# Isle of Wight Biodiversity Action Plan
# Heathland and Acid Grassland Habitat Action Plan

Second Review December 2008

# 1 Introduction

This Habitat Action Plan has been prepared through consultation with a range of organisations and specialists within the Isle of Wight BAP partnership. It was first produced in 2002 and reviewed in 2008.

Heathland and Acid grassland have both been identified as priority habitats in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan. Because the extent of true lowland heath is restricted on the Island and because these two habitats tend to occur in close association and are subject to similar threats and conservation requirements, they have been combined within this single Habitat Action Plan for the Isle of Wight. The Action Plan seeks to ensure that national objectives for these two habitats are translated into effective action on the Island, taking into account local issues. The identification of heathland and acid grasslands as national and local priority habitats are based on the following factors:

1. Semi-natural lowland grassland, including acid grassland has declined by 97% in England and Wales over the last 50 years. It is estimated that there is some 30,000 ha of lowland acid grassland in Britain.
2. In England, only one sixth of the heathland present in 1800 now remains. The UK has some 58,000 ha of lowland heathland, of which the largest proportion (58%) is found in England. The UK has an important proportion (about 20%) of the international total of this habitat.
3. On the Isle of Wight, the decline in heathland and acid grassland is estimated to be in excess of 79% since 1850.
4. There is an estimated 70 ha (67 ha dry heath + 3 ha wet heath) of heathland and 122 ha of dry acid grassland remaining on the Isle of Wight. However, the extent of acid grassland probably needs to be re-assessed following further field survey.
5. The enormous loss of this habitat on the Isle of Wight has been accompanied by severe fragmentation, with many of the remaining areas of heathland and acid grassland being small and isolated.
6. Many of the remaining areas of heathland and acid grassland on the Isle of Wight are not being managed optimally for nature conservation. A review of the condition of SSSI and SINC containing this habitat in 2001 suggested that 40% are in favourable condition or believed to be in favourable condition, 40% are in unfavourable condition or believed to be in unfavourable condition, and the remaining 20% of sites are of unknown condition.
7. Heathland and acid grasslands on the Isle of Wight provide habitat for many species of national or local importance including 5 national priority BAP species, together with 9 national and 46 species of local conservation concern.

The **England targets** (2008) for these habitats include:

**lowland heathland**:

- maintain the current extent of 58,000 ha by 2010
- achieve favourable or recovering condition of 34,086 ha by 2015
- re-establish 6,100 ha by 2015

**lowland dry acid grassland**:

- maintain the current extent of 20,142 ha by 2010
- achieve favourable or recovery condition of 17,295 ha (86%) by 2015
- restore 285 ha of degraded or neglected habitat by 2015
- re-establish 276 ha by 2015

The **South-east Regional targets** (2008) for these habitats include:

**lowland heathland**:

- maintain the current extent of 17,464 ha by 2010
- re-establish 1,777 ha by 2015

**lowland dry acid grassland**:

- maintain the current extent of 5,153 ha by 2010
- restore 151 ha of degraded or neglected habitat by 2015
- re-establish 112 ha by 2015

The **Isle of Wight targets** (2008) for these habitats combined are:

- maintain the current extent of 192 ha of lowland heathland and dry acid grassland by 2015
- achieve favourable or recovering condition of 163 ha (85%) of lowland heathland and dry acid grassland by 2015
- restore 20 ha of degraded or neglected lowland heathland and dry acid grassland by 2015
- re-establish 90 ha of lowland heathland and dry acid grassland by 2015

# 2 Current Status

## Physical Features of the Island's Heathland and Acid Grassland

### Description of Habitat

The national heathland Habitat Action Plan defines this habitat as being characterised by the presence of plants such as heather, dwarf gorse and cross-leaved heath and is generally found below 300 metres in altitude. Acid grassland occurs in a wide variety of different types, both in the UK and on the Isle of Wight.

