

WARWICKSHIRE, COVENTRY & SOLIHULL LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

REPORT 2001 – 2007



OUR SUCCESSES - Habitat creation schemes – new wetlands & woodlands

- Increases in some priority species
- Increased participation – a growing partnership

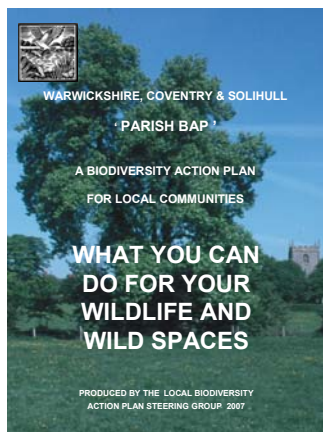


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GOOD PROGRESS WITH THE RESTORATION OF TRADITIONAL ORCHARDS

“The newly formed South Warwickshire Orchard Group is researching the past and present extent of local orchards and aims to create and sustain interest in fruit orchards and their products.”

Ruth Moffatt, LBAP Co-ordinator



OUR PARISH BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN (PBAP) . . .

. . . is probably the first of its kind in the country – **A Biodiversity Action Plan for Local Communities** - designed to promote practical action for wildlife ‘on people’s doorsteps’. This guide to conservation in any one of our parishes is available from the LBAP Co-ordinator (see p.4)



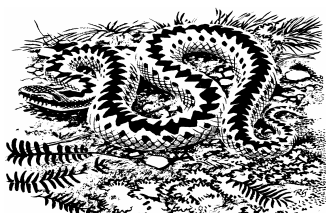
© Steven Falk

OUR BARN OWL TARGETS EXCEEDED!

“Progress is very satisfactory with numbers recovering well. Nest box schemes are helping recovery. Numbers fluctuate with the vole population and the species is very productive in good vole years”

*Graham Harrison,
West Midlands Bird Club*

OUR CONCERNS - Continuing loss of habitat - Continuing decline in species



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COULD THE ADDER BE EXTINCT IN THE COUNTY?

“We need to increase awareness of the adder’s endangered status, possibly extinction from the county and a swift validation system if adders are reported. Research is needed and identification of at least two receptor sites.”

*Jan Clemons, Warwickshire
Amphibian and Reptile Team*



© Arundel Wildfowl
& Wetland Trust

A GLOOMY PROSPECT FOR WATER VOLES!

“The future for water voles in Coventry and Warwickshire looks very bleak. The situation is critical, so bad they could be extinct in a few years unless there is a change for the better.”

*Peter Sanders,
Warwickshire Wildlife Trust*



© Warwickshire Museum

WILDLFLOWER MEADOWS AT AN ALL-TIME LOW

“Without the resource to review existing sites it is impossible to measure net movements. . . . The imminent loss of set-aside could have implications.”

*Tony Beysens, Farming &
Wildlife Advisory Group*

WHERE ARE WE NOW WITH OUR BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLANS?

Action Plan progress in 2007, based on results of *reporting on targets and actions* by the LBAP partnership between 2005-7.

* Change of land cover as recorded by the Habitat Biodiversity Audit between 2001-2006

Species Action Plans (our 19 UKSAPs in bold)	Plan progress	Habitat Action Plans (our 15 UKHAPs in bold)	Plan progress	* HBA Status
Adder	↓	Allotments	↔	Loss
Argent & Sable Moth	↔	Canals	↑	No data
Barn Owl	↑	Churchyards & Cemeteries	↑	No data
Bats	↔	Disused Industrial & Railway Land	↓	No data
Bittern	↔	Fen & Swamp	↔	No change
Black Poplar	↑	Field Margins	↑	Increase
Bloody-nosed Beetle	↑	Gardens	↔	No data
Chalk Carpet Moth	↑	Hedgerows	↔	No data
Common Dormouse	↓↓	Lowland Acid Grassland	↔	No change
Cuckoo Bee	↑	Lowland Calcareous Grassland	↑	No change
Dingy Skipper Butterfly	↑	Lowland Heathland	↔	Loss
Dotted Bee-fly	↑	** Lowland Neutral Grassland	**↑	**Major loss
Farmland Birds	↔	** Discrepancy in the above plan between overall progress & HBA status is due to the reporting on actions in 2005 preceding ongoing survey data		
Great Crested Newt	slight ↓	Parks & Public Open Spaces	↑	No data
Lapwing	↓	Ponds, Lakes & Reservoirs	↔	Loss
Leaf-rolling Weevil	↑	Quarries & Gravel Pits	↑	Loss
Otter	↑	Reedbeds	↑	No change
Rare Bumblebees	↑	Rivers & Streams	↓	No change
Red Wood Ant	slight ↑	Roadside Verges	↓	No data
Scarce Arable Plants	↑	School Grounds	↓	No data
Small Blue Butterfly	↑	Scrub & Carr	↓	Loss
Snipe	↓	The Built Environment	↔	No data
Song Thrush	↑	Traditional Orchards	↑	Increase
Water Vole	↓	Woodlands	↑	Increase
White-clawed Crayfish	↓	Wood-pasture, Parkland & Veteran Trees	↔	No data
Wood White Butterfly	↑			

