

Recorders' Biodiversity Day

Thank you for agreeing to take part in our Recorders Day!

As you know, this Recorders' Day has been organised to provide you with the opportunity to input your knowledge and expertise into the Local Biodiversity Action Plan process and to help make the Biodiversity Action Plans as well informed as possible.

Aim of the Recorders' Biodiversity Day

By the end of the day on the 9 December we would like to have agreed a list of species that are important for each Local Authority in Gwent. For convenience, these species lists will be referred to here as the 'Gwent Species List' (although by the end of the day this will be a separate list for each Local Authority area). From the Gwent Species List, we would also like to identify 'Key Local Species' i.e. those species that require an individual Action Plan. This should include as a minimum all the UK-Priority Species that occur in Gwent (however, see example criteria 1 for possible exceptions). We also need to agree criteria for selecting species for both the Gwent Species List and then from these the Key Local Species list.

Before the day

In order to make the most of the Recorders' day we would be most grateful if prior to the day you could try and carry out the following:

- On the Species List for your particular group, please mark whether each species is present or absent (✓ or x) in each Local Authority area. If you hold more detailed information please use the occurrence status key (see Species List Key)
- Have a think about what criteria we can use to select species for the Gwent Species List and the criteria we should then use to select those species that require Action Plans. Some example criteria are enclosed for you to look at (see Example Criteria and Background Information).
- Consider other locally important species not already on the draft Gwent Species List provided, that may qualify under the example criteria (even though this may be difficult, since the criteria have not yet been agreed).

To assist with the identification of Local Authority boundaries we have provided a map of Gwent with the boundaries marked on it. Larger A1 maps are available on request from the Gwent Wildlife Trust.

Any help or information that you can provide would be very much appreciated so if we are asking too much please just do as much as you can.

What is in this pack?

Pack Contents:

- Background information sheet - UK to Gwent Species Lists
- A draft Gwent Species List of your relevant group
- Species List Key
- Set of example criteria for the selection of Gwent Species List
- Map of Gwent including the Local Authority boundaries

The draft Gwent Species List

To make a start on a Gwent species list, we have collated the information that is available to date. The Species List enclosed is taken from the Species Audit for Wales and comprises the UK-Species of Conservation Concern that are thought to occur in Wales and information of the occurrence of these species in each of the Local Authorities in the Gwent area (see Background Information). Please be aware that this information may contain inaccuracies. Therefore if possible, please could you confirm the data on the list and make corrections where appropriate.

Additionally, many of you have already, very kindly, commented on the Species list in the Greater Gwent Biodiversity Action Group's (GGBAG) Biodiversity Guidance for Gwent. The information from the Guidance has been incorporated onto the list to avoid duplication.

The whole species list has been divided into four groups (plants/fungi, mammals/herpetofauna/fish, birds and invertebrates) and the relevant list has been sent out to each person that has expressed an interest in helping. These groupings reflect the afternoon session.

If you would like to discuss any of this information further - please don't hesitate to contact someone on the contacts list sent out with the invitations.

The LBAP Process: UK and Wales Species Lists: Background Information

What did the draft Gwent Species List originate from?

The UK Priority Species and Species of Conservation Concern Lists

In 1995, the UK Biodiversity Steering Group identified 1250 species that fulfilled one or more of the following criteria:

- Threatened endemic and other globally threatened species
- Species where the UK has more than 25% of the world or appropriate biogeographical population.
- Species where numbers or range have declined by more than 25% in the last 25 years.
- Species that are found in fewer than 15 -10km squares around the UK
- Species which are listed in the EC Birds and Habitats Directives, the Bern, Bonn or CITES Conventions or under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. (Species for which the UK has international obligations or that are protected under UK legislation).

This made up the UK 'Long list' of globally threatened and declining species in the UK. A subset of the 'Long' list was then taken that comprised about 400 species that were either globally threatened or rapidly declining (i.e. has declined by more than 50% in the last 25 years) and this made up the UK 'Short' and 'Middle' lists.

Since 1995, the Long list has been re-named the Species of Conservation Concern list and the Short and Middle lists (with revisions) have become the Priority Species list. The Priority Species are those that have been targeted for action through species action plans or species statements, and the Species of Conservation Concern are only subject to monitoring. If the status of a species on the SoCC changes then they may move to the Priority list, however they are not being targeted for action at present.

The Species Audit for Wales

The Species Audit for Wales has been compiled by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) on behalf of the Wales Biodiversity Group. It comprises of all the species that occur in Wales that:

- occur on the UK-Species of Conservation Concern list
- are additional species that are recorded in a Red Data Book (or equivalent) and are not on the UK Species of Conservation Concern list.

It provides information on the distribution and management of over 800 species.

The draft Gwent Species List

The draft Gwent Species List provided in this pack is a subset of the Species Audit for Wales. It contains all of the UK-Species of Conservation Concern that occur in Wales and omits the additional Red Data Book (RDB) species. The RDB species have been omitted to save you time, as the list is very long and many of the species will not be relevant to Gwent. The information on the occurrence of the species in each Local Authority is also taken from the Species Audit for Wales and covers a number of different categories (see Species List Key).

Why do we need a Gwent Species List?

Local Biodiversity Action Plans (L BAPs) are the product of a process that identifies what action is required to maintain and enhance Biodiversity in the local area. This is to be done by setting targets for Biodiversity conservation and identifying and implementing actions to achieve these targets. However it will be difficult, if not impossible, to identify specific targets or actions for species unless we have some idea of their status in the local area. Therefore, the production of a Gwent Species List is a fundamental part of the L BAP process so it can be used to effectively identify those species that are priorities for action.

Why do we need to identify criteria?

To ensure that the Gwent Species List will stand up to scrutiny, it is important that we can justify why each species is included on the list. Therefore, before we produce a species list we need to agree criteria that identifies why each species is of local importance. One of the most important decisions to make is whether to use subjective general criteria or whether to use quantifiable detailed criteria. The latter option would be more defensible when scrutinised (e.g. as part of the Planning process) but may not be feasible given the data available. Perhaps a combination of the two would be more appropriate?