The heathland on the Island has not been comprehensively surveyed to assess the range of National Vegetation Classification (NVC) communities that are present. However, most of the examples of dry heathland conform to the *Ulex minor – Agrostis curtisii* heath (H3) community, which is the typical dry heathland community of the Hampshire Basin and the New Forest. The fragments of heathland that occur on the clay soils of Parkhurst Forest

may be classified as *Ulex minor – Calluna vulgaris* (H2) heathland, whilst the wet heath that occurs in a few small and isolated patches may be assigned to the *Erica tetralix – Sphagnum compactum* community (M16).

The flora of dry heathland is typically species-poor but associated species commonly include patches of common gorse or bracken, whilst growing with the heathers and heathland grasses may be species such as the heath milkwort, heath pearlwort and tormentil together with mosses such as *Polytrichum juniperinum* and *Campylopus introflexus*. Wet heath, by contrast, can be much more diverse, especially in grazed examples. In addition to the cross-leaved heath and patches of sphagnum moss that are typical of the community, associated species include deer grass and purple moor-grass. A low growing spiny shrub known as petty whin also grows in this heathland type, but it has not been seen in recent years.

An unusual version of species-rich heathland also develops on acid clay soils in Parkhurst Forest and at Bouldnor, where heathers and dwarf gorse grow in a complex mosaic with species-rich neutral grassland. This form of heathland does not conform well to the NVC, but appears to be a southern version of heathland types found in Cornwall.

In other places, areas of heathland occur in a remarkable mosaic with chalk grassland where superficial deposits of clay or gravel cap the downs. In these relatively small areas, heathers and other acid loving plants grow with typical chalk grassland or calcicole species. This heathland type, known as chalk heath, is not described by the NVC but is well described in 'Isle of Wight Chalk Heaths' (Chatters, 1990)

Acid grassland types on the Island have also been poorly surveyed and little is known of the range of NVC communities present. Examples of both *Festuca ovina - Agrostis capillaris – Rumex acetosella* (U1) and *Festuca ovina - Agrostis capillaris – Galium saxatile* (U4) are known. Within these broad community types, there are also likely to be a number of sub-communities although these have yet to be identified. Elsewhere on the Island there are also interesting examples of bristle bent grassland, which conform to the *Agrostis curtisii* grassland community (U3). Examples of this can be found in many places on the Island such as Sandown Golf Course, Head Down near Whitwell and on Ventnor Downs.

Acid grassland also occurs in association with dense stands of bracken where it can support a number of woodland plants, most notably stands of bluebells. In terms of the NVC, this vegetation conforms to the bluebell sub-community of *Pteridium aquilinum – Rubus fruticosus* under scrub (W25a). However, the examples of this habitat on exposures of ferruginous sandstone that occur on the Island appear to have more in common with similar examples found on the cliffs of the south west of England and may not have been derived from woodland clearance as is commonly believed.

A number of priority species are associated with the heathland and acid grasslands of the Island. These include the Dartford warbler, stonechat, adders, mottled grasshopper, a number of uncommon bees and wasps and the moss *Hylocomium splendens*.

**Distribution and Extent**

The main concentrations of heathland on the Isle of Wight are now confined to the summit of Ventnor Downs and the outcrop of Tertiary and Pleistocene gravels known as Headon Hill in the west of the Island. Smaller fragments of the habitat occur where other deposits

of gravel occur such as on Bleak Down near Rookley or St George's Down near Newport. Small patches of heathland also occur on both gravel and clay soils within Parkhurst Forest where it survives in forestry clearings and along rides. Other fragments of the habitat survive on the chalk downs within Brighstone Forest. Most of the remaining examples of heathland on the Island can be described as dry heath, and contrast with the few small examples of wet heath that can be found on Bleak Down and associated with acid peat deposits in the Medina and Eastern Yar valleys.

Acid grassland often occurs in association with dry heathland on the downs of the Island, particularly within Brighstone Forest and on Ventnor Downs. However, examples of acid grassland also occur in a number of other locations where there are sand or gravel deposits. This includes deposits of sand on the coast where acid grassland has developed on stabilised sand dunes such as those at St Helen's Duver and the former intertidal sand flats now within the reclaimed Brading Marshes. Away from the coast, acid grassland also occurs on the outcrops of ferruginous sandstone that form low hills throughout the south of the Island.