WHERE ARE WE GOING IN 2008?

The LBAP Main Steering Group has decided to focus effort in 2008 on the following 4 Habitat Action Plans (HAPs), selected according to a combination of the following criteria:

- The number of actions underway but 'behind schedule', overall plan progress, HBA status, and associated species, some of which are new UK Biodiversity Priority Species (UKSAPs)
- Opportunities for partnership, the degree of biodiversity gain and the feasibility of projects

Habitat Action Plan (HAP)	Actions 'behind schedule'	Overall plan progress	* HBA Status	Associated Species Action Plans (SAPs) (New UKSAPs in <i>italics</i>)
Disused Industrial & Railway Land	53%	↓	No data	Adder, Argent & Sable, Bats, Dingy Skipper, Bloody-nosed Beetle, Rare Bumblebees. <i>Cuckoo & Slow-worm.</i>
Lowland Neutral Grassland (* see note above)	50%	↑	Major loss	Bats, Black Poplar, Lapwing, Rare Bumblebees, Snipe. <i>Cuckoo & Yellowhammer</i>
Ponds, Lakes & Reservoirs	33%	↔	Loss	Bats, Bittern, Great Crested Newt, Lapwing, Snipe, Water Vole. <i>Willow Tit, Common Toad & Grass Snake</i>
Roadside Verges	13%	↓	No data	Barn Owl, Bats, Black Poplar, Bloody-nosed Beetle, Dingy Skipper, Farmland Birds, Scarce Arable Plants. <i>Cuckoo & Yellowhammer</i>
Gardens	A combination of 3 existing HAPs into one new action plan	↔	No data	Barn Owl, Bats, Black Poplar, Great Crested Newt, Rare Bumblebees, Song Thrush, Water Vole. <i>Hedgehog, Hedge Sparrow, House Sparrow, Common Starling, Slow-worm, Common Toad & Grass Snake</i>
Parks & Public Open Spaces		↑		
Churchyards & Cemeteries		↑		



Fox Cub, Steven Falk



Whiskered Bat. Paul Elliott



Corn Bunting, Steven Falk

HABITAT BIODIVERSITY AUDIT and WILDLIFE SITES PROJECT

The Warwickshire Coventry and Solihull Habitat Biodiversity Audit was started in 1995 and the Phase 1 survey of the sub-region was completed by 2000, divided into habitat types, e.g. woodland, wetland, lowland grassland. The audit is updated annually, aiming to re-survey 20% of all sites per year. It identifies potential Local Wildlife Sites, sites of sufficient biodiversity to need a more detailed survey. The Wildlife Sites Project completes the Phase 2 survey, targetting 60 sites per year across the sub region. Information is digitised onto a GIS system and annual updates are sent to the local authorities each of which contributes to funding the work of these partnership projects. These surveys are an excellent monitoring tool for the LBAP, assessing the current levels of the various habitats. Many volunteers have been involved to date and this aspect will expand during 2008.

The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act

On 1st October 2006 a statutory Biodiversity Duty was placed on all Local and Public Authorities which states: "Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity" Examples areas suggested in the Defra Guidance include the following:

Public Land, Buildings and Biodiversity

Improving Sites Biodiversity

Surveys and Audits
Site and Building Design
Management Regimes
Grounds maintenance
Species protection
Linking public sites with natural areas

Use of Native Tree & Plant species

Provision of Nesting Sites

Public access/
interpretation/ involvement
Leading by example

Public Authority/Local Authority sites & buildings

Beaches, shoreline and seabed
Bridges and Structures
Buildings
Cemeteries and Crematoria
Common Land
Defence Land
Depots/warehouses/distribution centres
Drainage and sewerage
Farmland
Gardens and allotments
Historic buildings/monuments
Housing and related infrastructure
Landscaping
Nature Reserves and designated sites
Parks and Green Infrastructure
Ports and harbours
Power stations
Railways and airports
Regeneration Sites
Rights of Way
School Grounds
SportsFields and Golf Courses
Tenanted Land
Verges/highways/roundabouts/street trees
Wasteground/Brownfield Sites
Waste sites and quarries
Water bodies, canals and floodplains
Woodland

