mascula*
Giant bellflower	*Campanula latifolia*
Primrose	*Primula vulgaris*
Wych elm	*Ulmus glabra*
Silver birch	*Betula pendula*
Rowan	*Sorbus aucuparia*
Holly	*Ilex aquifolium*
Bluebell	*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*
Wood anemone	*Anemone nemorosa*
Alder	*Alnus glutinosa*
Downy birch	*Betula pubescens*
Blackthorn	*Prunus spinosa*
Wild boar	*Sus scrofa*
Elder	*Sambucus nigra*
Bramble	*Rubus sp*
Honeysuckle	*Lonicera periclymenum*
Turtle dove	*Streptopelia turtur*
Linnet	*Carduelis cannabina*
Whitethroat	*Sylvia communis*
Yellowhammer	*Emberiza citrinella*
Tree sparrow	*Passer montanus*
Tree pipit	*Anthus trivialis*
Willow sp	*Salix sp*
Wood barley	*Hordelymus europaeus*
Bullfinch	*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*
Song thrush	*Turdus philomelos*
Spotted flycatcher	*Muscicapa striata*
Square-spotted clay moth	*Xestia rhomboidea*
Angle-striped sallow moth	*Enargia paleacea*
Rhododendron	*Rhododendron ponticum*
Himalayan balsam	*Impatiens glandulifera*
Sweet chestnut	*Castanea sativa*
Spotted flycatcher	*Muscicapa striata*

Upland hay meadow

Meadow cranesbill	*Geranium pratense*
Wood cranesbill	*Geranium sylvaticum*
Sweet vernal grass	*Anthoxanthum odoratum*
Yorkshire fog	*Holcus lanatus*
Quaking grass	*Briza media*
Pignut	*Conopodium majus*
Meadow buttercup	*Ranunculus acris*
Lapwing	*Vanellus vanellus*
Curlew	*Numenius arquata*
Corncrake	*Crex crex*
Yellow wagtail	*Motacilla flava*

Upland calcareous grassland

Thistle broomrape	*Orobanche reticulata*
Limestone bedstraw	*Galium sterneri*
Common rock-rose	*Helianthemum nummularium*
Northern brown argus butterfly	*Aricia artaxerxes*

Species-rich grassland

Rabbit	*Oryctolagus cuniculus*
Spring sandwort	*Minuartia verna*
Alpine penny-cress	*Thlaspi caerulescens*
Sheep's fescue	*Festuca ovina*
Mountain pansy	*Viola lutea*
Common scurveygrass	*Cochlearia officinalis*
Wild Thyme	*Thymus polytrichus*
Thrift	*Armeria maritima*
Moonwort	*Botrychium lunaria*
Meadow foxtail	*Alopecurus pratensis*
Great burnet	*Sanguisorba officinalis*
Crested dogstail	*Cynosurus cristatus*
Marsh marigold	*Caltha palustris*
Burnt tip orchid	*Orchis ustulata*
Green-winged orchid	*Anacamptis morio*
Meadow saffron	*Colchicum autumnale*
Greylag goose	*Anser anser*
Yellow wagtail	*Motacilla flava*

Upland heathland and Bog	
Meadow pipit	*Anthus pratensis*
Wheatear	*Oenanthe oeanthe*
Red grouse	*Lagopus lagopus*
Merlin	*Falco columbarius*
Hen harrier	*Circus cyaneus*
Bracken	*Pteridium aquilinum*
Sphagnum moss spp	*Sphagnum sp*
Common butterwort	*Pinguicula vulgaris*
Cottongrass (all species)	*Eriophorum spp*
Heather	*Calluna vulgaris*
Golden plover	*Pluvialis apricaria*
Short-eared owl	*Asio flammeus*
Adder	*Vipera berus*
Gorse	*Ulex europaeus*
Silver birch	*Betula pendula*
Moorland edge	
Bracken	*Pteridium aquilinum*
Black grouse	*Tetrao tetrix*
Brown hare	*Lepus europaeus*
Grey partridge	*Perdix perdix*
Curlew	*Numenius arquata*
Nightjar	*Caprimulgus europaeus*
Lapwing	*Vanellus vanellus*
Ring ouzel	*Turdus torquatus*
Skylark	*Alauda arvensis*
Linnet	*Carduelis cannabina*
Reed bunting	*Emberiza schoeniculus*
Fen	
Reed bunting	*Emberiza schoeiculus*
Water rail	*Rallus aquaticus*
Barn owl	*Tyto alba*
Snipe	*Gallinago gallinago*
Grasshopper warbler	*Locustella naevia*
Bittern	*Botaurus stellaris*
Bearded tit	*Panurus biarmicus*
Reed bunting	*Emberiza schoeniclus*
Marsh harrier	*Circus aeruginosus*
Reed warbler	*Acroephalus scirpaceus*
Sedge warbler	*Acroephalus schoenobaenus*
Water rail	*Rallus aquaticus*
Swallow	*Hirundo rustica*
Sand martin	*Riparia riparia*
Starling	*Sturnus vulgaris*
European eel	*Anguilla anguilla*
Great fen sedge	*Cladium mariscus*

Standing water	
Common frog	*Rana temporaria*
Common toad	*Bufo bufo*
Smooth newt	*Triturus vulgaris*
Great crested newt	*Triturus cristatus*
Palmate newt	*Triturus helveticus*
Pillwort fern	*Pilularia globulifera*
Wigeon	*Anas penelope*
Whooper swan	*Cygnus cygnus*
Teal	*Anas crecca*
Shoveler	*clypeata*
Mallard	*Anas platyrhynchos*
Gadwall	*Anas strepera*
Pochard	*Aythya ferina*
Tufted duck	*Aythya fuligula*
Ruddy duck	*Oxyura jamaicensis*
White-headed duck	*Oxyura leucocophala*
Little ringed plover	*Charadriusdubius*
Ringed plover	*Charadrius hiaticula*
Sand martin	*Riparia riparia*
Reed bunting	*Emberiza schoeiculus*
Flowing water	
Spruce's bristle-moss	*Orthotrichum sprucei*
Yellow star of Bethlehem	*Gagea lutea*
Kingfisher	*Alcedo atthis*
Grayling fish	*Thymallus thymallus*
White-clawed crayfish	*Austropotamobius pallipes*
Depressed river mussel	*Pseudanodonta complanata*
American mink	*Mustela vison*
Signal crayfish	*Austropotamobius pallipes*
Giant hogweed	*Heracleum mantegazzianum*
Japanese knotweed	*Fallopia japonica*
Himalayan balsam	*Impatiens glandulifera*
Australian stonecrop	*Crassula helmsii*
Otter	*Lutra lutra*
Goosander	*Mergus merganser*
Cormorant	*Phalacrocorax carbo*
Grey heron	*Ardea cinerea*
Water vole	*Arvicola terrestris*
Water shrew	*Neomys fodiens*
Kingfisher	*Alcedo atthis*
Grey wagtail	*Motacilla cinerea*
Reed bunting	*Emberiza schoeiculus*