The former extent of acid grassland on the Isle of Wight is virtually impossible to assess, given the complex mosaic it forms with heathland and scrub. The former area of heathland on the Island was calculated by Clive Chatters in his report to the IWCC in 1984. He calculated that there was some 729 hectares of heathland on the Island in 1850. This figure did not however include the extensive area of heathland and acid grassland that occurred on the chalk downs, particularly in the area of what is now Brighstone Forest and the gravel cap to the Ventnor Downs. Current estimates are that an area of 122 ha of dry acid grassland and 70 ha of heathland making a combined area of some 192 ha, representing a loss of at least 79% since 1850. In addition, there are a further 58.3 ha of bracken and bluebell stands.

**Legislation and Site Designation**

Much of the known area of heathland and acid grassland on the Isle of Wight is included within SSSI (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and SINC (Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation). Table 1 lists the main SSSI and SINC known to support heathland and acid grassland on the Isle of Wight. Further assessment is required to identify what proportion of the habitat on the Island is protected by SSSI and SINC.

The largest and most important areas of heathland are owned and managed by the National Trust. Most of the acid grassland is however in private ownership.
The Isle of Wight AONB includes several areas of heathland and acid grassland, particularly the examples associated with the chalk downs and the ridges of ferruginous sandstone found in the south of the Island.

Many small fragments of heathland and acid grassland and the greatest potential for habitat recreation and restoration exists within Parkhurst, Brighstone and Bouldnor Forests, which are managed by Forest Enterprise.

**Summary of Important Sites**

The largest areas of heathland remaining on the Isle of Wight are those within the National Trust owned Ventnor Downs SSSI and on Headon Hill within the Headon Warren and West High Downs SSSI. Both are well managed. Heathland was, however, once a common and widespread habitat on the Isle of Wight occurring extensively within

Parkhurst Forest and between Cranmore and Bouldnor in the north west of the Island before conversion to forestry plantations. Large areas of heathland also occurred in the north east of the Island between Wootton and Newport, but most of this has either been lost to agricultural improvement or forestry plantations. In the south of the Island, further extensive heathlands occurred on Blackpan Common near Sandown. Fragments of these heathlands still remain, with the largest and most intact being found within the forestry plantations managed by Forest Enterprise and on Sandown Golf Course.

Acid grassland is found over a wider number of sites with particularly good examples within Brading Marshes and within the stabilised dunes at St Helen's. Other examples are found on the ridges of ferruginous sandstone that outcrop in the south of the Island such as on Row Down at Brighstone.

**Table 1: Distribution and extent of heathland, acid grassland and bluebell/bracken stands on the Isle of Wight**

| **SSSI name** | **Area ha** | **Comments** |
|---|---|---|
| Headon Warren and West High Down | 262.9 | Heathland in favourable condition |
| Ventnor Downs | 162.6 | Heathland grazed and in favourable condition |
| Brading Marshes to St Helen's Ledges | | Small area of bluebells and bracken |
| **SINC name** | **Area ha** | **Subsidiary habitat** |
| St George's Down | 17.02 | Semi natural- broadleaved woodland |
| Row Down | 13.32 | Relict heath |
| Dame Anthony' s Common | 9.86 | Scrub |
| Skinner's Hill | 10.74 | Scrub |
| Perreton Down | 6.89 | Woodland |
| St Catherine's Down | 18.64 | Calcareous grassland |
| Ventnor Radio Station | 12.57 | Chalk heath |
| Head Down | 4.75 | Scrub |
| Heath Hill | 1.14 | |
| Sandown Golf Course | 45.84 | Scrub, acid ponds |
| Ningwood Common | 16.84 | Scrub |
| Bleak Down | 10.27 | Scrub, pools |
| Gore Down | 23.03 | Unimproved neutral grassland |
| South Down | 2.66 | |
| Sheard's Scarp | 2.32 | |
| Hollow Lane Chillerton | 4.32 | |
| Grammar's Common | 17.72 | Relic heathland |
| Mottistone Common | 60.82 | Relic heathland, remnant chalk grassland |

# 3 Current Factors affecting the habitat

Many of the factors affecting the conservation of heathland and acid grassland relate to continued sustainable management through appropriate grazing and mowing systems. These are reviewed in the Isle of Wight Grazing and Biodiversity Topic and apply equally to a range of grassland habitats, which are summarised below.

