

Synopsis of Biodiversity Report

Biodiversity Report prepared by Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) regarding land at Barnham and Eastergate Parishes 22 October 2012 – requested by Scott Robertson

This report is hugely comprehensive containing around 140 pages.

The Report includes information from the following:

- Maps
- Sussex Protected Species Register
- Sussex Bat Inventory Report
- Sussex Bird Inventory Report
- UK BAP Species Inventory – (BAP means Biodiversity Action Plan)
- Sussex Rare Species Inventory
- Sussex Invasive Alien Species
- Full Species List
- Environmental Survey Directory Report

SNCI – None in the NP Area. Fontwell Racecourse SNCI borders onto Eastergate Parish Boundary in the North.

SSSI – None in the NP Area

Other Designations/Ownership – Environmental Stewardship Agreement; Notable Road Verge

Habitats

Ancient Tree; Ancient Woodland; Chalk Stream; Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh; Lowland calcareous grassland; Lowland meadow; Traditional Orchard.

Notes

The report notes that “**..It must not be assumed that this report contains the definitive species information for the site concerned..**”

Protected Species

Badger - Specific Badger records are not included in this report as it has been requested that they remain confidential however there are two reports held of badgers within the NP area.

Otters - if there is a river or tributary within 1km of the area be aware of potential for otters in the vicinity. There are no recorded sightings of Otters within the NP area.

Wood White & Duke of Burgundy butterflies – These two rare butterfly species have a very restricted range in Sussex and records have been made confidential based on advice given from Butterfly Conservation Sussex Branch.

Confidential Records

1 Confidential record exists under the Rare Species Inventory for the reported area.

1 Confidential record exists under the Protected Species Register for the reported area.

1 Confidential record exists under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan Species Inventory for the reported area.

Designated Site Map – (Appx 1)

The species search area for the report is shown on the designated site map which includes areas outside of the parishes. However, only sightings within the parish areas (NP area) are included in this synopsis unless otherwise stated.

There is a notable road verge marked just north of Eastergate Sports Field.

It is worth noting the 2 x SNCIs on Fontwell Racecourse bordering the northern Eastergate Parish boundary.

Habitat Map – (Appx 2)

This shows the locations of a variety of habitats within the reported area. Within the NP area it shows:

- **The path of the chalk streams**
“..Chalk streams are important because they are fed from groundwater aquifers which means they have clean, clear water and relatively stable water temperatures. These unique conditions along with their chalk geology, support a rich diversity of wildlife including important fish populations such as brown trout, native crayfish and many other specialist species. Their rarity means that chalk streams are recognised as a priority habitat under the UK BAP and many have been designated SSSI’s..”
- **A large area of Traditional Orchards in Eastergate Parish**
“..The mosaic of habitats such as hedgerows, dead wood and fruit trees make traditional orchards important for a wide range of species. Traditional Orchards provide the conditions needed for many bryophytes and lichens. Holes and crevices in old trees provide habitat for bats and nest sites for birds such as redstart and bullfinch (both found in the NP area). Dead and decaying wood makes traditional orchards hugely important for invertebrates, lichens and fungi..”
- **Areas of Open Water in both Parishes**
“..Drainage channels and open water associated with grazing marsh supports a number of fish species and can provide important spawning areas. Water filled ditches are often used by otter, water vole and various dragonflies..”
- **A large area of Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh in the South West area of Barnham**
“..Wading birds such as redshank (found in the NP area) feed on invertebrates forced close to the surface by the high water table and shallow surface floods. Around 500 species of vascular plant have been recorded from grazing marsh including rare species such as narrow-leaved water-dropwort. It supports large numbers of invertebrates including over a thousand nationally notable species..”
- **An area of Lowland Calcareous Grassland in the Northern Area of Eastergate towards Fontwell**
“..Lowland calcareous grasslands develop on shallow lime-rich soils generally overlying limestone rocks – in Sussex it occurs exclusively on chalk. Chalk grassland can support

over 50 species of flowering plant per square metre, including a number of nationally scarce species. Many species of rare invertebrates are found including hoverflies, molluscs and moths. Rare assemblages of mosses and lichens can be found on some chalk grasslands. The grasslands and associated patches of scrub provide breeding and feeding habitat for many birds including scarce species such as stone curlew..”