Farmland guidance note	
Lapwing	*Vanellus vanellus*
Redshank	*Tringa totanus*
Curlew	*Numenius arquata*
Snipe	*Gallinago gallinago*
Grey partridge	*Perdix perdix*
Turtle dove	*Streptopelia turtur*
Skylark	*Alauda arvensis*
Swallow	*Hirundo rustica*
Song thrush	*Turdus philomelus*
Linnet	*Carduelis cannabina*
Tree sparrow	*Passer montanus*
Corn bunting	*Miliaria calandra*
Yellowhammer	*Emberiza citrinella*
Brown hare	*Lepus europaeus*
Red clover	*Trifolium pratense*
Garden guidance note	
Song thrush	*Turdus philomelus*
Bullfinch	*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*
Swift	*Apus apus*
Smooth newt	*Triturus vulgaris*
Common frog	*Rana temporaria*
Common toad	*Bufo bufo*
Mason bee	*Osmia rufra*
Ivy	*Hedera helix*
Swift	*Apus apus*
Swallow	*Hirundo rustica*
Barn owl	*Tyto alba*
Common frog	*Rana temporaria*
Common toad	*Bufo bufo*
Water vole	*Arvicola terrestris*
Kestrel	*Falco tinnunculus*
House martin	*Delichon urbica*
House sparrow	*Passer domesticus*
Great crested newt	*Triturus cristatus*
Smooth newt	*Triturus vulgaris*
Non-native problem species guidance	
Rabbit	*Oryctolagus cuniculus*
Common ragwort	*Senecio jacobaea*
Himalayan balsam	*Impatiens glandulifera*
Japanese knotweed	*Fallopia japonica*
Giant hogweed	*Heracleum mantegazzianum*
Rhododendron	*Rhododendron ponticum*
Australian stonecrop / New	*Crassula helmsii*
Zealand pygmy weed	
Water fern	*Azolla filiculoides*

American mink	*Mustela vison*
Grey squirrel	*Sciurus carolinensis*
Hawfinch	*Coccothraustes*
Pine marten	*Martes martes*
Signal crayfish	*Austropotamobius pallipes*
Floating pennywort	*Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*
Sudden Oak death fungus	*Phytophera sp.*
Southern red oak	*Quercus falcata*
Atlantic salmon	Salmo salar
Brown trout	Salmo trutta
White-clawed crayfish	Austropotamobius pallipes
Water vole	
Water vole	Arvicola terrestris
American mink	Mustela vison
Brown rat	Rattus norvegicus
Willow	Salix sp
Common reed	Phragmites australis
Curlew	
Curlew	Numenius arquata
Black grouse	
Black grouse	Tetrao tetrix
Scot's pine	Pinus sylvestris
Silver birch	Betula pendula
Hawthorn	Crataegus monogyna
Sallow	Salix cinerea
Heather	Calluna vulgaris
Bilberry	Vaccinium myrtillus
Red grouse	Lagopus lagopus
Bats	
Whiskered bat	Myotis mystacinus
Brandt's bat	Myotis brandtii
Daubenton's bat	Myotis daubentonii
Natterer's bat	Myotis natteri
Common pipistrelle bat	Pipistrellus pipistrellus
Soprano pipistrelle bat	Pipistrellus pygmaeus
Noctule bat	Nyctalus noctula
Brown long-eared bat	Plecotus auritus
Leisler's bat	Nyctalus leisleri
Lesser horseshoe bat	Rhinolophus hipposideros
Nathusius' pipistrelle bat	Pipistrellus nathusii

Appendix 7
Bibliography

1. The UK Biodiversity Action Plan comprises of the following documents:

Biodiversity: The UK Action Plan, 1994 (UKBSG).
Biodiversity: the U.K. Steering Group Report Volume 1: Meeting the Rio Challenge, 1995 (UKBSG).
Biodiversity: The UK Steering Group Report Volume 2 (UKBSG),
UK Biodiversity Group Tranche 2 Action Plans, Volumes 1 to 6, referred to as the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP) (UKBSG).
UK Biodiversity Group: Index to the Steering Group Reports and Tranche 2 Action Plans (UKBSG).

See www.ukbap.org.uk and www.ukbap-reporting.org.uk

2. SINC Panel. Ed. Baker, Shepherd and Gillespie, 2001, Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in North Yorkshire, pvt report.

3. North and East Yorkshire Ecological Data Centre website – www.neyedc.co.uk

4. Carter A, 1987, 'North Yorkshire Inventory of Ancient Woodland' Part 1: Craven and Richmondshire, English Nature.

5. Selman R, Dodd F, Bayes K, 1999, 'A Biodiversity Audit of Yorkshire and the Humber', English Nature. See www.yhbf.org

6. Gregory RD, Wilkinson NI, Noble DG, Robinson JA, Brown AF, Hughes J, Procter D, Gibbons DW, Galbraith CA, 2002, 'The population status of birds in the United kingdom, Channel Islands and Isle of Man: an analysis of conservation concern 2002 – 2007' British Birds 95, September 2002, pp 410 – 448.

7. EN, 1995, Grassland Inventory

8. Morgan N, 1996, 'The birds of Northallerton and Richmond', privately published.

9. Ure Initiative Management Group, Ure Initiative Strategy, 2003, Environment Agency.

10. Gibbons DW, Reid JB, Chapman RA, 1993, 'The New Atlas of Breeding Birds in Britain and Ireland: 1988-1991', Poyser, London.

11. Calladine, J., Baines, D., & Warren, P. 2002. Effects of reduced grazing on population density and breeding success of Black Grouse in northern England. J. Appl. Ecology 39: 772-780.

12. Millward, D. 2003 'A Species Audit for Richmondshire' private report for North Yorkshire County Council

This document is available in alternative formats such as large print.
If you would like a copy please get in touch.

The production of this document has been jointly funded by the Richmonshire Local Strategic partnership, Richmondshire District Council, North Yorkshire County Council and the North Yorkshire County Council Community Fund Support for LSPs.

Richmondshire BAP

Part 2. Richmondshire BAP Action Programme

This document is the second part of the Richmondshire BAP programme.

The complete BAP consists of the following two parts:

Part 1. The Action Plan.
This gives our objectives for the priority habitats and species in Richmondshire and provides information on current status and reasons for decline.

