

SUMMARY SHEET 2

Biodiversity

This document provides a summary of key points taken from the biodiversity chapter of the AONB Management Plan (2009-2014). It is intended to provide a quick and easy reference guide for users with a specific interest in this subject. Those intending to quote from the management plan and those who require a more detailed understanding should consult the document in full, available at www.malvernhillsaonb.org.uk.

Special features

Key AONB habitats	UK BAP priority habitat	Key AONB species	UK BAP priority species
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	Yes	Dormouse	Yes
Lowland dry acid grassland	Yes	Bats - Lesser Horseshoe Barbastelle Soprano Pipistrelle Bechsteins	Yes
Lowland calcareous grassland	Yes	Bullfinch	Yes
Lowland meadows	Yes	Skylark	Yes
Traditional orchards	Yes	Song Thrush	Yes
Wood pasture and parkland	Yes	Great Crested Newt	Yes
Veteran trees	No	High Brown Fritillary Butterfly	Yes
Rivers and streams	Yes	Black Poplar	No
Hedgerows and hedgerow trees	Yes	Polecat	Yes
Ponds	Yes	Barn Owl	No
Wet woodland	Yes	Adder	Yes
		Peregrine Falcon	No
		Noble Chafer	Yes



Common spotted orchid in Suckley Woods



Noble Chafer
 © Peoples Trust for Endangered Species

Key issues

Information - Good quality, up-to-date and geographically specific information on species and habitats is lacking in certain areas. Such information is needed to inform decision-making in the land management and development control arenas. **(B05)**

Visitor pressure - The pursuit of recreational activities in some parts of the AONB can damage sensitive species and habitats, for example erosion of lowland acid grassland from walking, cycling and horse riding on the hills, dog roaming, unrestricted parking, litter and fly-tipping. **(B02, B07)**

Continued overleaf

Land management practices (agriculture and forestry) - The special wildlife of the AONB is closely related to its special landscapes and centuries of farming and forestry traditions which are waning in certain areas. The maintenance of wildlife and its habitats is dependent upon good land management practices such as grazing, coppicing, orchard management and hedge laying.

A reduction in grazing activity, especially on the high hills and surrounding commons, has led to an increase in scrub cover and a decline in grassland condition and open bracken cover.

(B01, B02, B03, B04, B07)

Development - Insensitive development can lead to direct loss or have adverse effects on biodiversity, for example barn conversions can disturb bat habitats, and wildlife corridors can become fragmented. **(BP1, B01, B02, DP1)**

Problem species - Some species of plant and animals exist within the AONB at particular sites that are considered to be detrimental to the biodiversity of the AONB. These include trees such as Sycamore, and Ash, other plants such as Japanese Knotweed, Himalayan Balsam, New Zealand Pygmy Weed, Common Ragwort and Giant Hogweed and animals such as deer and grey squirrels. **(B01, B02, B03, B05)**

Climate Change - The potential change in habitat that results from altering weather patterns and temperature ranges is significant for the future of many species. Lack of freezing conditions affects the germination of many native species of tree. Changes in climate may isolate wildlife populations in their local habitats, making the presence of wildlife corridors yet more important. Some species may also be unable to survive if climatic conditions are unfavourable at critical stages in their life cycles. Drier conditions may lead to increasing pressure on water resources, affecting the availability and quality of a vital commodity for all wildlife. **(B03, B06)**

Habitat fragmentation and joined-up management - The wildlife value of the countryside between special wildlife sites needs to be improved in order to buffer key habitats and to increase their resilience and connectivity. **(BP2, B03)**

Guiding principles

BP1 In exercising development control decisions, opportunities should be sought to positively enhance biodiversity; for example, through developer contributions.

BP2 The fragmentation of key biodiversity habitats should be avoided and reversed.

Strategic objectives

B01 Conserve, enhance and expand key habitats and populations of key species in line with local and UK Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) and the England Biodiversity Strategy Delivery Framework.

B02 Restore the condition of degraded habitats in line with local and UK BAPs.

B03 Enhance the wildlife value of the countryside and achieve greater connectivity between key habitats within the AONB and between the AONB and the countryside beyond.

B04 Ensure 98% of all SSSI area is in favourable or recovering condition by 2014.

B05 Undertake survey and research to secure and update information on the state of the AONB's biodiversity resources, leading to the identification of specific, geographically referenced targets for all UK BAP habitats and species by 2014.

B06 Monitor climate change and interpret its effects on the presence and distribution of biodiversity in the AONB.

B07 Promote greater understanding and enjoyment of the biodiversity resources of the AONB and the need for their protection and management.



The rare High Brown Fritillary Butterfly



Bluebells