Guidance for Local Authorities
Implementing the Biodiversity
Duty (Defra 2007)

Reducing Impacts on Biodiversity

Energy
Water Use
Land Take
Noise, Air and Light
Pollution
Spillage
Chemical Use
Construction
Materials/Methods
Disturbance
Peat Products
Invasive Species

Green Buildings

ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP SCHEMES AND THE LBAP

Alongside a diversification into fish lakes, Stuart Russell of Toft Farm created a scrape and about 80 acres of wetland alongside the River Leam. Within three months lapwing started to nest for the first time and the site can also boast a visit by a great white egret, only the third recorded sighting in the county.



FWAG



Lapwing, WCC



FWAG

WHERE WE FIT INTO THE UK BAP

The **UK Biodiversity Action Plan** was launched in 1994 in response to the 1992 Rio **Convention**, the first international treaty to provide a legal framework for biodiversity conservation. In 2007 the **new UK List of Priority Species and Habitats** was adopted, bringing together in one place all the scientific information on UK BAP species and habitats. This list contains 1149 species and 65 habitats that have been listed as priorities for conservation action.

Currently, we share two-thirds of our 50 action plans with the UKBAP; the rest are for species and habitats of local value and rarity (see progress chart, page 2). As we review the LBAP more action plans will be written, reflecting these changes. We will be starting this process in 2008.

THE WARWICKSHIRE, COVENTRY & SOLIHULL LOCAL BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN PARTNERSHIP

The partnership of **60 organisations and individuals** within the sub-region was formed in 2001 to develop the Warwickshire, Coventry & Solihull Local Biodiversity Action Plan (for a list of members, see our website: www.warwickshire.gov.uk/biodiversity). This large number of members, all involved in nature conservation in some way, ensures that we are working towards the same priorities. Two **Annual Conferences** for the partnership have been held (see Conferences section).

A Main **Steering Group** within the wider group, of 36 members, meets twice a year to discuss matters referred to it by the LBAP Co-ordinator. The Steering Group welcomes the involvement of new organisations and individuals.

A small **Core Steering Group** of 9 members of the Steering Group was formed in 2005 to assist the Co-ordinator with reporting on the progress of the actions proposed in the individual action plans (see Progress chart) and the preparation of a **Biodiversity Action Plan for Local Communities** (see Parish BAP). In 2008 this group will be helping the Co-ordinator to review the LBAP to bring targets in line with the **2006 UK BAP Targets Review** and **2007 New Priority Species and Habitats**.

The administration of the LBAP is funded by **Natural England**. The Memoranda of Agreement between the two bodies in receipt of this funding are designed to enable the delivery of a suite of 'core services' by the LBAP partnership under the following headings:

- Establishing and maintaining a broad partnership
- Delivering BAP locally
- Fund-raising for BAP delivery
- Reporting and monitoring progress
- Integrating BAP into local policies
- Promoting BAP locally
- Representation regionally and nationally

OUR CONFERENCES

At **our next conference in June 2008** we will address some of the requests of participants at previous conferences, including the NERC Act, UKBAP, LBAP successes, case studies from the Parish BAP and a site visit.

We have already held two conferences for our partnership:

- In **2006**, a response to the **Minerals Development Framework Core Strategy 'Issues and options'**
- In **2007**, to discuss the effects of **Climate Change on Adaptation & Biodiversity**, for which a report is available on our website (see below)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The LBAP co-ordinator would like to express her thanks to all members of the partnership who have given their time over the past three years to the enormous task of reporting on progress with our action plans. In addition, since the launch of the LBAP in 2003, many partners and other organisations have contributed funds to help the LBAP progress.

BECOME A CHAMPION OF THE LBAP!

If you can offer time or money, or have a skill to share, you could adopt one of our action plans. Perhaps one species appeals to you more than any other - there are 26 to choose from - or you may be more interested in one of our 24 habitat plans. We would particularly like to get businesses involved in protecting Warwickshire's biodiversity.

If you would like to find out more, please contact Ruth Moffatt, LBAP Co-ordinator
on 01926 412197 or email: ruthmoffatt@warwickshire.gov.uk