- **4 Areas of Ancient Woodland in Barnham**
“..Ancient Woodland is defined by Natural England as a site that has had a continuous woodland cover since at least 1600AD. It is an irreplaceable, wildlife-rich habitat, and often includes archaeological features..” “..Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity & Geological Conservation (2005) (published by ODPM, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) states that, ‘ancient woodland is a valuable biodiversity resource both for its diversity of species and for its longevity as woodland. Once lost it cannot be recreated.’..”
- **An area of Lowland Meadow on Fontwell Racecourse (SNCI) bordering Eastergate Northern Parish Boundary**
“..Lowland meadows are species-rich grasslands occurring on natural soils with a neutral pH, in the lowlands. They are traditionally managed by hay cutting and/or grazing, and usually contain a high number of colourful herb species. They are botanically rich including uncommon species such as green-winged orchid and frog orchid. A diversity of herbs provides nectar for a range of invertebrates including butterflies, bees and moths. Many lowland meadows are ancient habitats with a long history of management. They are important for birds such as corncrake and skylark (found in the NP area)..”
- **One Ancient/Veteran Tree on Nursery Close of the Farnhurst Estate in Eastergate**
“..Ancient trees form a vital part of our landscape, heritage and biodiversity. Ancient trees are biologically, aesthetically or culturally interesting because of their great age. In ancient or post-mature stage of life. Have a large girth relative to others of the same species. Veteran trees are usually in the second or mature stage of life. Have important wildlife and habitat features including hollowing or associated decay fungi, holes, wounds and large dead branches..”

Ownership & Management Map – (Appx 3)

This shows two types of Environmental Stewardship in the NP area:

- Towards the centre of Eastergate Parish an area of Entry Level Stewardship (ELS).
- In the Southern area of Barnham Parish most of the land is of mixed Entry Level Stewardship & Higher Level Stewardship with a smaller patch a little further north.

Environmental Stewardship is an agri-environment scheme that provides funding to farmers and other land managers in England to deliver effective environmental management on the land. There are four elements to environmental stewardship and two types exist in the NP area.

Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) – provides a straight forward approach to supporting the food stewardship of the countryside. This is done through simple and effective land management that goes beyond the Single Payment Scheme requirement to maintain land in good agricultural and environmental condition. It is open to all farmers and landowners.

Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) – involves more complex types of management and agreements are tailored to local circumstances. HLS applications will be assessed against specific local targets and agreements will be offered where they meet these targets and represent good value for money.

Natural England Website

Species Identified as being present in the Barnham and Eastergate Parishes - The NP Area

The report gives more details than given here often including location by name and/or grid reference.

Sussex Protected Species Register

These species are protected under Schedules 5, 6 and 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

- Flowering Plant - Pennyroyal (flowering plant).
- Reptiles - slow-worm; common lizard; grass snake; adder.
- Terrestrial Mammals - European Water Vole, and just outside the NP area in Wandley's Copse the Hazel Dormouse.

There is only 1 area of Barnham that has the Pennyroyal present. There are multiple sightings of Slow-worm across the NP area and it is also known that many sightings are made locally but go unreported. There are 3 areas supporting the Common Lizard. 6 sightings of Grass Snake and 1 sighting of an Adder. The European Water Vole is known in 3 areas. The Hazel Dormouse has been located a number of times in Wandley's Copse (just out of the NP area).

1 confidential record exists for this category.

Sussex Bat Inventory

All species of Bat are protected by UK and European law; under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. These have been identified by; sunrise surveys, building inspections, seeing them in flight, identifying droppings or a dead body. The roost locations are unspecified. Species of Bat noted in the NP area are:

- Bat sp.
- Serotine - in 2 areas
- Pipstrelle – in 3 areas
- Long-eared sp. – in 2 areas
- Brown Long-eared Bat – in 1 area

Sussex Bird Inventory

Whilst no actual location is given for these birds a total of **123 different species** have been sighted within the reported area. Birds are important indicator species of key habitats. The recordings are provided to Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC) by the Sussex Ornithological Society (SOS); not all SOS bird data is included in this report. Records within the breeding season of 15 Schedule 1 birds and 3 other species which are classed as sensitive in Sussex are not included.

