

Burnet-saxifrage



Scientific Name:
Pimpinella saxifraga

Current factors causing loss or decline

There is little past data on the species to assess declines or changes in populations but today the species cannot be described as frequent, as considered by the earlier authors. The general decline in unimproved pasture adds further weight to the presumption of decline. Agricultural improvement is the most likely cause of loss, although high stock densities may lead to over-grazing damage, however limited grazing, to promote the grassland habitat, is presumably a beneficial activity.

Current action

Burnet-saxifrage receives no specific action at present.

Several of the sites where it occurs are included within City-wide Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), notably the Cathkins Braes.

Current status

Burnet-saxifrage is a member of the Umbellifer family (Apiaceae) and is characterised by its once-pinnately, divided lower leaflets and white-flowered 'umbel' inflorescences.

It is found throughout Britain, but is rare or absent in northwest Scotland and commoner to the south. It is most typically found on freely draining, unimproved pastures or rocky ledges, but usually on less acidic types, tending to indicate more basic or calcareous soils.

Today, in the City, Burnet-saxifrage is known from 3 tetrads, all in the south, occurring as a number of small, scattered individuals or populations; the localities are all associated with unimproved grasslands on the Cathkin Braes, but include golf course margins at nearby Blairbeth.

There is limited specific data on former distribution but earlier Flora writers considered it to be frequent. It was first recorded by Ure (1793) from "pastures near Kittochside". Henedy's Clydesdale Flora (1891) describes it from "mountain pastures" and mentions the Cathkin Hills and Kittoch Glen. Lee (1933) notes the habitats as "hill pastures and rocky ground".

Main Locations of Burnet-saxifrage in Glasgow



Objectives and targets

The first priority is to draw an accurate picture of the species current distribution and viability and then to increase the awareness among landowners and users of the presence of Burnet-saxifrage and vulnerability to agricultural treatments.

Objective 1: Establish current distribution and status of Burnet-saxifrage populations.

Target 1: Monitor existing populations and search potential new sites by 2003

Objective 2: Maintain the current distribution and population sizes.

Target 2: Ensure no further loss or damage to the surviving populations.

Objective 3: Introduce appropriate habitat management to encourage viable populations.

Target 3: Discourage damaging agricultural improvement or other disturbance at all known sites.

Objective 4: Increase the distribution of Burnet-saxifrage at suitable habitats.

Target 4: Investigate feasibility of increasing population sizes and introducing to suitable new sites.

Proposed Action with Lead Authorities

Action	Lead	Delivery	Objective
Policy and Legislation			
Promote Burnet-saxifrage in reviews of agri-environmental schemes.	GCC-LS(CG)	FWAG, GCC-LS	2, 3
Ensure the value and needs of existing pasture sites are noted during woodland planting schemes.	GCC-LS(CG)	FC, GCC-DRS, SNH	2
Ensure protection of known sites in any developments subject to Planning Applications.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-DRS, SNH	2
Site Safeguard and Management			
Encourage landowners, managers and farmers to implement sympathetic management at suitable sites.	GCC-LS(CG)	FWAG, GCC-LS, SNH	2, 3
Species Management and Protection			
Introduce sympathetic species management at existing sites.	GCC-LS(CG)	FWAG, GCC-LS, SNH	2, 3, 4
Establish nursery sites for species propagation.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-LS	4
Advisory			
Ensure information and guidance on conservation management is available.	GCC-LS(CG)	FWAG, GCC-LS(CG), RSPB, SNH	2, 3, 4
Advise relevant landowners and users of the presence of Burnet-saxifrage and its conservation management.	GCC-LS(CG)	FWAG, GCC-LS, SNH	2, 3, 4
Future Research and Monitoring			
Sample selected populations for monitoring and management assessment work.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-LS(CG), SNH	1, 3, 4
Survey suitable grassland areas to identify new populations.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-LS(CG), SNH, SWT	1, 4
Establish suitable sites for potential reintroduction.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-LS(CG), SNH, SWT	4
Conduct literature searches to discover information on former distribution.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-LS(CG), SNH	1, 4
Communication and Publicity			
Promote Burnet-saxifrage as indicator of species rich grassland to landowners and public.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-LS, SNH, SWT	2, 3, 4
Co-ordinate with management for grassland action plans.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-LS(CG)	1, 2, 3, 4
Review the progress of this Action Plan by 2006.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-LS(CG)	1, 2, 3, 4

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Glasgow City Council: Development and Regeneration Services(GCC-DRS), Glasgow City Council: Land Services(Conservation Group) (GCC-LS(CG),

Glasgow City Council: Culture and Leisure Services (GCC-CLS), Glasgow City Council: Education Services (GCC-ES), Glasgow City Council: Land Services Countryside Ranger Service (GCC-LS(CRS),

Scottish Ornithologists' Club (SOC), Greenspace for Communities(GFC), British Waterways (BW), Forestry Commission (FC), Farming Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), The WISE Group (TWISE)

Glasgow Natural History Society (GNHS), Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), Scottish Wildlife Trust (SWT).

Clyde Amphibian and Reptile Group (CARG), Butterfly Conservation (BC), Concern for Swifts (CFS)