Part 2. The action programme.
This gives the UK BAP targets (if any) and a table of quantifiable targets and actions to be delivered locally. These tables form an appendix to the published BAP. They provide a broad menu of targets and actions that will be initiated when opportunities, funding and partner leadership is identified. Active targets are targets and their actions, which have been or are likely to be initiated in the current twelve-month reporting period. Each 'live' target and action will be input into the on-line Biodiversity Action Reporting System (BARS). The BARS software has been designed so that it can automatically communicate with the partners that have agreed action delivery, to prompt them to report progress. The current active targets can be viewed on the website www.ukbap-reporting.org.uk/

The Action Programme provides a menu of targets and actions for each priority, which if implemented, will make progress towards the objectives set out in each action plan. The BAP Steering Group will meet annually to review progress and to add new targets and actions or delete obsolete ones. Actions where partners, funding and a delivery mechanism have been identified will become active and be entered into BARS.

The priority habitat and species target and action tables.

Habitats

Woodland
Lowland wood pasture, parkland and veteran trees
Upland hay meadow
Upland calcareous grassland
Species-rich grassland
Floodplain grassland
Upland heathland and Blanket bog
Moorland edge
Fen
Reedbed
Standing water
Flowing water

Species

Otter
Water vole
Bats
Black grouse
Curlew

Habitats

Woodland

BAP Objectives, Targets and Actions

The UK BAP Objectives are:

Wet woodland

- Increase current area of Wet woodland of 24,000 to 30,000 ha.
- Initiate management measures to achieve favourable condition in 100% of Wet woodlands within SSSIs and 80% of total resource by 2004 and to achieve that favourable condition for 70% within SSSIs and 50% of total resource by 2010.
- Initiate restoration of site-native species to 3,200 ha, and complete this for 50% of this area by 2010 and 100% by 2015.
- Initiate natural colonisation or planting of 6,750 ha on un-wooded or ex-plantation sites - 50% by 2010 and 100% by 2015.

Upland oakwood

- Maintain the current extent (70,000 to 100,000 ha) and distribution of Upland oakwood.
- Improve the condition of the existing Upland oakwood resource, using a mixture of management for timber, sheltered grazing and minimum intervention.
- Avoiding other habitats of high nature conservation value, expand the area of Upland oakwood by 7000 - 10000 ha (about 10%) by planting or natural regeneration on currently open ground, and by conversion from non-native plantations, by 2005.
- Complete the restoration to site-native species of 7000 - 10000 ha (10% of the total resource) of former Upland oakwood that has been converted to non-native Plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites.

Upland mixed ashwoods

- Maintain the total extent (approx. 67,000 ha) and distribution of Upland mixed ashwood.
- Complete the establishment of a further 3,000 ha of Upland mixed ashwood on un-wooded sites, or by conversion of non-native plantations, by 2015.
- Maintain the current extent (40,000-50,000 ha) and distribution of ancient semi-natural Upland mixed ashwood.
- Initiate measures intended to achieve favourable condition in 100% of Upland mixed ashwoods within the SSSI resource and in 80% of the total resource.
- Achieve favourable condition over 50% of the total resource by 2010 and 70% of the designated sites by 2010.
- Complete restoration to site-native species of 1,200 ha of former Upland mixed ashwood, which has been converted to non-native plantation on Ancient Woodland Sites by 2010 and a further 1,200 ha by 2015.

No.	Long Term Target	Target Goals	Target Date	Lead Organisation
Woodland				
W-T1	No loss of any Woodland recorded in the Ancient Woodland Inventory.	Maintain extent of ancient woodland at 400 ha.	2010	FC
W-T2	Implement restoration plans to increase the resource of semi-natural woodland on PAWS ancient sites.	Restore 45 ha of PAWS woodland.	2010	FC
W-T3	Expand the semi-natural woodland resource, whilst not affecting other areas of high nature conservation value, where possible adjacent to ancient woods.	Create 15 ha of woodland.	2010	FC, Yorwoods
W-T4	To increase knowledge of the resource of ancient woodland, including sites under 2 ha in size, which are not on the AWI.	Establish the extent of ancient woodland in 75 arishes.	2010	NEYEDC
W-T5	Raise awareness of the nature conservation value of woodland through the media and public events.	Organise 1 woodland event.	2010	Yorwoods, BTCV
W-T6	Encourage woodland owners to manage woodland in favourable condition for wildlife.	Enhance the quality of 20 ha.	2010	FC, BTCV

No.	Action	Link to Target No.	Action Goal	Responsibility
Woodland				
W-A1	Identify and target owners of PAWS, to promote and facilitate the implementation of restoration plans for converting PAWS to semi-natural woodland.	W-T2	Enhance 35 ha of PAWS woodland (full restoration by 2040).	Yorwoods, FC
W-A2	Implement restoration plans to practically undertake the restoration of PAWS on MoD land.	W-T2	Restore 10 ha of PAWS woodland.	MoD
W-A3	Facilitate the management of existing woods, including stock proofing and controlling non-native species, using the EWGS and other incentives.	W-T6	Enhance quality of 50 ha of established woodland (all actions).	Yorwoods, FC, Defra, BTCV
W-A4	Facilitate the planting of small woods, particularly ghyll woodlands in the upland areas, to benefit Black grouse.	W-T3	Create 5 ha of semi-natural woodland in ghylls.	Yorwoods, FC, Defra
W-A5	Identify suitable areas and facilitate halo-planting or the planting and/or seeding of semi-natural woodland and scrub using species of local provenance.	W-T3	Create 10 ha (all actions).	Yorwoods, FC, Defra
W-A6	Organise woodland walks, events and site information for publicly accessible woods.	W-T5	Deliver 1 woodland event annually.	Yorwoods, FC, MoD, BTCV
W-A7	Survey the ancient woodland resource (including PAWS), possibly involving members of the public. Monitor existing and known ASNW to ensure integrity.	W-T4 W-T1	Survey 15 parishes. Use AWI to monitor known ASNW.	Yorwoods, FC, NEYEDC
W-A8	Identify woodland (of all types) where advice may be offered to owners, and improvements made.	W-T6	Identify and advise 10 Woodland owners.	FC, EN, Defra, FWAG

W-A9	Woods on the AWI to be surveyed and tested for SINC status (excepting SSSIs), which will help with their protection through planning.	W-T1	Assess 3 sites for SINC status.	SINC Panel
W-A10	Undertake enhancement of Ancient semi-natural woodland on MoD land, following recent MoD Ancient woodland survey.	W-T6	Enhance 20 ha.	MoD
W-A11	Establish a new native species wood on Stainton Moor MoD land, (which will be promoted as best practice).	W-T3	Create 15 ha.	MoD

Lowland wood pasture, Parkland and Veteran trees

BAP Objectives, Targets and Actions

The UK BAP Objectives are:

- Conserve in favourable condition, restore and expand.
- Protect and maintain the current extent of 10,000 to 20,000 ha and the current distribution, in a favourable ecological condition.
- Initiate, in areas where there are derelict examples, a programme to restore 2,500 ha to favourable ecological condition by 2010.
- By 2002 initiate the expansion of 500 ha in appropriate areas to help reverse fragmentation and to reduce the generation gap between Veteran trees.