### Further loss of habitat

Much of the remaining heathland and acid grassland on the Isle of Wight is now within SSSI or other protection, and as the agricultural economy has declined in recent years, the threat to the remaining areas of the habitat from agricultural intensification has subsided. However, the threat from lack of management is a problem on some sites, especially those that are small and fragmented, or where bracken is able to colonise remaining areas of heathland and acid grassland. Although the threat to the habitat through agricultural intensification may have receded, it has not by any means disappeared.

The decline in numbers of cattle and in particular beef cattle, that has taken place on the Island in recent years may make it difficult to graze areas of heathland and acid grassland in the future.

There is also a threat from various development pressures. This can include development for housing or mineral extraction as well as recreational use, for example, motorcycle riding.

Management of these threats and pressures remains a significant factor in conserving the remaining heathland and acid grassland resource.

**Financial incentives**

Sufficient financial incentives are needed to encourage farmers and land managers to maintain and restore areas of heathland and acid grassland on the Isle of Wight. The Environmental Stewardship Scheme has provided valuable support for the restoration and creation of some heathland and acid grassland, but the levels of payment available through this scheme may not be sufficient, and may decline further in line with the general decline in agricultural incomes.

Environmental Stewardship payments are available for all landowners. In addition, Natural England may enter into management agreements with SSSI owners if the site is deemed to be in unfavourable condition.

In the wider countryside outside of these protected sites, there is a need to reverse the trend of habitat decline seen over the past 150 years. Whereas this should be encouraged throughout the Island, there are areas where the potential gains are likely to be greatest, and where efforts and financial incentives should be targeted.

Alternative methods of providing a financial incentive also need to be considered and evaluated. This might include niche and brand marketing schemes.

The availability of a local slaughtering facility is likely to be critical to the success of local produce production and sale.

**Availability of suitable stock and stock management expertise**

Restoration of habitats with low productivity, for example heathland and acid grassland is likely to need specialist breeds that can thrive on this type of vegetation. It may also be necessary to ensure areas of better quality grassland are available to livestock grazing this habitat to ensure the economic viability of the farm system. Certain farming systems are also likely to be more beneficial to biodiversity than others. For example, extensive beef rearing systems are likely to be preferable to modern dairy production.

Grazing and grassland management on low productivity habitats and the restoration of these habitats using livestock as a management tool is a specialist area of expertise. Whereas many farmers may have very valuable skills, it may be that there is a specific need for training and provision of information to assist in developing these skills in this specialist area.

**Public access**

Much of the heathland and acid grassland on the Island has public access along footpaths and bridleways, or more generally as open access. This can create a number of problems to livestock managers. Problems arise from gates being left open and from dog worrying of livestock. The public can also be seriously concerned by the prospect of walking in places where livestock are present. This can make it difficult to restore grazing if livestock have been absent for a number of years. These difficulties can be largely overcome with better public information and wardening but this requires considerable time and resources.

**Weed growth and habitat stabilisation**

The restoration of heathland and acid grassland often passes through a phase in which soil fertility and disturbance is sufficient to create ideal conditions for the growth of 'weed' species with ragwort, creeping thistle and dock causing the most significant problems. As the natural grassland or grazed habitat becomes re-established the weed species naturally decline, however, it is not generally acceptable to allow these high weed infestations to persist for the period it takes for the new equilibrium to establish, this might take five years or so. In the meantime, it is necessary to control these weed species with well-targeted herbicide use, or by other means. This can be expensive and time consuming and often relies upon the use of specialised equipment such as ragwort pullers or weed wipers.

