

## Dingy Skipper (*Erynnis tages*)

**Areas and status:** Widespread but patchily distributed throughout England and Wales. Scarce in southern and north-eastern Scotland. Significant declines in distribution (-61%) 1976-2014.

**Woodland type:** Upland Broadleaved Woodland, Lowland Broadleaved Woodland, PAWS, Scrub.

**Preferred habitat niches:** Glades, rides, edges, coppice, clear-fell, disturbed ground and scrub mosaic. Breeds mainly on Common Bird's-foot-trefoil; favours sparsely vegetated habitats, particularly herb-rich grasslands with patches of bare ground.

### Potential habitat management issues associated with decline:

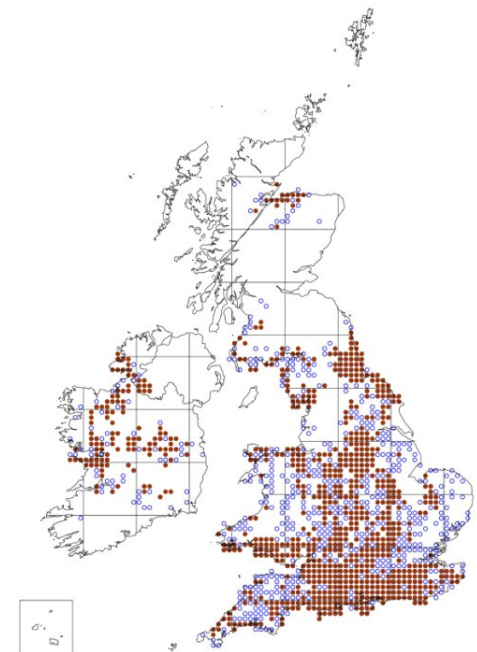
- Overshading and scrubbing up of glades, rides and other open areas
- Abandonment of coppicing and felling leading to loss of canopy gaps
- Re-stocking of woodland clearings and tree planting of open areas adjacent to woodlands
- Intensive management of rides and clearings, such as repeated mowing (e.g. more than once a year) leading to grassy swards and loss of larval food plants
- Changes in agricultural management of unimproved grasslands close to woodlands (e.g. overgrazing, undergrazing and conversion to improved grassland/arable)
- Planting, scrubbing up and redevelopment of brownfield habitat (e.g. railway lines, waste ground and quarries) within and close to woodlands
- Habitat fragmentation and loss of connectivity leading to isolation of surviving populations

### Potential habitat management solutions:

Prescription	Comment
Rides, Glades	Cut rides in 3 zones: 1 regularly for access, 2 on a 4-7 yr rotation & 3 on a 8-20 yr rotation. Scarify rides/glades to create shorter vegetation with patches of bare ground; do not scarify whole ride/glade at once. Widen and enlarge if necessary; widths should be >1.5 times the height of nearby trees; scallop ride edges to create sheltered conditions. Creating new east-west rides and box junctions within woods can be valuable.
Rotational coppice	Cut coupes (20x20m to 30x30m) on short rotations (<12yrs). Rotations >12 yrs if coppice re-growth slow or area of coppice woodland is large. Coppice adjacent coupes or locate coupes beside wide rides and glades.
Small group clear-fell	Clear-fell (20x20m to 40x40m) areas on 25-40yrs cycles. Fell adjacent coupes or beside wide rides and glades.
PAWS	In plantations, retain scrub and open grassland mosaic; enlarge rides and glades as necessary. Restoration offers opportunities if non-native trees are cleared to provide extensive areas for natural regeneration.
Scrub	Retain patches of scattered, young scrub. Cut on rotation when cover exceeds 20% by area
Grazing	Where livestock/deer are having a negative impact on coppice re-growth, erect stock-proof/deer-proof enclosures. Deer control will also be required if they are causing significant problems.
Connectivity	Manage woodlands on a landscape-scale by widening rides which connect clearings within woods and link up with rides/clearings in adjacent or nearby woods. Create/maintain areas of suitable non-woodland habitat between woods a few km apart, e.g. unimproved grasslands, scrub mosaic, brownfield sites etc



©Sam Ellis



○ Pre 2005  
● 2005 – 2014

Source: Butterfly Conservation