No.	Long Term Target	Target Goals	Target Date	Lead Organisation
Lowland wood pasture, parkland and veteran trees				
LWP-T1	Raise awareness of the importance of Lowland wood pasture and parkland and provide management advice.	Deliver 3 sets of advice.	2010	NYCC
LWP-T2	To increase knowledge of the resource of veteran trees.	Survey 25 parishes.	2010	NEYEDC
LWP-T3	Promote the nature conservation value of veteran trees, outside of Lowland wood pasture and parkland sites, through the media.	Deliver 1 media promotion.	2010	NYCC

No.	Action	Link to Target	Action Goal	Responsibility
Lowland wood pasture, parkland and veteran trees				
LWP-A1	Establish ownership, and undertake condition surveys of Lowland wood pasture and parkland, subject to landowner permission.	LWP-T1	Set up 1 register.	NEYEDC, NYCC
LWP-A2	Survey Lowland wood pasture and parkland sites for dead wood invertebrates.	LWP-T2	Survey 3 sites.	NEYEDC, YNU
LWP-A3	Survey Lowland wood pasture and parkland sites for fungi of veteran trees and associated pasture.	LWP-T2	Survey 3 sites	NEYEDC, YNU
LWP-A4	Give advice on Lowland wood pasture and parkland to interested parties on management and grants.	LWP-T1	Deliver 3 sets of advice.	Defra, FWAG, Yorwoods
LWP-A5	Publish information promoting Lowland wood pasture and parkland and celebrating veteran trees.	LWP-T3	Publish 1 article.	NYCC
LW-A6	Encourage management or restoration of Lowland wood pasture and parkland under the Environmental Stewardship Scheme.	LWP-T1	Maintain quality and extent of 3 sites.	Defra, FWAG
LWP-A7	Organise and undertake a survey for veteran trees in a number of parishes, set up a database.	LWP-T2	Survey 25 parishes.	NEYEDC
LWP-A8	Organise the assessment of ‘at risk’ veteran trees by a qualified specialist, for advice on prolonging tree life.	LWP-T3	Assess 10 trees.	RDC

Upland Hay Meadow

BAP Objectives, Targets and Actions.

The UK BAP Objectives are:

- Arrest the depletion of unimproved upland hay meadow throughout its UK distribution.
- Within SSSIs, initiate appropriate management for all significant stands of unimproved upland hay meadow in unfavourable condition by 2005.
- Wherever biologically feasible, achieve favourable status of all significant stands of unimproved upland hay meadow within SSSIs by 2010.
- For stands outside SSSI's, secure favourable condition over 30% of the resource by 2005.
- For stands outside SSSI's, secure favourable condition over as near to 100% of the resource as is practicable by 2015.
- Attempt to re-establish 50 ha of upland hay meadow of wildlife value at carefully targeted sites by 2010.

No.	Long Term Target	Target Goals	Target Date	Lead Organisation
Upland hay meadow				
UHM-T1	Manage whole resource through SSSI or ESS management agreements.	Enhance quality of 12 ha.	2010	EN, Defra
UHM-T2	Promote the economic value of the resource, in terms of tourism, so that it is reflected in development plans and policy documents up to regional level.	Organise 5 responses to consultations.	2010	RDC
UHM-T3	Increase our knowledge of the resource of Upland hay meadow.	Establish the extent in 21 parishes.	2010	NEYEDC
UHM-T4	Re-establish Upland hay meadow.	Create 2 ha.	2010	Defra

No.	Action	Link to Target No.	Action Goal	Responsibility
Upland hay meadow				
UHM-A1	Management agreements to be in place for all SSSI Upland hay meadows.	UHM-T1	Enhance quality of 7 ha.	EN, Defra, FWAG
UHM-A2	Encourage positive wildlife management of SINC sites containing Upland hay meadow, through advice on management and grants.	UHM-T1	Enhance quality of 5 ha.	Defra, FWAG, BTCV
UHM-A3	Make and publicise the economic case for conserving Upland hay meadow to the appropriate Tourist information Centres.	UHM-T2	Undertake 1 mailing.	RDC
UHM-A4	Survey the Upland hay meadow resource to ensure that all sites are recorded and ratify all sites fitting SINC criteria.	UHM-T3	Survey sites in 1 parish.	NYCC, NEYEDC
UHM-A5	Establish and support management agreements and agri-environment options for re-creating Upland hay meadow.	UHM-T4	Create 2 ha.	Defra

Upland Calcareous grassland

BAP Objectives, Targets and Actions.

The UK BAP Objectives are:

- Maintain the current distribution and extent (ca 22,000- 25,000 ha) of upland calcareous grassland in the UK
- Achieve favourable condition for at least 75% of Upland calcareous grassland through sympathetic management by 2005 or as soon as biologically practical thereafter.
- Initiate pilot attempts to re-create 200 ha of Upland calcareous grassland by 2005, with a particular emphasis on reducing fragmentation through linking small, vulnerable and discontinuous sites

No.	Long Term Target	Target Goals	Target Date	Lead Organisation
Upland calcareous grassland				
UCG-T1	To ensure no loss of Upland calcareous grassland and no reduction in the quality of this habitat where it occurs on SSSIs.	Maintain extent and quality of 46 ha.	2010	EN
UCG-T2	Provide expert advice on management and grants, to SINC owners, to enable them to manage sites economically and for wildlife.	Enhance 32 ha.	2010	NYCC

No.	Action	Link to Target No.	Action Goal	Responsibility
Upland calcareous grassland				
UCG-A1	Liaise with landowners to establish SSSI management agreements.	UCG-T1	Maintain extent and quality of 46 ha.	EN, Defra
UCG-A2	Liaise with SINC owners, assess the condition of the habitat and give advice on ESS Higher Level Scheme agreements.	UCG-T2	Enhance 32 ha.	Defra, FWAG, NYCC

Species-rich grassland

BAP Objectives, Targets and Actions.

The UK BAP Objectives (all types) are:

- Arrest depletion.
- Within SSSIs start rehabilitation management for significant stands in unfavourable condition by 2005, to get favourable status by 2010.
- For other sites, secure favourable condition over 30% of resource by 2005 and 100% by 2015.
- Re-establish 500 ha at targeted sites by 2010.