**Habitat fragmentation and loss of ecological continuity**

Many species require a minimum area of habitat in which to maintain sustainable populations, this is particularly true for birds such as the nightjar and Dartford warbler.
Other species have poor powers of dispersal and hence cannot colonise new habitats unless they are close or contiguous with existing habitats, for example some butterflies such as the grayling or small copper.

The natural recolonisation of heathland and acid grassland is also dependent upon a nearby source of seed and plant propagules. The current state of habitat fragmentation may mean that intervention will be required to restore these habitats through the re-introduction of seed and other plant propagules from appropriate donor sites. These are likely to be the remaining SSSI and SINC that retain semi-natural vegetation, which makes their conservation even more critical for the future.

**Forestry plantations**

Many of the remaining fragments of heathland and acid grassland remain within forestry plantations in particular Parkhurst Forest, Brighstone Forest and Bouldnor Plantation. These relict areas of habitat are difficult to manage within the context of a forestry plantation and are often too small to sustain a diverse heathland flora or fauna. However,

these forestry plantations offer the greatest potential for heathland restoration on the Isle of Wight. What is more they are state owned, and hence offer significant scope for heathland restoration and management through re-instating the extensive grazing systems these areas once supported. This is happening on Mottistone Common, where the National Trust and a private landowner have taken over the land from Forest Enterprise, removed the trees and are restoring the site to heathland.

# 4 Current Action

**Site and Species Protection**

**Site designation SSSI, SAC**
There are currently no plans to notify new heathland or acid grassland sites as SSSI on the Isle of Wight, although Cranmore Common SSSI was notified in 2001. SINC identification is ongoing on the Island. Further heathland or acid grassland sites may be identified by the IW Council.

**Purchase of additional reserves or properties**
It is possible that further areas of heathland and acid grassland or more importantly, areas with the potential for restoration as heathland and acid grassland, will become available for purchase by nature conservation organisations. Further action to bring this land into management by nature conservation organisations needs to be planned and coordinated.

**Habitat management**
Lowland heathland and acid grassland is a target habitat for the Environmental Stewardship Scheme, administered by Natural England. This scheme provides payments for maintaining and enhancing lowland heathland and acid grassland and arable reversion to this habitat, although there is only a limited pool of funding for which spending has to be prioritised.

Not all the examples of this habitat on the Island are in good condition. Some are being colonised by scrub and bracken, and are ungrazed or inadequately grazed. An initial assessment of the condition of heathland and acid grassland has been made by Natural England and the IWC Ecology Officer, in discussion with the H&IWWT Officer. The details of this assessment are reviewed in the Grassland and Grazed Habitats Topic Report (February 2002).

English Nature (now Natural England) together with Wight Wildlife (now H&IWWT) and SEEDA funded two projects aimed at identifying the potential for promoting agricultural systems that will result in the maintenance and restoration of heathland, acid grassland and other grazed habitats on the Island. This was superseded by the Living Landscapes Project where funding was obtained to work with and advise farmers and landowners. Since the original HAP, a niche market in locally sourced meat has developed and the Grazing Officer action has been dropped and a new action of supporting animal husbandry has been introduced.

The most extensive areas of heathland restoration have been undertaken by the National Trust and Wight Conservation at Mottistone Common.

The People's Trust of Endangered Species owns a fragment of the former Lynn Common near Wootton. This currently supports a conifer plantation but the Trust is planning to gradually remove this to part restore the land to heathland.

### Survey, research and monitoring

There is little survey research or monitoring of heathland and acid grassland on the Isle of Wight.

Natural England have carried out an assessment of the condition of all SSSI on the Isle of Wight with a target of ensuring that 95% are in favourable or recovering condition by 2010.

Nightjar and Dartford warbler populations on the Island have been monitored as part of the BTO national survey by the IW Ornithological Group and IW Natural History and Archaeological Society.

