



Sheep's-bit



Scientific Name:
Jasione montana L.

Current factors causing loss or decline

The species can no longer be described as frequent, as considered by the earlier authors. Although agricultural improvement may have been a factor at some former sites (and heavy grazing pressure), changes in land use are likely to be more important. The Tollcross area formerly had several sand quarries, where disturbed sandy soils, would be a good habitat for the plant; the infilling and loss to urbanisation of such sites have very likely accounted for the destruction of local populations.

Current action

Both of the remaining populations are included within Local Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (LSINCs), with the presence of the Sheep's-bit being a key feature at each site. Preliminary visits to known sites were made in 2001; seed was collected and seedlings are being grown at the Botanic Gardens for use in future restoration work.

LOCAL SPECIES ACTION PLAN

Current status

Sheep's-bit is a small, biennial member of the Bellflower family (Campanulaceae). It is notable for its relatively large, rounded, pale blue inflorescence made up of many small, individual flowers.

It is found throughout Britain, except northern Scotland, but is much commoner in the west, tending to be coastal in western Scotland. It is more typically found on freely draining, mostly acidic, sandy or gravelly soils or rocky ledges, where periodic disturbance can encourage seed set.

Today, in the City, the Sheep's-bit is known from 2 tetrads, both in the southeast. At Garthamlock it is associated with rocky outcrops of an old quarry, where it is found in some profusion. A single individual is known from North Mount Vernon (Burntbroom), where it occurs on the sandy soil of a disused railway embankment; across the road to the west, a few other individuals have been noted. It was first recorded by Professor Hope (1768) who wrote "twixt Hamilton and Glasgow". Hennydy's Clydesdale Flora (1891) describes it as frequent, noting "dry banks on a light, gravelly soil" with Tollcross sand hills and the banks of the Clyde as named localities. Lee (1933) also notes it as frequent and from "dry sandy soils", naming Tollcross and Cadder, but mentioning that it is most common near the coast.

Main Locations of Sheep's-bit in Glasgow



Objectives and targets

A priority is to increase the awareness among landowners and users of the presence of Sheep's-bit and ensure that appropriate management is carried out to increase threatened, or maintain viable, populations.

- Objective 1:** *Establish and maintain the current distribution of populations.*
 - Target 1:** *Survey known sites and ensure no further loss or damage to the surviving populations.*
- Objective 2:** *Ensure appropriate habitat management to encourage viable populations.*
 - Target 2:** *Monitor populations and introduce sympathetic management at all sites*
- Objective 3:** *Improve the viability of Sheep's-bit populations and encourage spread.*
 - Target 3:** *Increase population sizes where low and introduce to suitable new locations or sites.*

Proposed Action with Lead Authorities

Action	Lead	Delivery	Objective
Policy and Legislation			
Ensure protection of known sites in any developments subject to Planning Applications.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-DRS	1
Site Safeguard and Management			
Encourage landowners, managers and users to implement sympathetic management.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-LS, GfC-KC	1, 2, 3
Species Management and Protection			
Introduce sympathetic species management at existing sites.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-LS, GfC-KC	2, 3
Establish nursery sites for species propagation.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-LS	3
Advisory			
Advise relevant landowners and users on the presence of Sheep's-bit and its conservation management.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-LS	1, 2, 3
Ensure information and guidance on conservation management is available.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-LS	1, 2, 3
Future Research and Monitoring			
Sample populations for monitoring and management assessment work.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-LS(CG)	2, 3
Survey suitable areas to identify new populations.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-LS(CG)	1
Identify suitable locations for restoration.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-LS	3
Communication and Publicity			
Promote Sheep's-bit as an example of former sandhill habitat at Burntbroom.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-LS(CRS)	3
Links with other Action Plans			
Co-ordinate with management for Acid Grassland Action Plan.	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-LS	1, 2, 3
Review Plan in 2007	GCC-LS(CG)	GCC-LS	1, 2, 3

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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 (CIS)