

Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*)

Areas and status: Throughout the British Isles, often common but locally rare or absent.

Woodland type: Lowland Broadleaved Woodland, Scrub

Preferred habitat niches: Woods, hedgebanks and damper areas in grasslands, often on heavy soils. Needs relatively open conditions but also shade from hot sun. Often on north-facing banks. Associated with shade conditions in Eastern England e.g. woodland but in more open habitats e.g. railway banks and motorway verges, in Western and SW England. Found in glades, along rides and woodland edges, scrub mosaic, clear fell and coppice.

Potential habitat management issues associated with decline:

- Lack of woodland management leading to over shading
- Hedgerow removal and agricultural improvement of primrose-rich grassland
- Over collection of flowers and plants (now illegal)
- Climate change - hot, dry summers in eastern England where have caused a decline.
- Air pollution – primrose is believed to be sensitive to air quality (declines in industrial S Wales)

Potential habitat management solutions:	
<i>Prescription</i>	<i>Comment</i>
Thinning	Aim to let in as much light as possible (25 – 35% canopy gap or more, depending on site aspect and soil)
Small group felling	Open up woodland (> 0.25 ha)
Coppice	Short to medium rotation (5 to 12 years) in medium size coupe (c 30 x 30m?)
Clearfell	Use to create open areas
Create/maintain glades	Create/maintain glades adjacent to existing populations
Create/maintain rides	Create/maintain rides (2 or 3 zone)
Public access	Create attractive linking paths so that early spring displays can be appreciated but not damaged
Maintain connectivity	Seek landscape-scale connections between woods and hedgebanks with primroses



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■ Distribution 1987-2016 (BSBI)