

VP-B1 Spreading Bellflower *Campanula patula*
SPECIES ACTION PLAN

1. Current status

- 1.1 Spreading bellflower is a biennial herb of dry, well-drained sunny sites on fairly infertile soils, regenerating from seed after disturbance (sometimes following long periods of dormancy). It has disappeared from many sites due to the decline in traditional woodland and wayside management (e.g. coppicing, hedging and ditching) and the use of roadside herbicides. Increased nutrient deposition might also have influenced this decline.
- 1.2 Spreading bellflower is widespread in central and western Europe but has declined through its range in Britain. The centre of the Welsh distribution is in the border counties of Monmouthshire, Breconshire, Radnorshire, and Montgomeryshire.
- 1.3 In Monmouthshire it occupies a series of ancient woodlands and recent forestry sites. Plantlife holds seven recent records and eight pre-1970 records. The more recent records include The Hatterels near Pandy (within the BBNP), Upper Hael wood in the Wye Valley and Reddings Inclosure in the Forest of Dean. Between 1970 and 2000 records are held for Llansoy, Lydart, the Mitchel Troy area, Llantrisant, Shirenewton and several sites in the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean. Populations are often small with the largest known record in Wales being 20 plants, which were found at High Meadow Wood in 1984. Most records are for populations of less than four plants. Spreading bellflower frequently occurs in small, short-lived populations and might be overlooked in a number of localities within its range.
- 1.4 The species is listed as Endangered in the new Vascular Plant Red List for Great Britain (Cheffings & Farrell, 2005). This is a very high status of threat of extinction. The species is recognised as a Species of Principle Importance in Wales and is therefore listed as a Section 42 Species (NERC Act 2006).

2. Current factors affecting the species (In rank order of importance)

- 2.1 Decline in traditional woodland and wayside management (e.g. coppicing, hedging and ditching)
- 2.2 Roadside management (e.g. herbicides, strimming).
- 2.3 Increased nutrient load (e.g. traffic emissions and fertilizers) along field and footpath boundaries.

3. Current action

- 3.1 Spreading bellflower is listed as a Plantlife *Back from the Brink* species in Wales.
- 3.2 Plantlife and the BSBI have collated current and historical records and alerted relevant vice county recorders of the need for updated data and associated survey.
- 3.3 Sites in Monmouthshire have been surveyed and Plantlife are encouraging volunteers to visit sites with recent and historical records to look for the species.
- 3.4 Plantlife staff and members are visiting sites in the Wye Valley and have drawn up plans (for 2006 onwards) to extend this survey, with management plans e.g. scrub clearance for priority habitat identified in this search.
- 3.5 In 2005 Plantlife carried out a '*Harebell Hunt*,' a national survey that included spreading bellflower.
- 3.6 The Forest Enterprise and Plantlife held a volunteer workday at the Reddings Inclosure in the Forest of Dean during September 2004. Verge sides where the plant has recently occurred were disturbed.

4. Proposed targets (Including target goals where appropriate)

- 4.1 Maintain the range of the species in Monmouthshire.
- 4.2 Return populations to favourable condition through positive site management and by restoring habitat links within the currently fragmented.

5. Proposed actions and key partners for Spreading Bellflower

Action	Key Partners		Timescale
	Lead	Support	
1. Policy and Legislation			
1.1 Ensure policies and strategies do not adversely affect populations of spreading bellflower.	MCC	CCW, Plantlife	Ongoing
1.2 Ensure spreading bellflower is fully considered when assessing any development, which may impact upon the species.	MCC	CCW, GWT	Ongoing
1.3 When there is no alternative ensure that appropriate mitigation or compensation measures for spreading bellflower are used during development.	MCC		Ongoing
1.4 Where appropriate, ensure opportunities for enhancing habitat for spreading bellflower are used	MCC		Ongoing