No.	Long Term Target	Target Goals	Target Date	Lead Organisation
Species-rich grassland				
S-rG-T1	Protect and improve the resource where it occurs on road verges.	Enhance 0.5 ha	2010	NYCC
S-rG-T2	Protect and improve the resource where it occurs in churchyards.	Enhance 1 ha	2010	NYCC
S-rG-T3	Protect and improve the resource where it occurs within farmland and especially on SINC sites.	Enhance 30 ha	2010	Defra, BTCV
S-rG-T4	Promote the re-creation of Species-rich grasslands where appropriate (e.g. in mineral site reclamation schemes).	Create 10 ha	2010	NYCC, Defra
S-rG-T5	Increase our knowledge of the resource of Species-rich grassland.	Survey 21 parishes.	2010	NEYEDC
S-rG-T6	Provide expert advice on habitat management and grants, to landowners, to enable them to manage sites economically and for wildlife.	Organise the preparation of 5 Farm plans	2010	Defra
S-rG-T7	Promote the nature conservation interest and accessibility to local communities of the habitat.	Organise 1 media promotion.	Annual	BAP steering group

No.	Action	Link to Target No.	Action Goal	Responsibility
Species-rich grassland				
S-rG-A1	Liaise with the Highways Authority and establish a Road Verge Maintenance policy with maintenance schedules that benefit the best road verges in the District and cascade this down to operatives.	S-rG-T1	Enhance 1 ha.	NYCC
S-rG-A2	Incorporate biodiversity management into Highways Authority Road Verge Maintenance policy.	S-rG-T1	Deliver 1 policy change.	NYCC
S-rG-A3	Liaise with landowners of SINC road verges and facilitate the preparation and implementation of road verge management plans.	S-rG-T1	Enhance either 1 ha.	NYCC
S-rG-A4	Liaise with landowners of churchyards and facilitate the preparation and implementation of churchyard, grassland management plans.	S-rG-T2	Enhance either 1 ha.	NYCC
S-rG-A5	Liaise with landowners and facilitate the preparation and implementation of management agreements through the ESS Higher Level Scheme.	S-rG-T3	Enhance 40 ha.	Defra, FWAG
S-rG-A6	Work in partnership with local authorities, mineral companies and other agencies in order to re-create this habitat as part of the reclamation of mineral extraction sites.	S-rG-T4	Create 10 ha.	NYCC, SUWP
S-rG-A7	Survey the Species-rich grassland resource, including identifying Special Interest Verges.	S-rG-T5	Survey 3 parishes.	NEYEDC
S-rG-A8	Give advice on Species-rich grassland, including its management and grants, to parish councils and parochial church groups.	S-rG-T6	Deliver 10 lots of advice.	NYCC, YWT (Living Churchyards Project)
S-rG-A9	Organise events or publish information promoting churchyard grasslands and road verges, to parish councils, parochial church groups and other parties.	S-rG-T7	Deliver 1 event or publish 1 article.	NYCC, YWT (Living Churchyards Project)

Floodplain grassland

BAP Objectives, Targets and Actions.

The UK BAP Objectives are:

Floodplain grazing marsh (including coastal).

- Maintain the existing habitat extent and quality (300,000ha).
- Rehabilitate 10,000 ha of grazing marsh habitat in unfavourable condition, by the year 2000. This would comprise 5,000 ha already targeted in Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs), with an additional 5,000 ha.
- Begin creating 2,500 ha of grazing marsh from arable land in targeted areas, in addition to that which will be achieved by existing ESA schemes, with the aim of completing as much as possible by the year 2000.

No.	Long Term Target	Target Goals	Target Date	Lead Organisation
Floodplain grassland				
FG-T1	Increase our knowledge of the resource of Floodplain grassland and establish a baseline.	Survey 21 parishes.	2010	NEYEDC
FG-T2	Maintain the quality and extent of Floodplain grassland.	Maintain quality and extent of 25 ha.	2010	Defra
FG-T3	Restore or re-create semi-improved Floodplain grassland to favourable wildlife status.	Create 10 ha.	2010	Defra

No.	Action	Link to Target No.	Action Goal	Responsibility
Floodplain grassland				
FG-A1	Quantify the resource by checking and comparing existing data sets of Floodplain grasslands, including BioDAT & The Grassland Inventory.	FG-T1	Check 2 data sets.	NEYEDC
FG-A2	Sites containing this habitat to have a conservation management plan, or to be in an ESS Higher Level Scheme agreement and to be managed appropriately.	FG-T2	Enhance 25 ha.	Defra, FWAG, BTCV
FG-A3	Encourage the re-establishment of Floodplain grassland on arable land within flood valleys, through agri-environment schemes, or through mineral restoration schemes.	FG-T3	Create 10 ha.	Defra, FWAG, SUWP, NYCC, BTCV
FG-A4	Refine SINC criteria for birds.	FG-T2	Agree 1 set of bird guidelines.	NYCC
FG-A5	Collect bird data, assess sites and ratify new sites if criteria are met.	FG-T2	Ratify 5 SINCs.	NYCC

Upland moorland and Blanket bog

BAP Objectives, Targets and Actions.

The UK BAP Objectives are:

Upland heathland

- Maintain the current resource in favourable condition.
- Achieve favourable condition on all upland heathland SSSIs by 2010.
- Improve the condition of at least 50% of semi-natural upland heath outside SSSIs by 2010.
- Increase dwarf shrubs to at least 25% cover where they have been reduced or eliminated.
- Restoration of between 50,000 and 100,000 ha by 2010.
- Recreation of 5,000 ha by 2005 of heathland lost to agricultural improvement or afforestation.

Blanket bog

- Maintain the current extent and overall distribution of blanket mire currently in favourable condition.
- Improve the condition of those areas of blanket mire, which are degraded but readily restored, so that the total area in favourable condition by 2005 is 340,000 ha.
- Introduce management regimes to improve and maintain a further 280,000 ha of degraded blanket mire by 2010.

No.	Long Term Target	Target Goals	Target Date	Lead Organisation
Upland moorland and Bog				
UH&B –T1	Identify and fill in active moorland drainage grips.	Enhance 10 ha.	2010	EN, MoD, Defra
UH&B –T2	90% of Blanket bog (23 ha) to be in EN criteria of favourable condition for wildlife.	Maintain 21 ha.	2010	EN, MoD, Defra
UH&B –T3	90% of Upland heathland (3,800 ha) to be in EN criteria of favourable condition for wildlife.	Maintain 3,420 ha.	2010	EN, MoD, Defra

UH&B –T4	Restore degraded Upland heath	Enhance 50 ha.	2010	EN, MoD, Defra
UH&B –T5	Provide expert advice to landowners and land managers.	Organise 5 pieces of advice.	2010	EN, MoD, Defra
UH&B –T6	Promote and celebrate the resource.	Organise 5 media articles.	2010	RDC
UH&B –T7	Increase our knowledge of the distribution and breeding population of the priority species.	Survey 75 parishes.	2010	NEYEDC
UH&B –T8	Allow naturally returning Hen harriers to breed successfully.	Increase population by 1 breeding pair.	2010	Police WLO

