

I-B2 Waved Carpet *Hydrelia sylvata* SPECIES ACTION PLAN

1. Current status

- 1.1 The waved carpet occurs in coppiced woods with a long history of active coppice, and in open sunny areas with younger growth of the larval foodplants present. The foodplants are alder, birch, willow and, in Kent, sweet chestnut. Hazel has also been suggested and there is one old report of blackthorn being used. The adult moths fly in June and July, resting by day among bushes and occasionally on tree-trunks. The larvae feed between July and August in most years and pupate in September to over winter as a pupa in an earthen cell until emergence the following July.
- 1.2 In Britain the waved carpet is a highly localised species with post-1980 records concentrated in five main areas: Devon, Cornwall and Dorset; the borders of Hampshire, Sussex and Surrey; East Sussex and Kent; Gloucestershire and South Wales. Historically this species was recorded over much of England and Wales but the species has declined following the widespread cessation of active coppice management. The moth appears to exist at low density over much of its range and is likely to be under-recorded. For instance, it probably occurs more widely in Wales than records suggest.
- 1.3 In Gwent the waved carpet is largely confined to woodlands of the Wye Valley with the exception of two records in Newport and an old record from Usk. Although all the sites contain open spaces, there is no obvious association with recently coppiced areas. The maximum number of records for any site is four, with many sites having only a single individual recorded, suggesting the species occurs at low density and / or is not readily attracted to light. Post 1980 records are from Hael Wood (SO5207), Llandogo (SO523042), Penallt (SO527100), Fedw Wood (ST505982), Wyndcliff (ST5297) and Loysey Wood (SO500066) though the small number of active recorders means the species is probably still present elsewhere.

Lowe (2003) conducted a survey of known south Wales waved carpet sites for Butterfly Conservation (Wales). Of the eight sites studied (two of which were in Monmouthshire), he only found the adult moth at one site, confirming how difficult this species is to record. Lowe also failed to find larvae (by beating) at any of the sites, but since alder is the only foodplant mentioned in all literature accounts and was present at all of the sites surveyed, alder is presumed to be the primary foodplant in Wales.

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

- 2.1 The loss of young re-growth due to the decline of coppicing in the lowlands.
- 2.2 The loss of broadleaved woodland, particularly damp alder-rich woodland, due to replanting with conifers.

3. Current action

- 3.1 The Forestry Commission's *Coppice for Butterflies Challenge* (Woodland Improvement Grant) scheme has targeted three areas where the argent and sable is present including the Wye Valley.
- 3.2 Monmouthshire Moth and Butterfly Group annually target previously unvisited woodland for light-trapping to determine the distribution of species such as waved carpet. In 2005 a new site was found at Fedw Wood (ST505982).
- 3.3 Butterfly Conservation released a fact sheet on waved carpet in 2005, sponsored by DEFRA. It is obtainable from the BC website www.butterfly-conservation.org/conbio/defrafactsheets/.

4. Proposed targets

- 4.1 Maintain the range of this species, concentrating particularly on the Wye Valley core area (10km squares ST59, SO50, SO51).
- 4.2 Enhance the overall population by 2010.

5. Proposed actions and key partners for Waved carpet

Action	Key Partners		Timescale
	Lead	Partners	
1. Policy and Legislation			
1.1 Ensure policies and strategies do not adversely affect the breeding population	MCC	CCW	Ongoing
1.2 Ensure waved carpet is fully considered when assessing any development, which may impact upon the species.	MCC	BC CCW GWT	Ongoing
1.3 When there is no alternative ensure that appropriate mitigation or compensation measures for waved carpet are used during development.	MCC	MCS MDC	Ongoing
1.4 Ensure opportunities for enhancing habitat for waved carpet are used during the planning process	MCC	MCS MDC	Ongoing
2. Funding and Incentives			
2.1 Where appropriate, include the requirements of the species when	FCW	CCW	Ongoing

preparing or revising prescriptions for Woodland Grant Schemes			
3. Funding / Resources			
3.1 Target grant aid such Woodland Grant Schemes and <i>Coppice for Butterflies</i> on areas known to be important for waved carpet.	FCW	CCW	Ongoing
3.2 Target funding and expertise to search for larvae and determine their feeding requirements	BC	MCC	Ongoing
4. Site Protection and Designation			
4.1 Seek to designate areas known to be important for waved carpet as SINCs.	GWT	MCC SINC panel	2005-09
5. Habitat and Site Management			
5.1 Seek to retain an extensive area of woodland in the Wye Valley with appropriate management	FCW CCW	MCC	Ongoing
5.2 Ensure that waved carpet is included on site management documents for all relevant SSSIs.	CCW	BC GWT	Ongoing
6. Habitat Creation / Restoration			
7.1 Seek to increase the available habitat at known sites and attempt to link up fragmented sites.	FCW CCW	MCC	Ongoing
7. Research			
7.1 Conduct targeted autecological research to inform habitat management, including the age of coppice after cutting, which is preferred by the moth, the length of time such cut areas remain suitable, mobility of the species and population structure.	BC	CCW FCW	2010
8. Survey and Monitoring			
8.1 Undertake surveys to establish current distribution and changes in distribution.	MMBG	BC GWT	Ongoing
9. Information and Databases			
9.1 Pass information gathered during survey and monitoring of this species to a central database (SEWBRc).	MMBG	BC	Ongoing
10. Communication - Advisory			
10.1 Advise landowners and managers of the presence of this species and the importance of beneficial management for its conservation.	BC	MCC	Ongoing

11. Communication - Publicity			
11.1 Promote opportunities for the appreciation of the species and the conservation issues associated with its habitat. This should be achieved via articles within appropriate journals, leaflets and events.	MCC	BC FCW	Ongoing
12. Action Plan Process / Links to other Plans			
12.1 Produce a Habitat Action Plan for Woodland	MCC	FCW CCW	By March 2007

6. Abbreviations

BC	Butterfly Conservation
FCW	Forestry Commission Wales
GWT	Gwent Wildlife Trust
MCC	Monmouthshire County Council
MCS	Monmouthshire Countryside Service
MDP	Monmouthshire Development Plans
MDC	Monmouthshire Development Control
MMBG	Monmouthshire Moth and Butterfly Group
NAWAD	National Assembly for Wales Agricultural Department
SEWBRc	South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre
WAG	Welsh Assembly Government
AONB	Wye Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

7. References

Norman Lowe (2003) Butterfly Conservation Report No S03-32