

This Habitat Action Plan sets out to maintain and improve broad-leaved woodland habitat on Caravan Club-owned sites, and has been drafted for Club Site Teams and Site Wardens. It provides background information on broad-leaved woodland and makes recommendations for effective habitat management.

Introduction

Due to extensive clearance and exploitation over many centuries, good-quality broad-leaved woodland habitat has become rare in the UK. It is a very species-rich habitat, and is home to almost twice as many species of conservation concern as any other habitat in the UK.

The Caravan Club audit 2006 revealed that this habitat is present on, or in close proximity to 82 Club sites

How to recognise this habitat

This habitat includes:

- all broadleaved and yew stands and mixed broadleaved and coniferous stands, where broadleaved and yew trees constitute at least 20% of the cover
- Patches of scrub of above 0.25 ha, which form a continuous canopy
- Areas of recently felled broadleaved woodland and other integral features of woodland, such as glades and rides



Credit: Peter Wakely/Natural England

Current status

- After centuries of exploitation and decline, improved management has resulted in an increase in UK broad-leaved woodland cover in recent years. The Forestry Commission estimates that broadleaved woodland (including Broadleaved, Mixed, Coppiced, and Coppice-with-Standards) now covers over 1 million ha, or 4.8% of the total land area of Britain (Forestry Commission 2003)
- Broadleaved woodland is protected under the EC Habitats Directive, with 29 different woodland and forest types of temperate Europe listed under Annex I
- Current factors causing loss or decline include:
 - Replacement of native trees by non-native trees
 - Invasion by non-native shrub species, such as rhododendron *Rhododendron* spp.
 - Loss of species, through neglect or unsympathetic management
 - Excessive disruption through large scale changes in management regime
 - Uncontrolled grazing of deer and domestic stock

Ecology/management requirements

Broad-leaved woodland is an extremely species-rich habitat, particularly for flowering plants, fungi, lichens, birds, mammals, and invertebrates. Woodland is also important at the ecosystem level, being critical for the proper functioning of many other habitats and ecological processes. Well-managed woodland can help to prevent flooding and erosion, and reduce air and noise pollution.

How to look after this habitat

	Site safeguard and management	Habitat management and protection
DO'S	<p>DO Conserve existing trees between woodland fragments, and plant more native trees where possible, to <u>improve connectivity between woodland fragments</u></p> <p>DO <u>Develop lengths of species-rich hedgerow</u>, between fragments of broadleaved woodland. This will improve colonisation and long-term survival rates of many woodland plant and animal species</p> <p>DO <u>Allow the natural regeneration</u> of broad-leaved woodland into new areas</p> <p>DO Look to <u>create new broad-leaved woodland</u> areas, where possible, through the planting of native species of local provenance</p> <p>DO <u>Provide at least 10 bat or bird boxes per ¼ ha</u> (see also associated species action plans for song thrush, bullfinch)</p>	<p>DO <u>Conserve veteran trees, and those which are dead or dying</u>. Aim to have at least three veteran/dead/dying trees per ¼ ha, where this is safe (see also action plan for veteran trees)</p> <p>DO <u>Maximise the core area</u>, and minimise edge lengths of woodland. Many of the rarest woodland species prefer core woodland</p> <p>DO <u>Provide at least 5 piles of deadwood per ¼ ha</u>. This will provide habitat for rare woodland invertebrates, amphibians, birds (foraging) and also reptiles, if located near a south-facing woodland edge</p> <p>DO Maintain good <u>canopy cover, a range of native nut and fruit-bearing species</u> (particularly hazel), and <u>nest-boxes</u>, especially where common dormouse may be present (see also dormouse species action plan for further details)</p>
DON'TS	<p>DON'T Use any <u>herbicides</u> or <u>insecticides</u> on site</p> <p>DON'T Allow livestock to graze <u>un-managed</u> on site</p> <p>DON'T <u>Clear deadwood</u> from site</p>	<p>DON'T <u>Remove or excessively cut or tidy</u> ancient or veteran trees, unless there are significant safety risks</p> <p>DON'T Allow <u>excessive woodland grazing</u> by deer (limited culling, under licence, may be necessary)</p>

For further information on this habitat visit:

The Caravan Club Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) for broad-leaved woodland: <http://www.caravanclub.co.uk>

UK BAP for broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland: <http://www.ukbap.org.uk/UKPlans.aspx?ID=46>

UK BAP for lowland beech and yew woodland: <http://www.ukbap.org.uk/UKPlans.aspx?ID=2>

UK BAP for lowland wood-pasture and parkland: <http://www.ukbap.org.uk/UKPlans.aspx?ID=5>

UK BAP for upland mixed ashwoods: <http://www.ukbap.org.uk/UKPlans.aspx?ID=3>

UK BAP for upland oakwood: <http://www.ukbap.org.uk/UKPlans.aspx?ID=1>