

Creating the list of proposed Species Priorities for the Worcestershire LNRS

Related documents:

- **Species that will benefit from Habitat Potential Measures (Category A Species)**
- **Species that require bespoke Potential Measures (Prioritised Category B, C and D species)**
- **Category B-D Species Assessment and Scoring Matrix**
- **Biodiversity Priorities Assessment Matrix**
- **Creating the list of proposed Biodiversity Priorities (habitats and environmental issues) for the Worcestershire LNRS**

STEP 1.

The first step in selecting the species that would be prioritised within the Worcestershire LNRS was the production of a longlist of potential Species Priorities. Biodiversity priorities (habitats and environmental issues) were considered separately.

The longlist was compiled using records provided by Worcestershire Biological Record Centre, supplemented with records from other sources including species specialist groups and the NBN Atlas. These records were then filtered according to one or more of the following criteria:

- Recorded within Worcestershire since 1999 (for the majority of taxa, however some taxonomic groups, such as Plants, had later cut-off dates where justified)
- On one or more of the following lists – GB IUCN red list (Near Threatened/Vulnerable/Endangered/Critically Endangered), Worcestershire BAP, NERC s41, Birds of Conservation Concern Red and Amber lists, GB mammal and GB herptile lists
- Species with 5 or fewer records were validated by WBRC and species specialists to ensure they were not a misidentified/vagrant species.

The species longlist was also cross-referenced back to the Issues and Options consultation responses to ensure that all species, threat and pressures suggestions were considered and, where relevant, incorporated into the species longlist.

STEP 2.

A Task & Finish Group was convened to:

- Verify the identified records
- Add any missing species (e.g. locally important species)
- Add in additional detail for each species: key habitats; pressures/threats; potential measures for recovery
- Categorise each species into one of seven categories proposed by Defra (see Table 1)

The longlist was then reviewed by a group of species specialists to verify the longlist and add any missing species and/or information.

Each species was then categorised according to its primary habitat type and Category.

Category A species are those that are likely to benefit from general creation, expansion, and improved connectivity of good quality habitat. Following Defra guidance, these species were matched with their corresponding Biodiversity Priorities and Potential Measures that, if carried out, would likely improve their status and/or range.

Category B-D species are those requiring bespoke conservation measures above and beyond general habitat creation and improvement. These species are therefore suitable for inclusion in the species priorities list. As per Defra guidance these Category B-D species were then grouped into habitat-based assemblages wherever possible, based on their potential to benefit from the same recovery measures. Those that did not fit into an assemblage were left as standalone species.

Category E to G species are out of scope of this iteration of the LNRS. These species were retained in a list ready for possible inclusion in a subsequent LNRS.

Table 1. Summary of categories used to aid identification of which species LNRS can best support and those for which LNRS Potential Measures are not appropriate. Based on 'Species Recovery within Local Nature Recovery Strategies: Advice for Responsible Authorities. Defra, 2023'.

Category A	Needs more / bigger / better-connected habitat	Do not require prioritisation for LNRS measures
Category B	Needs targeted habitat management	Suitable for consideration for LNRS measures
Category C	Needs improvements in environmental quality	Suitable for consideration for LNRS measures
Category D	Needs bespoke conservation action(s)	Suitable for consideration for LNRS measures
Category E	Needs better evidence base / on-the-ground action is not a priority	Unsuitable for consideration for LNRS measures
Category F	Needs action outside England	Unsuitable for consideration for LNRS measures
Category G	Vagrants / occasional visitors	Unsuitable for consideration for LNRS measures

STEP 3.

In the final step of the shortlisting process, the Task & Finish Group agreed a set of criteria (based on Defra recommendations) against which each Category B-D assemblage and standalone species could be assessed and scored. A Species Assessment and Scoring Matrix was compiled to enable the assessment and scoring process.

Once the final priority list had been agreed, Potential Measures for each assemblage and standalone species were finalised and mapped on the Local Habitat Map.