

1. CURRENT STATUS

1.1 Legislation and priority status

International	None known
UK and Wales	Wildlife and Countryside Act (Section 13 ^a) SoCC ^b
Gwynedd	None known

1.2 Status in Wales and beyond

Bluebells are also found scattered throughout western Europe mainly in France, the Netherlands and Belgium, and have become naturalised in central Europe. Bluebell^c is an 'Atlantic' species not reaching further east than western Germany (as a native species) and absent from Scandinavia.

Bluebells are widely distributed and common throughout the United Kingdom, occurring widely except in Orkney and Shetland. Bluebells are of international importance within the UK as 25-49% of the world population is found here.

1.3 Status in Gwynedd^d

Bluebells are locally abundant in Gwynedd, being especially notable in upland oak woodlands and ancient and/or species rich hedgerows such as Parc y Borth LNR. Coed Dinorwig LNR, part of Padarn Country Park, has some of the most outstanding colonies in the UK.

2 FACTORS AFFECTING THIS SPECIES IN GWYNEDD^e

- Loss of habitat including woodlands and hedgerows
- A decline in traditional woodland management can lead to the shading out of bluebells
- A 'tidy park' mentality where a fine strand of bluebells are reduced and weakened by regular mowing, especially during the flowering period
- Physical damage to leaves and bulbs by trampling or grazing by livestock. Leaves are non-replaceable as they are preformed in the bulb the previous year, making damage at any time during the growing season detrimental.
- Picking of bluebell flowers which can weaken colonies
- Illegal exploitation of bulbs for commercial purposes
- Hybridisation with the Spanish bluebell commonly grown in gardens.

^a 1 b, 2a+2b - "sale" only

^b UK Species of Conservation Concern List

^c *Hyacinthoides non-scripta*

^d Within this document the term "Gwynedd" refers to areas outside the Snowdonia National Park area, except where specified otherwise

^e See also associated HAPs for more general factors affecting this species' habitats

3. ASSOCIATED GWYNEDD SAPS / HAPS

Upland oakwoods, Upland mixed ashwoods, Scrub woodlands, Veteran trees, lowland wood-pasture & parkland, Arable field margins, Cloddiau, Hedgerows, Transport corridors, Maritime cliff and slopes

4. CURRENT ACTION IN GWYNEDD

4.1 Site and habitat protection

- Populations of bluebell may be found in areas of Gwynedd identified as potential Wildlife Sites, designated as LNR (e.g. Parc Dudley and Parc y Borth), SSSI (eg. Coed Dinorwig, Coed Elernion and Talhenbont), NNR or candidate SAC.
- A number of important woodlands are protected by Tree Preservation Orders.
- The Hedgerow Regulations have brought hedgerows into the planning process and ensure the retention of a number of hedges.

4.2 Management and programmes of action

- None known

4.3 Survey, research and monitoring

- During 2003 Plantlife organised a nationwide volunteer survey of bluebells and their habitats, the results of which are not yet available.

5. ACTION PLAN OBJECTIVES

1. To establish the current status and distribution of bluebell in Gwynedd.
2. To protect, maintain and enhance existing bluebell populations and related habitats.
3. To restore and enhance other suitable sites in order to increase bluebell population and distribution.

6. PROPOSED ACTIONS

Code	Action	Partner(s) ^f
Policy and legislation		
1	Use planning conditions to ensure developments in sensitive locations are compatible with bluebell conservation TARGET/TIMESCALE: Ongoing	GC , Relevant partners
2	Consider designating suitable sites of importance for bluebell (including ancient woodland sites) as Wildlife Sites TARGET/TIMESCALE: Start process of designation, By 2005	GC , NWWT, Plantlife
Species / habitat management and protection		
3	Promote and support grant schemes including Tir Gofal, Llŷn ESA and / or use management agreements where appropriate to secure favourable habitat management of sites with established bluebell populations, and adjacent areas which could provide linkages between isolated populations, taking into account the needs of other associated LBAP species and habitats TARGET/TIMESCALE: To be set, Ongoing	CCW , CC , CLA , DEPC , FWAG Cymru , FUW , GC , NFU Cymru , NT , Plantlife
4	Ensure that the potential presence and management requirements of bluebells are considered within any relevant management plans or grant schemes (including SSSI management plans, NWMPs, WGS, Tir Gofal, ESA) by liaison (including consultation and provision of comments) between key organisations TARGET/TIMESCALE: Ongoing	CCW , DEPC , FC , GC
5	Continue to sympathetically manage all GC owned bluebell sites TARGET/TIMESCALE: Ongoing	GC
Advisory		
	None identified	
Survey, research and monitoring		
	None identified	
Communications and publicity		
6	Continue to raise awareness of the damage that livestock can do to woodlands and associated plants such as bluebells, and discourage people from picking or digging-up these plants through attending local agricultural shows and events, creating local publicity, and in producing education/advisory material TARGET/TIMESCALE: Ongoing	GC , CCW , NWWT

7 PARTNERS & OPPORTUNITIES

7.1 Overall Lead Partner for SAP

Gwynedd Council (**GC**)

^f Lead partner for this action is indicated by bold typeface, see section 7.2 for explanation of abbreviations

7.2 Key partners

Coed Cymru (CC)

Country Land and Business Association (CLA)

Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)

Department for Environment, Planning and Countryside (Welsh Assembly Government) (DEPC)

Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group Cymru (FWAG Cymru)

Farmers Union of Wales (FUW)

Forestry Commission (FC)

National Farmers Union Cymru (NFU Cymru)

National Trust (NT)

North Wales Wildlife Trust (NWWT)

Plantlife

7.3 Opportunities

Farming unions, landowners and managers, volunteers, local community groups

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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9. ABBREVIATIONS

BAP: Biodiversity Action Plan, ESA: Environmentally Sensitive Area, HAP: Habitat Action Plan, LBAP: Local Biodiversity Action Plan, LNR: Local Nature Reserve, NNR: National Nature Reserve, NWMP: Native Woodland Management Plan, SAC: Special Area of Conservation, SAP: Species Action Plan, SPA: Special Protection Area, SSSI: Site of Special Scientific Interest, UWB: University of Wales, Bangor, WGS: Woodland Grant Scheme

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