

Shropshire Biodiversity Action Plan



Grizzled Skipper (*Pyrgus malvae*)



1 Objectives and Targets

1.1 Objectives

- A. Protect, enhance and monitor the existing populations present on sites in two core areas (Oswestry Uplands and the Wyre Forest).
- B. Encourage more appropriate management on at least two more sites in each of these core areas.
- C. Increase survey effort directed at this species to see if it is present on other Shropshire sites.
- D. Increase awareness of the status and needs of Grizzled Skipper in Shropshire through communication and education.

1.2 Targets

- Maintain all existing Grizzled Skipper colonies within the two core areas and aim to bring at least four more sites into suitable management by 2010.

2 Current Status

2.1 Importance

The Grizzled Skipper still occurs widely in Europe although it has recently declined in several European countries. It was formerly widely distributed in England and parts of Wales but declined substantially during the twentieth century especially in the western and northern parts of its range.

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2.2 Trends

The decline of the Grizzled Skipper is estimated to be >50% in the UK over the last 25 years (hence its inclusion as a UK BAP Priority Species Candidate).

2.3 Population and Distribution

The main strongholds for the Grizzled Skipper are now the southern English counties e.g. Dorset, Somerset, Hampshire and Wiltshire. In Shropshire it is now a very localised butterfly which is largely restricted to two main areas (the Wyre Forest and the Oswestry Uplands) with an occasional colony elsewhere.

3 Current Factors Affecting the Species

- Continuing changes in woodland management.
- Continuing decline in the market for coppice products.
- Natural succession causing deterioration in grassland/scrub and disused artificial habitats.
- Continuing fragmentation and isolation of habitats.

4 Current Action

4.1 Policy and Protection

- The Grizzled Skipper is not currently listed on Schedule 5 of the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act and therefore has no statutory protection.
- It is however now listed under the following category:
 - UKBAP Priority Species Candidate (2005)
 - A species action plan for the Grizzled Skipper was prepared in 1998 by Butterfly Conservation.
- A good number of the known sites for Grizzled Skipper in Shropshire are SSSI's.
- Sites in the Oswestry and Wyre Forest areas fall within Biodiversity Enhancement Areas.

4.2 Management, Research and Survey

- Four sites in the Oswestry Uplands are managed sympathetically by the Shropshire Wildlife Trust with recent management work on one other key site in this area (Llyncllys Quarry) very likely to benefit this species.
- Management of the Wyre Forest pipeline as an open area has retained Grizzled Skipper in this key part of the Wyre Forest until now. Management of the IMI Wyre Forest site has suited this species in the past.

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5. Key Habitats

- Scrubby unimproved grassland especially chalk downland and limestone grasslands.
- Woodland clearings
- Disused artificial habitats such as quarries, pits and railway lines.

6. Complementary Plans

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7. Action Plan

Habitat / Species	Action code	Action text	Location of action	Start date	End date	Lead	Assisting
Grizzled Skipper	SHR GSK CP 02	Produce at least 1 press release on the status of the Grizzled Skipper in Shropshire and how to record and conserve it by 2010.	Shropshire	2008	2010	BC	SWT
Grizzled Skipper	SHR GSK FR 01	Recruit at least five more volunteers to survey for Grizzled Skipper by 2010.	Shropshire	2006	2010	BC	SWT, WFSG
Grizzled Skipper	SHR GSK HS 01	Undertake practical habitat management to benefit Grizzled Skipper at 3 sites identified by action 'SHR GSK SU 03' by 2015.	Shropshire	2008	2010	BC	SWT
Grizzled Skipper	SHR GSK SM 01	Achieve favourable management for the Grizzled Skipper with the aim of doubling the potential habitat available to this butterfly at Dolgoch quarry, Llynclys Common, Llanmynech Rocks and Jones Rough by 2010.	Oswestry Uplands – Dolgoch quarry, Llynclys Common, Llanmynech Rocks and Jones Rough	2006	2010	SWT	BC, SC
Grizzled Skipper	SHR GSK SM 02	Achieve favourable management for the Grizzled Skipper with the aim of doubling the potential habitat available to this butterfly at one more site in the Oswestry area by 2010.	Oswestry Uplands	2006	2010	BC	
Grizzled Skipper	SHR GSK SM 03	Achieve favourable management for the Grizzled Skipper with the aim of doubling the potential habitat available to this butterfly at the Wyre Forest – at the Forestry Commission Pipeline and IMI by 2010.	Wyre Forest – FC Pipeline and IMI	2006	2010	BC	NE, FC
Grizzled Skipper	SHR GSK SM 04	Achieve favourable management for the Grizzled Skipper on at least two more sites in each of the two main areas for this species in Shropshire by 2010.	Oswestry Uplands and the Wyre Forest	2006	2010	BC	FC, SWT, NE
Grizzled Skipper	SHR GSK SU 01	Carry out habitat quality assessment on all 10 sites supporting colonies of Grizzled Skipper at least once every three years until 2012.	Oswestry Uplands, Wyre Forest and Clunbury	2006	2012	BC	SWT, WFSG, FC
Grizzled Skipper	SHR GSK SU 02	Monitor all 10 known Grizzled Skipper colonies at least once every three years until 2012.	Oswestry Uplands, Wyre Forest and Clunbury	2006	2012	BC	SWT, FC, NE, WFSG
Grizzled Skipper	SHR GSK SU 03	Carry out targeted survey for Grizzled Skipper on at least five more Shropshire sites by 2010.	Shropshire	2008	2010	BC	SWT

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Key to organisations

BC	Butterfly Conservation
EN	English Nature
FC	Forestry Commission
Lf	Lafarge Aggregates
NE	Natural England
SWT	Shropshire Wildlife Trust
WFSG	Wyre Forest Study Group
SBP	Shropshire Biodiversity Partnership
SC	Shropshire Council

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Plan last revised: April, 2008 by Fran Lancaster, Biodiversity Support Officer, Shropshire Council.

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