

Goat willow (pussy willow, great willow)
(Salix caprea)

Areas and status: Very widespread except on drier soils.

Woodland type: Lowland broadleaved woodland, scrub, wet woodland

Preferred habitat niches: Woods, hedgerows and damper areas in grassland, often on heavy soils. Needs relatively open conditions but also shade from hot sun. Often on north-facing banks. Found in glades, along rides and woodland edges, in scrub mosaics and pioneer plant in clear fell.

Potential habitat management issues associated with decline:

Although not under threat this large shrub is an important component of the woodland structure. Mature specimens in shade under woodland canopy are particularly valuable for insects including the **purple emperor butterfly**.



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Potential habitat management solutions:	
Prescription	Comment
Retention of old specimens away for ride edges	Fast growing shrub can become a nuisance if on the edge of operational rides.
Large clumps retained within the woodland block	Groups of willow as well as well as single specimens to be retained within the woodland.
Coppice/rotational cutting	Coppice where necessary to keep shrubs small or to rejuvenate. Cut on short to medium rotation (5 to12 years) along rides and glades to broaden the age range of trees.
Create/maintain glades	Adjacent to existing populations
Maintain connectivity	Seek landscape-scale connections between woods along rides and hedgebanks, streams.



■ Distribution 1987-2016 (BSBI)