All British birds, their nests and eggs are protected by UK law under Part 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Schedule 1 Birds (!)

Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 provides an additional tier of protection so that rare species are specially protected by increased penalties and cannot be intentionally or recklessly disturbed when nesting. Schedule 1 status also infers a right of arrest by a police officer if someone is suspected of committing certain offences against these species.

There are **18** different species listed under this schedule in the NP area.

Biodiversity Action Plan Species (UK BAP)

The bird species listed in this category each have a dedicated action plan which seeks to reverse their declines and protect vulnerable populations. In addition the Barn Owl has a Sussex Biodiversity Action Plan and the Skylark, Song Thrush and Swift each have a Species Statement for Sussex. All of these are found in the NP area.

There are **26** different species listed under this category in the NP area.

Natural Environment & Rural Communities (NERC) Act (N)

Bird Species on the England Biodiversity List were drawn up to meet the requirements of section 41 of the Act.

There are **16** different species listed under this category in the NP area.

Birds of Conservation Concern – Red, Amber and Green

Every 5 years governmental and non-governmental conservation organisations in the UK review the population status of 247 species that are regularly found in the UK. Species are divided into 3 lists, Red, Amber and Green, considering their conservation status, recent and historical decline, a rare breeder or restricted to only a few sites in the UK and if the species is internationally important.

Red List (R)

These species are **Globally Threatened**. Those whose population or range has declined rapidly in recent years and those that have declined historically and not shown a substantial recent recovery.

There are **26** different species listed under this category in the NP area.

Amber List (A)

These species are those with **Unfavourable Conservation Status** in Europe, those whose population or range has declined moderately in recent years, those whose population has declined historically but made a substantial recent recovery, rare breeders, and those with international importance or localised populations.

There are **46** different species listed under this category in the NP area.

In addition to the above are birds whose presence has been recorded but hold no special measures as to their status.

There are **48** different species without a specified category in the NP area.

UK Biodiversity Action Plan Species Inventory

In 1992 the UK joined other governments in signing the Convention on Biological Diversity at the Earth Summit. This called for signatories to develop national strategies and action plans to conserve biodiversity and the UK BAP was created. It was updated in 2007 and includes specific plans for species and habitats afforded priority conservation action. This list does not include bat, bird or otter records which are dealt with on other lists.

There are 11 different species under this category in the NP area.

- 2 Flowering Plants Spreading Hedge Parsley – in 1 area
Pennyroyal – in 1 area
- 1 Mollusc Ramshorn Snail – in 1 area
- 1 Amphibian Common Toad – in 1 area
- 4 Reptiles Slow-worm – in 10 areas
Common Lizard – in 3 areas
Grass Snake – in 7 areas
Adder – in 1 area

- 3 Mammals West European Hedgehog – in 24 areas
European Water Vole – in 3 areas
Brown Hare – in 2 areas
Also the Hazel Dormouse just out of area in Wandley’s Copse

1 confidential record exists for this category.

Sussex Rare Species Inventory

These species are selected according to strict criteria of rarity associated with their occurrence in Sussex.

- 1 Lichen Tornabea scutellifera listed in 2001 as **Extinct** but it is conceivable that it may be refound. Recorded in Barnham.
- 1 Fern Southern Polypody – in 1 area
- 14 Flowering Plants incl. 2 Endangered, 2 Vulnerable, 1 Priority and 1 lower risk.
 - Endangered Spreading Hedge Parsley – in 1 area
Pennyroyal – in 1 area
 - Vulnerable Nettle-leaved Goosefoot – in 1 area
Wall bedstraw – in 1 area
 - Priority Cornflower – in 1 area
 - Lower Risk Arum italicum subsp. neglectum – in 1 area
 - Others Annual Beard Grass – in 2 areas
Corn Parsley – in 2 areas
Broad-leaved Spurge – in 1 area
Fine-leaved Fumitory – in 1 area
Musk Stork’s-bill – in 1 area
Stinking Hellebore – in 1 area
Broad-leaved Osier – in 1 area
Pale Toadflax – in 1 area
- 1 Mollusc-Protected Anisus (Disculifer) vorticulus – in 1 area
- 1 Insect Andrena (Poecilandrena) labiata – in 1 area
- 1 Terrestrial Mammal European Water Vole – in 3 areas

1 confidential record exists for this category.