### Action for species

Appendix 1 gives details of species on the Isle of Wight found primarily on heathland and acid grassland. Action proposed in this Plan will be the principal means of conserving most of these species. In some cases, additional action plans and programmes will also contribute to conserving priority species: for example, UK Species Action Plans (UK SAP) and Butterfly Conservation Regional Action Plans (BC RAP).

## Associated Plans within the Isle of Wight BAP

Generic Habitat Action Plan

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# 5 Targets and Actions

### Biodiversity targets for Heathland and Acid Grassland on the Isle of Wight

**A** Maintain the existing area of Heathland and Dry Acid Grassland habitat for its wildlife and earth science interest with no net loss, subject to natural change
**B** Enhance and restore degraded or neglected areas of Heathland and Dry Acid Grassland habitat and/or exposures of high wildlife and earth science value
**C** Establish buffer zone habitats between intensively-managed agricultural land and Heathland and Dry Acid Grassland habitats
**D** Improve the knowledge of Heathland and Dry Acid Grassland resource by survey, research and monitoring
**E** Increase public awareness and appreciation of Heathland and Dry Acid Grassland resulting in a more positive management of this habitat

- *Actions D and E are covered by the Generic Action Plan*

| | Biodiversity Actions for Heathland and Acid Grassland on the Isle of Wight | Lead | Reporting | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2015 | 2020 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A1** | Maintain the existing extent of 192 ha of heathland and dry acid grassland by 2015 | NE | IWC | | | | ◆ | |
| **A2** | Ensure appropriate management to achieve favourable or recovering condition of 85% of heathland and dry acid grassland by 2015 | NE | IWC | | | | ◆ | |
| **A3** | Achieve a slaughter house/incinerator to support the Isle of Wight livestock industry by 2010 | NFU/ CLA/ IWC | IWC | | | ◆ | | |
| **B1** | Enhance and restore 20 ha of degraded or neglected heathland and dry acid grassland habitat by 2015 | NE | IWC | | | | ◆ | |
| **B2** | Work with the Forestry Commission to develop plans for the restoration and re-creation of heathland and acid grassland by removal or reduction of forestry plantations within target areas identified in the Grazing and Grassland management Topic Report | H&IWWT / FC | IWC | | | | ◆ | |
| **C1** | Increase the extent of lowland heathland and acid grassland by 90 ha, with emphasis on target areas identified in the Grazing and Grassland Management Topic Report | NE | IWC | | | | ◆ | |

◆ Complete by ⇨ Ongoing ➔start by

**KEY TO ORGANISATIONS**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *AONB* | *Isle of Wight Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Unit* | *IWC (Planning)* | *Isle of Wight Council Planning Services* |
| *H&IWWT* | *Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust* | *IWNHAS* | *Isle of Wight Natural History and Archaeological Society* |
| *IWC (Coastal)* | *Isle of Wight Council Centre for the Coastal Environment* | *NE* | *Natural England* |
| *IWC* | *Isle of Wight Council Parks and Countryside Section* | *NT* | *National Trust* |
| *FC* | *Forestry Commission* | | |

# References

1. English Nature, 1998. Isle of Wight Natural Area Profile
2. English Nature, 1998. UK BAP Targets By Natural Area - 10 Terrestrial Habitats
3. Department of the Environment, 1998, *UK Biodiversity Group Tranche 2 Action Plans. Volume II – terrestrial and freshwater habitats*. Peterborough: English Nature on behalf of the UK Biodiversity Group
4. Isle of Wight Biodiversity Partnership. 2002. Grassland and Grazed Habitats Topic Report. Isle of Wight Council.
5. Joint Nature Conservation Committee, 1999, The implementation of Common Standards for Monitoring and Conservation Objectives. Peterborough.
6. Sanderson, N.A. 2000. Review of extent of conservation interest and management of lowland acid grassland. English Nature, Peterborough.

