

Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*/Midland thorn *C. laevigata*

Areas and status: *C. monogyna* is widespread across UK on most soils. Midland thorn (*C. laevigata*) confined to midlands on heavier clays.

Woodland type: Upland Broadleaved Woodland, Lowland Broadleaved, high woodland, scrub.

Preferred habitat niches: Broadleaved open woodland; wood pasture, glades; ride edges. Also in hedge banks, Ancient woodland indicator. The hawthorn is a vital component in woodlands and wood pasture and can live for up 200 years. An early pioneer tree that colonises open ground and played a key role in the natural generation of ancient woodland/woodland pasture. Described as the nurse for the oak, the hawthorn offers protection to germinating saplings from browsing animals, including for oak, sweet chestnut and other light demanding trees. The hawthorn also provides valuable nectar to tree dwelling insects at a crucial part of the spring when these (saproxylic) insects emerge from ancient and decaying trees.



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Potential habitat management issues associated with decline:

- Loss of ancient woodland habitat
- Modern forestry practices
- Flailing affecting flowering nectar production
- Removal under scrub management

Potential habitat management solutions:	
Prescription	Comment
Thinning	Retain and allow natural regeneration of hawthorn during thinning operations
Planting	Include in new woodlands, plant singly and in groups to form groves
Species selection	Local provenance. Allow to mature into fully formed trees
Scrub management	Retain a scattered and broad age range of plants when removing undergrowth from around trees
Natural regeneration	Promote hawthorn growth as a nurse to other trees in grazed woodland and wood pasture
Ancient tree management	Ensure hawthorn are near to and widely scattered around oaks and other potential ancient trees for saproxylic insects
Hedge and ride management	Retain frequent standard trees and keep free from annual flailing
Dead wood	Retain dead and dying trees for as long as possible in situ
Connectivity	Valuable stepping stone as a single tree and a key hedgerow plant to connect landscape