No.	Action	Link to Target	Action Goal	Responsibility
Upland moorland and Bog				
UH&B-A1	Reduce sheep stocking rates where necessary for wildlife conservation.	UH&B-T3, T4	Enhance 50 ha.	EN, MoD, Defra, FWAG
UH&B-A2	Encourage landowners to maintain a low burning intensity on some areas of Upland heath and to leave it unburned on some areas of Upland heath.	UH&B-T3, T4	Enhance 100 ha.	EN, MoD, Defra, FWAG
UH&B-A3	From aerial photographs and fieldwork, identify active drainage grips that are causing unfavourable drainage or an adverse impact upon wildlife and advise landowners/block grips.	UH&B-T1	Enhance 50 ha.	EN, MoD, Defra, FWAG

UH&B-A4	Encourage landowners and land managers to enhance Upland heathland habitat through the planting of woodland and scrub on appropriate sites.	UH&B-T3, T4	Enhance 50 ha.	EN, MoD, Defra, FWAG, Yorwoods, BTCV
UH&B-A5	Prepare management guidance for landowners.	UH&B-T5	Deliver 5 sets of advice.	EN, MoD, Defra, FWAG
UH&B-A6	Use evocative moorland photographs to promote the habitat and the District.	UH&B-T6	Deliver 5 articles promoting the District's moorland heritage.	RDC
UH&B-A7	Organise surveys for Adder.	UH&B-T7	Survey 15 parishes.	NEYEDC
UH&B-A8	Organise surveys for Golden plover.	UH&B-T7	Survey 15 parishes.	NEYEDC
UH&B-A9	Organise surveys for Hen harrier.	UH&B-T7	Survey 15 parishes.	NEYEDC
UH&B-A10	Organise surveys for Merlin.	UH&B-T7	Survey 15 parishes.	NEYEDC
UH&B-A11	Organise surveys for Short-eared owl.	UH&B-T7	Survey 15 parishes.	NEYEDC
UH&B-A12	Work with landowners and gamekeepers to protect naturally returning Hen harriers, through mutual agreements.	UH&B-T8	Increase population by 1 breeding pair.	EN, Police WLO, FWAG

Moorland edge

BAP Objectives, Targets and Actions.

The UK BAP Objectives are:

This is not a UK BAP priority.

No.	Long Term Target	Target Goals	Target Date	Lead Organisation
Moorland edge				
ME-T1	Map of current habitat to be created, to direct future targets.	Develop 1 database.	2010	NEYEDC
ME-T2	Moorland edge resource to be managed under the Higher Level tier of the Defra ESS.	Enhance 50 ha.	2010	Defra
ME-T3	Creation of small plots (0.5–1 ha), of wildlife friendly arable habitat, to complement the mosaic of sub-habitats (avoiding existing good habitat, good landscape and uncultivated land covered by the EIA Regs 2000). Small plots to genuinely enhance wildlife as opposed to purely improving shooting interest.	Create 5 ha of arable.	2010	Defra
ME-T4	Increase our understanding of priority species within the resource, through survey of appropriate parishes.	Survey 25 parishes.	2010	NEYEDC

No.	Action	Link to Target No.	Action Goal	Responsibility
Moorland edge				
ME-A1	Collate data sources as to the definition of Moorland edge, agree definition and produce digitised map of extent & condition from an agreed base year.	ME-T1	Produce 1 map/database.	NEYEDC
ME-A2	Collate information on existing methods of land management for Moorland edge and the 'outcomes'.	ME-T2	Produce 1 report.	Defra, FWAG, MoD
ME-A3	Consider and target areas for appropriate planting and native woodland and scrub succession.	ME-T2	Create 5 ha woodland.	Defra, FWAG, MoD, Yorwoods, BTCV
ME-A4	Work with landowners / occupiers to assess sites and agree management prescriptions.	ME-T2	Enhance 50 ha (in total).	Defra, FWAG, MoD
ME-A5	Provide best practice land management training to benefit wildlife.	ME-T2, T3	Deliver 1 training course.	FWAG
ME-A6	Evaluate status of priority species.	ME-T4	Survey 25 parishes.	NEYEDC

Fen

BAP Objectives, Targets and Actions.

The UK BAP Objectives are:

- Initiate restoration of priority Fen sites in critical need of rehabilitation by the year 2005.
- Ensure appropriate water quality and water quantity for the continued existence of all SSSI fens by 2005.

No.	Long Term Target	Target Goals	Target Date	Lead Organisation
Fen				
F-T1	To assess condition and have management agreements in place for known Fen sites on SINCs.	Enhance quality of 10 ha.	2010	NYCC
F-T2	Provide expert advice on Fen management and grants, to landowners, to enable them to manage sites economically and for wildlife.	Deliver advice to 10 SINC owners.	2010	Defra
F-T3	Promote the creation of Fen habitat as part of mineral site restoration schemes.	Create 3 ha.	2010	NYCC

No.	Action	Link to Target No.	Action Goal	Responsibility
Fen				
F-A1	Liaise with SINC owners and encourage the establishment of management plans for SINC sites.	F-T1	Enhance 2 ha.	NYCC, BTCV
F-A2	Liaise with SINC owners and give advice on Fen management and grants.	F-T2	Deliver advice to 2 SINC owners.	Defra, FWAG, NYCC
F-A3	Advise Mineral Planning Officers and mineral extraction companies on Fen habitat creation and encourage them to deliver new Fen sites.	F-T3	Create 3 ha.	NYCC, SUWP

Reedbed

BAP Objectives, Targets and Actions.

The UK BAP Objectives are:

- Identify and rehabilitate all priority Reedbeds by 2000 and maintain condition through management.
- Create 1,200 ha of new Reedbed by 2010.

No.	Long Term Target	Target Goals	Target Date	Lead Organisation
Reedbed				
R-T1	Create Reedbeds through working in partnership, for example with the mineral extraction sector and the Minerals Planning Authority.	Create 20 ha.	2010	NYCC
R-T2	The management of ditches to include the retention of existing linear Reedbeds.	Maintain 1 km.	2010	Defra
R-T3	Increase our knowledge of the resource.	Survey 21 parishes	2010	NEYEDC

No.	Action	Link to Target No.	Action Goal	Responsibility
Reedbed				
R-A1	Consider Reedbed creation as part of Environment Agency Catchment Flood Management Plans.	R-T1	Create 20 ha (total).	
R-A2	Promote Reedbed creation as part of Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes.	R-T1	Create 20 ha (total).	EA, NYCC, RDC
R-A3	ttach Reedbed creation conditions as part of mineral planning approvals.	R-T1	Create 20 ha (total).	NYCC
R-A4	Promote ditch maintenance that does not eradicate existing patches of Common reed.	R-T2	Maintain 1 km.	Defra, FWAG
R-A5	Work with landowners to investigate projects to create Reedbeds on lake margins.	RT-1	Create 20 ha (total).	Defra, FWAG, BTCV
R-A6	Advise mineral extraction companies on the creation of Reedbeds and advise owners of standing water on the creation and management of reeds, possibly taking advantage of agri-environment schemes.	RT-1	Create 20 ha (total).	Defra, FWAG, BTCV, SUWP
R-A7	Through the collation of existing data, aerial photographs and survey, establish an inventory and digitised map of Reedbeds and linear patches of Common reed.	R-T3	Deliver 1 map.	NEYEDC

Standing water

BAP Objectives, Targets and Actions.

