

## Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*)

**Areas and status:** Frequent to abundant throughout British Isles (nearly half of world population). It is an offence to trade in this species under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981).

**Woodland type:** Upland Broadleaved Woodland, Lowland Broadleaved High Woodland, Scrub

**Preferred habitat niches:** Broadleaved woodland; closed canopy; clear fell and coppice; glades; ride edges. Also in hedgebanks, bracken communities and fields in wetter western regions. Ancient woodland indicator in east of England

### Potential habitat management issues associated with decline:

- Loss of woodland habitat
- Trampling
- Long-term grazing
- Illegal collection of bulbs (large-scale commercial)
- Hybridisation with Spanish Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides hispanica*) and hybrids (range of *H. hispanica* x *H. non-scripta* increasing)
- Climate change – warmer springs may encourage competitors to grow more vigorously

Potential habitat management solutions:	
Prescription	Comment
Thinning	Aim to provide/maintain plenty of light in early spring. If bramble is present retain light canopy to avoid competition.
Coppice	Coppice on medium or long rotation (c. 7 - 15 years)
Control grazing (may need fencing)	Keep stock levels very low or absent in dense bluebell communities
Maintain undisturbed soil	Keep new rides and other works away from bluebell communities
Maintain moisture in winter and spring, cool shade in summer	Maintain light canopy or long or short coppice rotations
Prevent waterlogging of soil	Avoid creating wet features or increasing wetness in areas with bluebell
Manage public access	Provide attractive access paths to see spring displays and prevent widescale trampling
Remove Spanish Bluebells or Bluebell hybrids	Dig up bulbs and allow to dry out in sun
Retain fallen logs to retain depth of leaf litter on slopes	Heavier and more energetic rain is increasing run off in woodlands and adjacent farmlands



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