Woodland Features – Associated Species

Full Species Action Plans have been prepared for 5 species/species groups which are generally associated with woodland and/or scrub habitats: dormouse, badger, red squirrel, bats and Juniper. The SAPs for these species are colour-coded with the Woodland Features Action Plan.

The following represent other important species associated with woodland and scrub habitats on the Highways Agency soft estate, but for which a full Species Action Plan has not been produced at this stage.

High brown fritillary

The high brown fritillary butterfly *(Argynnis adippe)* was once widespread and locally abundant across much of England. It is now extinct over 94% of its former range. It may be still be present on coppiced and Bracken-dominated wooded road verges that also support its food plant (violets) in Devon, Cornwall and Herefordshire. It is listed as *Vulnerable* on the GB Red List, is a UKBAP Priority Species and is protected by Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Suitable habitat for the high brown fritillary should be recorded and highlighted in the Environmental Database.

Native Black-Poplar

This is one of the less common endemic tree species in the UK; numbers have declined due to direct loss of individual trees and through land drainage. Populations tend to be isolated, with strongholds located in Shropshire and the Vale of Aylesbury. The male and female catkins occur on separate trees, female trees are uncommon and for this reason, many isolated populations are no longer self-sustaining.

Bluebell

Bluebell woodlands (woodlands which support a carpet of Bluebells in spring) are not found elsewhere in Europe. They tend to be associated with woodlands of long-standing since they do not colonise new woodland readily. They are most likely to be present on road verges adjacent to existing semi-natural woodlands or ancient hedgerows, or on verges that have been wooded in the past.

Deadwood invertebrates

Many rare species of invertebrates (mostly beetles and wasps) rely on dead and decomposing wood for at least part of their life cycle. These species are commonly associated with large mature (veteran) trees that support large quantities of standing dead wood, and with habitats such as wet woodland in which decomposing logs and branches are a common feature. The 'tidying up' of dead wood through over-management can have a detrimental effect on populations of rare invertebrates. Wherever possible, under the constraints of public safety, standing and fallen dead wood should be allowed to remain *in situ* on road verges.

Other species, and groups of species, which are declining in the wider countryside and which could be found associated with woodlands and road verge scrub include fungi, lichens, bats and a wide variety of woodland birds.

This leaflet is to be read in conjunction with the species Action Plans on:

Badger

Bats

Dormouse

Juniper

Red Squirrel