The UK BAP Objectives are:

For Mesotrophic lakes:

- Maintain the characteristic communities of current examples.
- Identify and implement effective remedial action to address nutrient enrichment in polluted lakes by 2010.

No.	Long Term Target	Target Goals	Target Date	Lead Organisation
Standing water				
SW-T1	Create new water bodies and associated terrestrial habitat exclusively for nature conservation, whilst not affecting existing areas of high conservation value and where there is a biodiversity gain.	Create 31 water bodies.	2010	Defra, BTCV
SW-T2	Maintain numbers of wintering Wigeon at Swale Lakes SSSI.	Enhance 1 site.	2010	EN, YWT
SW-T3	Promote the resource and its wildlife to the public, farmers and developers.	Deliver 1 promotion.	2010	NYCC, BTCV

No.	Action	Link to Target No.	Action Goal	Responsibility
Standing water				
SW-A1	Management at Swale Lakes SSSI, to benefit Wigeon, for which the site is notified.	SWT-T2	Enhance 1 site.	EN, YWT
SW-A2	Encourage the creation of ponds in development proposals.	SW-T1	Create 5 ponds.	RDC
SW-A3	On farms, encourage the creation and management of Standing water, where there is a wildlife interest and not including fish ponds.	SW-T1	Create 15 ponds.	Defra, FWAG, BTCV
SW-A4	Encourage the creation of garden ponds for wildlife.	SW-T1	Create 10 ponds.	NYCC
SW-A5	Give ecological advice to mineral extraction companies and Mineral Planning Authority.	SW-T1, T3	Create 1 water body.	NYCC, SUWP
SW-A6	Promote ponds and associated wildlife by using flagship species.	SW-T3	Deliver 1 promotion.	NYCC, BTCV

Flowing water

BAP Objectives, Targets and Actions.

The UK BAP Objectives are:

- Maintain characteristic wildlife.
- Restore water quality, flow & habitat diversity on SSSIs.

No.	Long Term Target	Target Goals	Target Date	Lead Organisation
Flowing water				
FW-T1	To maintain river, stream and ditch habitat, including riparian corridors, in a favourable condition for wildlife.	Enhance quality of 10 km (total).	2010	EA
FW-T2	Implementation of the Ure Initiative.	Enhance quality of 10 km (total).	2010	EA

No.	Action	Link to Target No.	Action Goal	Responsibility
Flowing water				
FW-A1	Implement CAMS to ensure sustainable water abstraction.	FW-T1, T2	Enhance quality of 10 km (total).	EA
FW-A2	Undertake work to meet EA water quality targets for appropriate sections of river.	FW-T1, T2	Enhance quality of 10 km (total).	EA
FW-A3	During ditch clearance, leave stretches of bank side vegetation (such as Common reed), un-touched, or replace after clearance.	FW-T1, T2	Maintain the quality of 10 km of ditch.	Defra, FWAG, BTCV
FW-A4	Identify barriers to fish migration on the District's rivers and their tributaries.	FW-T1, T2	Enhance quality of 10 km (total).	EA, Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust
FW-A5	Prepare guidance for the mineral extraction sector on the creation of Sand martin breeding cliffs.	FW-T1	Deliver 1 guidance note.	SUWP
FW-A6	Create vertical sand banks to allow the development of Sand martin colonies. This could be on either a river bank or on the bank of a Standing water body.	FW-T1, T2	Increase the population by 2 occupied colonies.	Mineral extraction companies, SUWP, EA, NYCC, EN, Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust

Species
Otter
BAP Objectives, Targets and Actions.
The UK BAP Objectives are:

- Maintain and expand existing populations. By 2010 restore breeding Otters to all catchments and coastal areas where they have been recorded since 1960.

No.	Long Term Target	Target Goals	Target Date	Lead Organisation
Otter				
O-T1	Increase our knowledge of Otter breeding areas.	Identify 10 breeding areas.	2010	YWT
O-T2	Increase the geographical range of the Otter.	Increase geographical range by 5 occupied 10km squares.	2010	YWT

No.	Action	Link to Target No.	Action Goal	Responsibility
Otter				
O-A1	Liaise with and advice Highways Agency, NYCC and RDC planning officers, on Otter issues including mitigation for planning approvals for both developments and road schemes.	O-T2	Increase geographical range of Otter by 2 occupied sites.	NYCC
O-A2	Survey the Otter population to determine baseline information on Otter activity and habitat suitable for breeding.	O-T1	Identify 10 breeding areas.	YWT, NEYEDC

O-A3	Facilitate the creation of artificial Otter holts.	O-T2	Maintain geographical range of Otter in 10 km squares.	EA, RDS Defra, FWAG
O-A4	Raise awareness and provide information on Otter requirements, with planning officers, riparian landowners, farmers, developers and angling clubs.	O-T2	Deliver 1 piece of advice.	YWT, BTCV
O-A5	Identify actual and potential Otter accident black spots for road deaths.	O-T2	Identify 1 Otter accident black spot.	YWT, NYCC
O-A6	Work in partnership with appropriate organisations, to facilitate the introduction of engineering solutions to Otter accident black spots on roads.	O-T2	Remove 1 Otter accident black spot.	YWT, NYCC
O-A7	Co-ordinate the sending of Otter casualties for post mortem and analysis.	O-T2	Send 1 Otter carcass for veterinary examination.	YWT
O-A8	Promote the use of carefully sited, cage (live) traps for American mink to the Gamekeepers Association, Country Land and Business Association and landowners, to minimise the risk of Otters being caught in traps.	O-T2	Deliver 1 piece of guidance.	YWT

Water vole

UK BAP Objectives, Targets and Actions.

The UK BAP Objectives are:

- Maintain the current distribution and abundance.
- Restore Water voles to their former widespread distribution, using the Vincent Wildlife Trust survey of 1989/90 as a baseline, by the year 2010.