Sussex Invasive Alien Species Report

This covers species which are non-native. This list is produced in order to help minimise the threat posed by invasive alien species in Sussex. An invasive alien is defined as an alien species whose introduction and/or spread threatens biological diversity. Section 14 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act prohibits the release to the wild of animals which are listed in Schedule 9 (Part I). It also prohibits planting in the wild of plants listed in Schedule 9 (Part

II) or otherwise causing them to grow there. The spread and control of invasive alien species are covered by Article 8(h) of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

- 1 Terrestrial Mammal American Mink – in 1 area
- 9 Flowering Plants Three Cornered Garlic – in 1 area
Red Valerian – in 3 areas
Wall cotoneaster – in 1 area
Small-leaved cotoneaster – in 1 area
Montbretia – in 3 areas
Japanese Knotweed – in 2 areas
Hybrid Bluebell – in 4 areas
False Virginia Creeper – in 1 area
Winter Heliotrope – in 4 areas

Sussex Environmental Survey Directory

A total of 36 surveys are listed in this directory for the NP area.

- 1 Survey with plant and invertebrate species on the Lidsey Water Treatment Works and the Land bordering the Old Canal at Lidsey.
- 1 Environmental Survey of Stemps Wood & Nanny Copse
- 1 Survey of Unimproved Grassland on the Meadow at Eastergate. This area is noted to be neglected. **Is this an area worth improving as part of the NP? Look at Survey when it arrives.**
- 2 Botanical Surveys: 1 of St. Mary's Churchyard, Barnham recording 104 species.
1 of St. George's Churchyard, Eastergate recording 108 species.
- 2 Ecological surveys: 1 of Nanny Copse, Barnham
1 of Chichester & Arundel Canal
- Surveys of 12 areas as part of the Sussex Geological Sites Survey (1126). Each of these contain either Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) or County Geological Sites (COGS). Details held by the Booth Museum of Natural History.
- Surveys of 2 areas undertaken by the Environment Agency as part of the Sussex Coastal Rifes, Reactive RCS Survey (2112) on the Lidsey Rife & Yapton Rife. Both these border/enter the NP area.
- Surveys of 13 areas undertaken as part of the Chichester Rifes Catchment RCS Survey (2113) Feb 1996.
- Surveys of 2 areas by the Environment Agency on riverine fish population as part of the National Fisheries Monitoring Programme. These were undertaken upstream and downstream of the Lidsey Sewage Treatment Works.

Recommendations

It is important that sightings are reported to Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre so that the presence of species in the NP area can be recorded. This is something that could be promoted to local

residents. Surveys may give a snapshot of biodiversity but there's nothing to beat regular local knowledge.

To do so see the SxBRC website: sxbrc.org.uk/biodiversity/recording/#sending-records

It may be worth developing an event across the two parishes, (with B.L.A.D.E?) perhaps a nature watch day or tying in with occasions like the RSPB's big garden big watch etc. There is an annual seminar – 'Biological Recorders Seminar' in Feb / Mar for anyone who is, or would like to be a recorder.

With regard to protecting the Biodiversity of the NP area, we need to ensure that appropriate surveys are carried out on any area of planning and indeed, carried out at the best time of year for the species. If they have not been, we need, and have a right, to request they are carried out.

Where planning consent has been given we need to do our best to ensure the various species are protected within the building process.

Useful Websites

www.sxbrc.org.uk – Sussex Biodiversity record Centre

www.jncc.gov.uk – Joint Nature Conservation Committee

www.naturalengland.gov.uk – Natural England

www.rspb.org.uk – Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

www.sos.org.uk – Sussex Ornithological Society

www.badgertrust-sussex.org.uk – Badger Trust Sussex

www.sussexbatgroup.org.uk – Sussex Bat Group

www.sussexarg.org.uk – Sussex Amphibian & Reptile Group

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