# Species associated with Lowland Heathland and Acid Grassland

## Species associated with Lowland dry acid grassland

| Latin name | English name | BAP | Other Habitat | Local Abundance | Local Population Trend |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Reptiles** | | | | | |
| *Vipera berus* | Adder | 1 | ***Maritime cliffs & slopes*** | Localised | Unknown |
| **True Bugs** | | | | | |
| *Megalonotus dilatatus* | A ground bug | 3 | ***Lowland mixed deciduous woodland*** | Rare | Unknown |
| *Psammotettix albomarginatus* | A leafhopper | 3 | ***Lowland mixed deciduous woodland*** | Rare | Unknown |
| **Flowering Plants** | | | | | |
| *Chamaemelum nobile* | Chamomile | 1 | | Rare | Stable |
| *Scleranthus annuus* | Annual Knawel | 1 | Arable & horticultural | Rare | Decreasing |
| *Viola lactea* | Pale Dog Violet | 1 | ***Lowland meadows*** | Rare | Decreasing |
| *Achillea ptarmica* | Sneezewort | 3 | ***Lowland meadows*** | Scarce | Decreasing |
| *Agrostis cutisii* | Bristle Bent | 3 | ***Lowland heathland*** | Scarce | Unknown |
| *Anacamptis pyramidalis* | Pyramidal Orchid | 3 | ***Lowland calcareous grassland*** | Localised | Increasing |
| *Erigeron acer* | Blue Fleabane | 3 | ***Lowland calcareous grassland*** | Rare | Decreasing |
| *Euphrasia confusa* | An Eyebright | 3 | | Rare | Unknown |
| *Filago minima* | Small Cudweed | 3 | ***Lowland heathland*** | Rare | Increasing |
| *Hypochaeris glabra* | Smooth Catsear | 3 | ***Coastal sand dunes*** | Rare | Unknown |
| *Jasione montana* | Sheepsbit Scabious | 3 | ***Maritime cliffs & slopes*** | Rare | Unknown |
| *Lotus angustissimus* | Slender Birdsfoot Trefoil | 3 | Grazing marsh | Rare | Unknown |
| *Medicago polymorpha* | Toothed Medick | 3 | Arable and horticultural | Scarce | Increasing |
| *Moenchia erecta* | Upright Chickweed | 3 | ***Coastal sand dunes*** | Rare | Decreasing |
| *Nardus stricta* | Mat-grass | 3 | ***Purple moorgrass & rush pasture*** | Rare | Unknown |
| *Orobanche purpurea* | Yarrow Broomrape | 3 | ***Lowland calcareous grassland*** | Scarce | Unknown |
| *Orobanche rapum-genistae* | Greater Broomrape | 3 | Boundary and linear features | Rare | Unknown |
| *Thymus pulegioides* | Large Thyme | 3 | ***Lowland heathland*** | Rare | Unknown |
| *Trifolium suffocatum* | Suffocated Clover | 3 | ***Coastal sand dunes*** | Scarce | Increasing |
| *Vicia lathyroides* | Spring Vetch | 3 | ***Coastal sand dunes*** | Rare | Decreasing |
| *Viola canina* | Heath Dog Violet | 3 | | Rare | Decreasing |

## Species associated with Lowland heathland

| Latin name | English name | BAP Code | Other Habitat | Local Abundance | Local Population Trend |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Bird** | | | | | |
| *Caprimulgus europaeus* | Nightjar | 1 | ***Lowland mixed deciduous woodland*** | Localised | Decreasing |
| *Sylvia undata* | Dartford warbler | 3 | | Localised | Increasing |

**Reptile**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Lacerta vivipara* | Common Lizard | 1 | ***Lowland meadows*** | Localised | Decreasing |

**Ants, Bees & Wasps**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Cerceris ruficornis* | A Digger wasp | 3 | | Rare | Unknown |
| *Tachysphex unicolor s.s.* | A solitary wasp | 3 | ***Maritime cliffs & slopes*** | Rare | Unknown |

