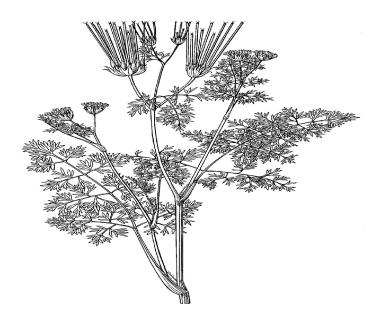
SUFFOLK LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

Shephard's Needle

(Scandix pectin-veneris)



Plan Lead FWAG

1 Definition of habitat or species

This annual plant was once common in arable fields, particularly on summer dry soils and often calcareous clays. It has suffered a dramatic decline due largely to agricultural intensification exacerbated by the low level of seed dormancy. The bulk of the seed germinates in autumn. It appears to be partially unaffected by some herbicides and competes well with intensively farmed winter cereal crops.

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

The UK population of shepherd's needle has declined dramatically since the 1950s, now being only found in a quarter of its previous locations. It is now restricted to east of a line from the Humber to the Bristol Channel. The species occasionally appears in large numbers on the chalky boulder clays of East Anglia. Suffolk is its stronghold where it is occasionally recorded as still occurring in pest proportions. It appears to have made something of a recovery from its past decline, doubling the number of 10km square records in the last ten years. However the Suffolk distribution appears to be stable.

3 Current factors affecting the species or habitats

The following changes in agriculture have largely been responsible for the decline of shepherd's needle and continue to affect its recovery

Increase use of herbicides and fertilisers

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 stubbles

4 Current action

The Great Waldingfield Airfield site is a County Wildlife Site

Shepherd's needle was harvested from an existing site (Elmsett) and introduced into the arable weed area at The Museum of East Anglian Life (2006)

5 Targets

Maintain viable populations at current sites and newly created sites

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

o Actions							
Action (apply SMART approach and	Achieve	Delivery partners					
include locations where relevant).	by date	(identify lead and					
		support partners)					
Site safeguard and management							
Or species protection/management							
Where appropriate, promote take up of	2006-2010	FWAG, NE, SWT					
Environmental Stewardship (ES) options							
that encourage and support arable							
wildflowers e.g. conservation headlands,							
uncropped margins.							
Survey Great Waldingfield Site to establish	2006-2010	SBRC, SWT, FWAG					
current management.							
Establish whether the Great Waldingfield	2006-2010	NE, SWT, FWAG,					
site and other good populations are in an							
agri-environment scheme, and apply for							
Environmental Stewardship as appropriate							
Research and monitoring							
Monitor the success of the introduction site	2006-2010	SWT, MEAL					
at the museum of East Anglian Life							
Advisory							
Ensure landowners and managers are alert	2006-2010	FWAG, SWT, SBRC					

to its appearance in arable crops and headlands and advise on appropriate management		
Communications and publicity		
Raise awareness and tolerance of the	2006 -2010	FWAG, SWT, SBRC, NE
species amongst (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.		

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

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