

Argent & Sable (*Rheumaptera hastata*)

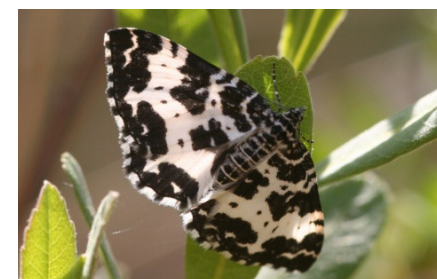
Areas and status: Thinly scattered in S & C England; extremely local in Wales. More widely distributed in W Scotland with a scattered distribution in Ireland.

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

Preferred habitat niches: Glades, rides, edges, scrub mosaic, clear fell, coppice, wet woodland, disturbed ground and open areas. Breeds on young leaves of Downy Birch and Silver Birch; occasionally feeds on willow; favours seedlings and young trees in sunny conditions. Breeds on Bog Myrtle in less wooded habitat.

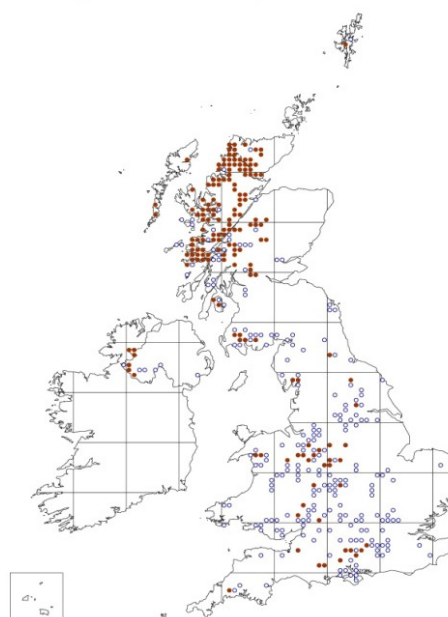
Potential habitat management issues associated with decline:

- Lack of woodland management leading to over shading and encroachment by trees and shrubs
- Conversion of suitable habitats to conifer plantations
- Lack of continuity of preferred habitats, e.g. over management resulting in loss of all young Birches
- Loss of suitable habitats close to woodlands (wet grassland, moorland and scrub) due to agricultural intensification and drainage



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Potential habitat management solutions:	
Prescription	Comment
Rides, Glades	Cut in 2 or 3 zones but retain some young Birches. Widen rides and enlarge glades if necessary; widths should be >1.5 times the height of nearby trees. Creating new east-west rides and box junctions within woods can be valuable especially where they link existing breeding areas. Retain seedling Birch and Willow and where species is known to breed on bog myrtle ensure a range of age classes is present in open situations.
Rotational coppice, Small group felling, thinning, selective felling	Coppice 30x30m to 50x50m coupes on 5-10yr cycles. Fell and thin to achieve 25-35% canopy gaps to ensure a continuous supply of young Birches.
PAWS	Thin immature conifers. In more established plantations, fell conifers growing close to rides, glades and disturbed ground.
Scrub	Retain scrub patches in tall grassland, within and close to woodlands. Cut scrub patches (e.g. 5x5m - 20x20m) on 5-10yr rotation when cover exceeds 20% by area. Cut areas of tall grassland annually to prevent scrub encroachment, but retain areas of young Birches. Carry out burning on the same scale on a 10yr rotation but avoid patches of Bog Myrtle.
Grazing	Maintain more open habitat by light cattle/pony grazing during autumn and winter.
Woodland creation (native species and/or natural regeneration)	Create new woodland and/or scrub mosaic on areas of low ecological value lying within and/or adjacent to woodland. Plant diverse mix of locally native trees and shrubs. Plan works to ensure presence of an extensive network of rides, glades and edges; plant Birches and Willows (and if conditions are suitable - Bog Myrtle) alongside these rides, glades and edges. Employ rotational cutting on a 2-4yr cycle to retain these open areas and to ensure a good range of age classes of young Birches. Alternatively, fence off areas to allow natural succession; favour Birches during subsequent thinning, then maintain by rotational cutting.



- Pre 2000
- 2000 – 2014

Source: Butterfly Conservation