**Butterflies**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Hipparchia semele* | Grayling | 1 | ***Lowland calcareous grassland*** | Scarce | Decreasing |
| *Argynnis aglaia* | Dark Green Fritillary | 3 | ***Lowland calcareous grassland*** | Occasional | Stable |

**Crickets & grasshoppers**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Ectobius panzeri* | Lesser Cockroach | 3 | ***Maritime cliffs & slopes*** | Scarce | Unknown |

**Flies**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Pelecocera tricincta* | A hoverfly | 3 | ***Lowland mixed deciduous woodland*** | Rare | Unknown |
| *Terellia vectensis* | A picture-winged fly | 3 | ***Lowland calcareous grassland*** | Rare | Unknown |

**Moths**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Acosmetia caliginosa* | Reddish Buff | 1 | ***Lowland meadows*** | Rare | Stable |
| *Heliothis maritima* | Shoulder-striped Clover | 1 | | Rare | Unknown |
| *Schrankia taenialis* | White-line Snout | 1 | ***Lowland mixed deciduous woodland*** | Localised | Decreasing |
| *Elaphria venustula* | Rosy Marbled | 3 | ***Lowland mixed deciduous woodland*** | Rare | Unknown |
| *Idaea sylvestraria* | Dotted Border Wave | 3 | ***Lowland mixed deciduous woodland*** | Scarce | Unknown |
| *Pachycnemia hippocastanaria* | Horse Chestnut | 3 | | Scarce | Unknown |
| *Pempelia genistella* | Gorse Knot-horn | 3 | ***Maritime cliffs & slopes*** | Rare | Unknown |
| *Selidosema brunnearia scandinaviaria* | Bordered Grey | 3 | | Rare | Unknown |

**True bugs**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Aphrophora alpina* | A froghopper | 3 | ***Lowland mixed deciduous woodland*** | Rare | Unknown |

**Liverworts**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Mylia anomala* | 'Anomalous Flapwort' | 3 | ***Fens*** | Believed extinct | |

**Mosses**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Leptodon smithii* | 'Prince-of-Wales Feather-moss' | 3 | Built-up areas & gardens | Scarce | Decreasing |
| *Pleurozium schreberi* | 'Red-stemmed Feather-moss' | 3 | Fen, marsh and swamp | Rare | Decreasing |

**Ferns**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Osmunda regalis* | Royal Fern | 3 | ***Maritime cliffs & slopes*** | Rare | Decreasing |

**Flowering Plants**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Agrostis cutisii* | Bristle Bent | 3 | ***Lowland dry acid grassland*** | Scarce | Unknown |
| *Anagallis minima* | Chaffweed | 3 | ***Lowland mixed deciduous woodland*** | Rare | Unknown |
| *Cuscuta epithymum* | Dodder | 3 | ***Lowland calcareous grassland*** | Rare | Unknown |
| *Epipactis palustris* | Marsh Helleborine | 3 | ***Maritime cliffs & slopes*** | Rare | Decreasing |
| *Erica tetralix* | Cross-leaved Heath | 3 | Fen, marsh and swamp | Rare | Decreasing |
| *Filago minima* | Small Cudweed | 3 | ***Lowland dry acid grassland*** | Rare | Increasing |
| *Filago vulgaris* | Common Cudweed | 3 | Arable & horticultural | Rare | Increasing |
| *Genista anglica* | Petty Whin | 3 | ***Fens*** | Believed extinct | |
| *Juncus squarrosus* | Heath Rush | 3 | Fen, marsh and swamp | Believed extinct | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Lythrum portula* | Water Purslane | 3 | Rivers & streams | Scarce | Decreasing |
| *Sagina subulata* | Heath Pearlwort | 3 | | Rare | Stable |
| *Thymus pulegioides* | Large Thyme | 3 | ***Lowland dry acid grassland*** | Rare | Unknown |
| *Vaccinium myrtilus* | Bilberry | 3 | ***Lowland mixed deciduous woodland*** | Rare | Decreasing |

1 = National BAP Priority Species

3 = Local BAP Priority Species

***Habitats*** = National BAP Priority Habitats