

# SUFFOLK LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

## Spreading hedge-parsley

(*Torilis arvensis*)



### Plan lead FWAG

#### 1 Definition of habitat or species

This species is an annual, rarely biennial plant once common in arable fields. It usually occurs in autumn sown cereals, but occasionally in other crops and on waste or disturbed ground. The species has poor seed dispersal so doesn't readily colonise new sites, but its seed can remain dormant in the soil for long periods.

#### 2 Current status: national, regional, and local (including trends and losses)

Nationally, this species has suffered a dramatic decline, with over half of its sites already lost by 1930. This decline has accelerated through the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the species is now nationally scarce. It is now confined to central and southern England and is probably on the edge of its range in Britain.

In Suffolk spreading hedge-parsley was discovered on the edges of the disused runways of the former Great Waldingfield Airfield in 1996. The Sudbury area, particularly Great Waldingfield Airfield, continues to be the species' stronghold, but there are casual records from arable sites across the county.

#### 3 Current factors affecting the species or habitats

The following changes in agriculture have largely been responsible for the decline of spreading hedge-parsley and continue to affect its extent.

Increase use of herbicides and fertilisers

The development of highly competitive crop varieties

Major improvements in seed cleaning techniques

The demise of crop rotations and the ability to grow monocultures over long periods

Deeper and more intensive cultivations

Loss of field edge refuges

Loss of winter stubble

#### 4 Current action

The Great Waldingfield Airfield site is a County Wildlife Site (CWS)

#### 5 Targets

Maintain viable populations at Great Waldingfield airfield CWS and at any new sites that are discovered.

Expansion target could be: Aim to expand the range via re-introduction of one site by 2010.

**Baseline 2005, targets for 2010, and identify targets for long term species or habitat viability for 2015 and 2020 and longer term (if desired)**

#### 6 Actions

Action (apply SMART approach and include locations where relevant).	Achieve by date	Delivery partners (identify lead and support partners)
<b>Site safeguard and management Or species protection/management</b>		
Where appropriate, promote take up of Environmental Stewardship(ES) options that encourage and support arable wildflowers e.g. conservation headlands, uncropped margins and overwintered stubbles	2006-2010	<b>FWAG</b> , NE, SWT
Resurvey site at Great Waldingfield and ensure current management regime is maintaining the species and amend management regime if monitoring shows a decline in population size/extent	2007-2010	<b>SBRC</b> (Sudbury Flora Group), SWT, FWAG
Establish whether the Great Waldingfield site is currently in an agri-environment scheme, and target for Environmental Stewardship as appropriate	2006-2010	<b>SBRC</b> , NE, SWT, FWAG,
Using historic and recent survey information, identify suitable locations and opportunities for introduction to increase	2008-2010	<b>SBRC</b> , FWAG, SBRC, NE, SWT and MEAL.

the Suffolk population of this species e.g. where wild bird seed mix is already being sown, over-wintering stubble ES options, at Museum of East Anglian Life arable weed area		
If sustainable and not detrimental to existing population, collect some seed from Great Waldingfield CWS for use at suitable new locations	2007-2010	<b>SBRC, SWT, FWAG</b>
<b>Research and monitoring</b>		
Annually monitor Great Waldingfield CWS	2006-2010	<b>SBRC (Sudbury Flora Group), SWT, FWAG</b>
Research optimal management for the species	2006-2010	<b>SBRC</b>
Monitor the success of any new introduction sites	2008-2010	<b>SBRC, SWT, FWAG</b>
Investigate the feasibility/desirability of including this species in wild bird and nectar mixes and where there are compatible measures to support farmland birds e.g. over-wintering stubble	2006-2010	<b>FWAG</b>
<b>Advisory</b>		
Ensure landowners and managers are alert to its appearance in arable crops and headlands and advise on appropriate management	2006-2010	<b>FWAG, SWT, SBRC</b>
Support and advise on ES applications and options that benefit arable plants e.g. unsprayed cultivated margins, overwintering stubble etc	2006-2010	<b>FWAG, SWT, NE</b>
<b>Communications and publicity</b>		
Raise awareness of the species (e.g. articles, publicity relating to this species and to reassure landowner/ farmer concerns regarding uncropped margins and conservation headlands,) amongst farmers, landowners and managers and the general public and the need to notify conservation bodies of new sites.	2006 -2010	<b>FWAG, SWT, SBRC, NE</b>

**NB Most of the action achieve by dates are 2006-2010 this means they need to be achieved or worked towards by 2006 and annually renewed until 2010.**

**Objectives currently not achievable by the plan partners:**

*This section should include objectives that the working group relevant to this plan would like to fund and achieve but due to constraints can't currently. By recognising these in the plan, means they aren't lost from the BAP : A list of bullet points*

**The production of a leaflet arable plants covering why they are important, how they can be incorporated into current farming practice.**

**Work in partnership with the Museum of East Anglian Life to continue to develop and promote their arable plant plot both as a refuge for arable plants and as an educational resource.**

**Monitoring of progress:**

Reported annually on the UK BAP reporting system BARS Biodiversity Action Reporting system.

**List of organisations that have been consulted regarding this plan and have agreed to aim to deliver their organisations commitments:**

SWT Susan Stone and Dorothy Casey  
NE Monica O'Donnell and Alison Collins  
All District Council SBP Representatives  
Suffolk County Council Andrew Murray-Wood  
SBRC Martin Sanford  
Suffolk biodiversity partnership officer Mary Norden  
FWAG Phil Watson  
RSPB Kirsty Coutts  
SOG Steve Piotrowski  
Sudbury Flora Group  
Museum of East Anglian Life

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