

## Deptford Pink (*Dianthus armeria*)

Deptford Pink is associated with dry pastures, disturbed ground, field borders and hedgerows, as well as roadsides, where it generally prefers light, sandy soil of relatively high pH. It is thought to require open conditions for success, although it is able to compete with taller vegetation once established.

The UKBAP Priority Habitats of particular importance to this species are: lowland dry acid grassland, lowland calcareous grassland, ancient and/or species-rich hedgerows and other ecologically important boundary features.

### Current status

#### *National status*

The range of Deptford Pink in Britain lies between north Wales and the south coast of England, with most of its sites occurring in southern England. Over the last 60 years this species has exhibited one of the most rapid declines of any species in the British flora. It is now known from only 13 to 15 sites.

Deptford Pink is classified as *Vulnerable* in Great Britain, is a UKBAP Priority species, and is currently being considered for inclusion on Schedule 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981).

#### *Status on the network*

Deptford Pink occurs on roadside verges; new colonies have recently been found on the network in Devon and Worcestershire, possibly as a result of disturbance of soil near to existing seed sources.

### Current factors affecting the species

#### *Loss/fragmentation of habitat*

New road developments and road improvement schemes may result in direct loss of the plants and their habitat.

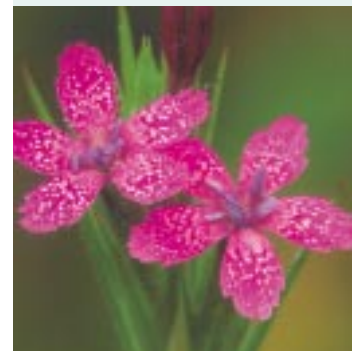
#### *Inappropriate management/deterioration of existing habitat*

Inappropriate management (such as mowing during the flowering season) or lack of management may result in successional changes causing the loss of the relatively open vegetation structure which this species requires.

### Current action

The UKBAP action plan for Deptford Pink proposes that surveys are undertaken to assess the current distribution, status and causes of decline of this species.

As new colonies are discovered on the network, Managing Agents are being informed of their location.



## Objectives

The aim of the Highways Agency Species Action Plan for the Deptford Pink is to implement appropriate management where this species

occurs and to ensure that new road developments avoid or adequately mitigate any potential impacts on this species and its habitat.

	Objective	Proposed actions
A	To avoid impacts of new road schemes or improvements on Deptford Pink.	5
B	To mitigate unavoidable impacts on Deptford Pink and its habitat and to consider options for habitat enhancement.	6, 8, 9
C	To monitor all road verges where this species is known to occur and safeguard through appropriate management.	3, 4, 7, 8
D	To raise awareness of HA staff, Managing Agents and consultants regarding the significance of Deptford Pink on the soft estate, in particular in network areas 1 and 9 where this species is known to occur.	1, 2, 9
E	To develop a greater knowledge of the distribution of Deptford Pink across the network.	2, 3, 4, 7

## Proposed action

The following table lists the actions required to achieve the objectives set out in this Plan. For some of the actions, potential partners have

been assigned as likely sources of cooperation. Targets are provided to give an indication of the timescale for the proposed action.

	Action	Potential partners	Target
	<i>Policy, guidance and advice</i>		
1	Provide detailed information to local Area Managers within network areas 1 and 9 (and any other areas where this species is found to occur on the network) on the management of roadside verges for the benefit of Deptford Pink.	Plantlife, EN	2004
2	Liaise with the relevant organisations regarding any new records for this species and optimal verge management regimes.	EN, WT,	2003
	<i>Surveying</i>		
3	Survey all areas of suitable verge habitat for Deptford Pink and record results on the Environmental Database.	-	2007
4	Re-survey known Deptford Pink sites annually and record changes in distribution.		2002-2012

	<i>Action (continued)</i>	Potential partners	Target
	<i>Mitigation and Management</i>		
5	For new schemes, road improvements or works to the road verge, avoid where possible impacts on established populations of Deptford Pink.	-	Ongoing
6	Where impacts of new schemes and road improvements on Deptford Pink habitat are unavoidable, consider the options for compensatory habitat enhancement (or re-introduction).	-	Ongoing
7	Monitor existing sites known to support Deptford Pink and ensure they are managed appropriately to maintain and enhance their value for the species.	EN, Local WT	From 2002
8	Review management of the road verges in areas close to populations of Deptford Pink to encourage the development of patches of bare ground. Once habitat requirements are properly understood, create five new sites for Deptford Pink on the network.	-	2012
	<i>Communications and publicity</i>		
9	Information on Deptford Pink (including the location of known populations) should be included in environmental training for HA staff and Managing Agents.	-	2003

### Links with other plans

This plan should be read in conjunction with the HAPs for grassland and boundary features.

The Deptford Pink does not currently have an individual action plan within any LBAPs.

### Lead partner

The lead partner for Deptford Pink is Plantlife.