during the planning process			
2. Funding and Incentives			
2.1 Where appropriate, include the requirements of spreading bellflower when preparing or revising prescriptions for Woodland Grant Scheme and Tir Gofal.	CCW	Landowners	
3. Funding / Resources			
3.1 Target grant aid such Woodland Grant Schemes on areas known to be important for spreading bellflower.	CCW	FCW	
4. Site Protection and Designation			
4.1 Seek to designate areas known to be important for spreading bellflower as SINC's and / or Roadside Nature Reserves.	GWT	MCC, SINC panel	2005-09
4.2 Notify as SSSIs any sites with viable populations of <i>C. patula</i> , where consistent with selection guidelines and where necessary to ensure their long-term protection and appropriate management.	CCW	Landowners	
5. Habitat and Site Management			
5.1 Where possible, ensure that occupied habitat is appropriately managed by 2008 through site management agreements and funding incentives. (Scrub cutting, traditional hedge and ditch clearance, grazing and woodland management.)	CCW	FCW	
5.2 Ensure that spreading bellflower is included on site management documents for all relevant SSSIs.	CCW		
6. Habitat Creation / Restoration			
6.1 Seek to increase the available habitat at known sites and attempt to link up fragmented sites.	Plantlife	FCW	End 2008
7. Species management			
7.1 Return populations to favourable condition through the restoration of positive site-management.	Plantlife	MCC, FCW	End 2008
7.2 Collect and deposit seed in the national seed bank at Wakehurst Place and ensure that plants are kept	CCW		

in cultivation at the National Botanic Garden of Wales or other appropriate sites.			
8. Research			
8.1 Determine key attributes for favourable condition and assess existing populations in these terms.	Plantlife		End 2007
8.2 Undertake a threat status assessment of all extant sites in Monmouthshire.	Plantlife		
8.3 Undertake some experimental management at one site (Reddings Inclosure, Forest of Dean)	Plantlife	FCW	
9. Survey and monitoring			
9.1 Partake in the Plantlife monitoring programme to ensure that all sites with records since 2000 are visited annually and those with records 1987-2000 are visited at least once every 3 years. Encourage volunteer surveyors to visit older sites and also survey other areas with suitable habitat.	Plantlife	BSBI, LBAP Partnership	End 2006
10. Information and Databases			
10.1 Map current and historical populations in Monmouthshire to identify population boundaries at a landscape scale.	Plantlife		
11. Communication -Advisory			
11.1 Advise landowners and land-managers of all extant sites of the presence and importance of this species and associated management needs and vulnerabilities.	Plantlife	FCW, CCW	
11.2 Advise Tir Gofal project officers in Monmouthshire of the population centres for this species and the need to encourage appropriate woodland, fence, ditch and hedgerow management in the vicinity.	CCW		
11.3 Identify sites for traditional woodland management (e.g. coppicing, pathway clearance) in stands of commercial forestry, and encourage	Plantlife	FCW	

landowners to reinstate such management.			
11.4 Draw together experience of management of the species to inform landowners of the best management practice.	Plantlife	CCW, FCW, Private landowners	
11.5 Issue clear management guidelines to maintenance contractors working along routes within population-centres of spreading bellflower and institute a monitoring strategy to assess the effectiveness of advice.	Plantlife	MCC	
12. Communication - Publicity			
12.1 Promote publications written by Plantlife such as the online species dossier and the advisory leaflet through the LBAP partnership and the partnership website.	Plantlife	LBAP Partnership	Start summer 2006
13. Action Plan Process / Links to other Plans			
13.1 Consider the requirements of spreading bellflower when writing Habitat Action Plans for Linear Features and Woodland.	MCC	LBAP Partnership	End March 2007

6. Abbreviations

BSBI Botanical Society of the British Isles
 CCW Countryside Council for Wales
 FCW Forestry Commission Wales
 FE Forest Enterprise
 GWT Gwent Wildlife Trust
 MCC Monmouthshire County Council
 MCS Monmouthshire Countryside Service
 MDC Monmouthshire Development Control
 MDP Monmouthshire Development Plans
 SINC Site of Importance to Nature Conservation

7. References

Dines, T. Plantlife 2005. DRAFT Species Action Plan Spreading Bellflower (*Campanula patula*) Clychlys Lledaenol. CRoW Act 2000: Section 74 - Wales List