No.	Long Term Target	Target Goals	Target Date	Lead Organisation
Water vole				
WV-T1	Increase the current geographical range of the Water vole.	Increase geographical range of the Water vole by 3 populations/occupied sites.	2010	EA
WV-T2	Create new Water vole habitats targeted close to existing populations to encourage expansion.	Create 3 occupied sites (as above).	2010	EA
WV-T3	Increase our knowledge of the current population and range of the Water vole.	To establish extent of population within 21 parishes.	2010	EA, NEYEDC
WV-T4	Promote awareness of Water voles and the damage rodenticides and herbicides do to Water vole habitat.	Delivery of 3 planning consultation responses, articles or leaflets.	2010	EA, YWT, BTCV
WV-T5	Protect existing Water vole populations from American mink.	Maintain 2 populations of Water vole.	2010	EA, YWT

No.	Action	Link to Target No.	Action Goal	Responsibility
Water vole				
WV-A1	Liaise with appropriate agencies, such as landowners, farmers, gamekeepers and angling clubs, and facilitate the trapping of American mink – targeted to watercourses holding populations of Water vole.	WV-T1, T5	Trap 5 American mink.	EA, YWT, BTCV, FWAG
WV-A2	Promote the conservation of the Water vole through working with interested parties to produce an advice leaflet on Water voles.	WV-T4	Produce 1 leaflet.	EA, YWT, FWAG
WV-A3	Promote the conservation of the Water vole through working with the local planning authority, giving advice on Water vole issues including mitigation proposals for planning approvals.	WV-T4	Deliver 3 planning consultation responses.	EA, YWT
WV-A4	Survey for Water voles and American mink.	WV-T1 WV-T3	Survey 4 parishes.	EA, NEYEDC
WV-A5	Liaise with local authority pest control officers, farmers and landowners, to raise awareness of the threat to Water voles of poisoning due to confusion with the Brown rat.	WV-T4	Maintain geographical range of 3 occupied sites.	NYCC
WV-A6	Provide advice and guidance on surveying, Water vole protection and management, habitat enhancement and creation and grants, to interested parties.	WV-T1 WV-T2 WV-T3 WV-T4	Increase geographical range by 3 occupied sites.	Ea, YWT, FWAG
WV-A7	Carry out feasibility study for re-introductions/release of Water voles.	WV-T1	Increase geographical range by 3 occupied sites.	EA, YWT, FWAG, Defra

Bats

UK BAP Objectives, Targets and Actions.

The UK BAP Objectives are:

The UK action plan has specific Actions and Objectives on a number of the bat species including, Common Pipistrelle, Barbastelle, Bachstein's, Greater Mouse-Eared, Greater Horseshoe and Lesser Horseshoe. Whilst all have individual targets the common theme is the maintaining of existing numbers and/or ranges and the expanding of populations into new geographical areas.

No.	Long Term Target	Target Goals	Target Date	Lead Organisation
Bats				
B-T1	Increase our knowledge of the known resource of all species of bat.	Establish the extent of bat populations in 12 parishes.	2010	NYBG
B-T2	Promote the nature conservation value of bats to specialist staff (e.g. architects, engineers, tree officers, etc)	Organise 1 promotional event.	2010	NYCC, RDC
B-T3	Promote the nature conservation of bats to the public and landowners.	Organise 1 promotional event.	2010	NYBG
B-T4	Develop a policy or system, to ensure that bat surveys are carried out on all Council properties prior to building work.	Organise 1 internal policy or system.	2010	RDC
B-T5	Increase the number of bat roosts.	Create 10 occupied sites.	2010	NYBG

No.	Action	Link to Target No.	Action Goal	Responsibility
Bats				
B-A1	Survey for bats.	B-T1	Survey 2 parishes.	NYBG
B-A2	Establish status of Brown long-eared bats.	B-T1	Launch a Richmondshire Brown long-eared bat survey through 'The Curlew'.	NYBG, RDC
B-A3	Locate and survey underground sites to establish extent of resource available for hibernating bats.	B-T1	Survey 2 parishes.	NYBG
B-A4	Promote participation in the National Bat Monitoring Programme to householders.	B-T1	Survey 20 roosts.	NYBG, BCT
B-A5	Promote the importance and management of mature trees for roosting bats, to arboriculturalists, contractors and council staff, and the importance of buildings for bats, to architects, engineers, planners and developers.	B-T2, B-T5	Create 10 occupied sites.	NYBG, RDC
B-A6	Organise the production of a media article on the nature conservation importance of bats.	B-T3	Deliver 1 article.	NYBG
B-A7	Survey local authority buildings and bridges for Bats prior to building work and then protect any bat interest.	B-T4	Maintain 25 occupied sites.	NYBG, NYCC, RDC
B-A8	Develop and implement effective policy to request surveys in connection with Development Control, in order to minimise the risk of roost loss during development.	B-T3	Deliver 1 policy.	EN, NYBG, NYCC, RDC

Black grouse

UK BAP Objectives, Targets and Actions.

The UK BAP Objectives are:

- Maintain the population of Black grouse to its 1996 level.
- Restore the range to its 1988 –1991 extent, by 2008 – 2011.
- In the long term (20 years) increase the UK population.
- In the long term (20 years) increase the range in the UK.
- Promote re-colonisation of formerly occupied areas between currently isolated populations by 2005.

No.	Long Term Target	Target Goals	Target Date	Lead Organisation
Black grouse				
BG-T1	Manage land to provide optimum Black grouse habitat on MoD land.	Increase geographical range by 1 occupied site.	2010	MoD
BG-T2	Seek voluntary shooting bans for Black grouse.	Increase population size by 5 displaying males.	2010	MoD

No.	Action	Link to Target No.	Action Goal	Responsibility
Black grouse				
BG-A1	Undertake practical management through agreements with tenant farmers and others, in the Feldom Ranges area, to enhance habitats for Black grouse.	BG-T1	Increase geographical range by 1 occupied site.	MoD
BG-A2	Liaise with owners of shooting rights, and seek agreement on, or to continue, voluntary shooting bans.	BG-T2	Increase population size by 5 displaying males.	MoD

Curlew

UK BAP Objectives, Targets and Actions.

The UK BAP Objectives are:

- Not applicable.

No.	Long Term Target	Target Goals	Target Date	Lead Organisation
Curlew				
C-T1	Promote the Curlew as a flagship species for the District.	Organise 1 promotion.	2010	RDC
C-T2	Offer a high level of management and funding advice, to enable landowners to manage sites for Curlew while remaining economical.	Deliver advice to 2 landowners.	2010	Defra

No.	Action	Link to Target No.	Action Goal	Responsibility
Curlew				
C-A1	Identify key breeding sites for Curlew on grassland, liaise with landowners and broker agreements to substantially protect nest sites.	C-T1	Maintain breeding Curlew on 5 occupied sites.	NYCC, Defra, FWAG
C-A2	Prepare and distribute an article on the Curlew, for the RDC newsletter 'The Curlew'.	C-T1	Deliver 1 article.	NYCC
C-A3	Liaise with landowners and give advice on management and grants.	C-T2	Deliver advice to 2 landowners.	Defra, FWAG