

Spreading Bellflower (*Campanula patula*)

Areas and status: Very local in Southern Britain with concentration along the Welsh borders and in W Midlands. Recorded as an alien elsewhere. Considerable range contraction since before 1960s.

Woodland type: Lowland Broadleaved Woodland

Preferred habitat niches: Open woods, wood borders, hedgebanks and rocky outcrops, associated with areas of ancient woodland. Coppice. Dry, well drained, sunny sites on fairly infertile sandy or gravelly soils. Glades, rides, edges and disturbed, open areas (tracksides and rides within woods, banks along woodland edges).

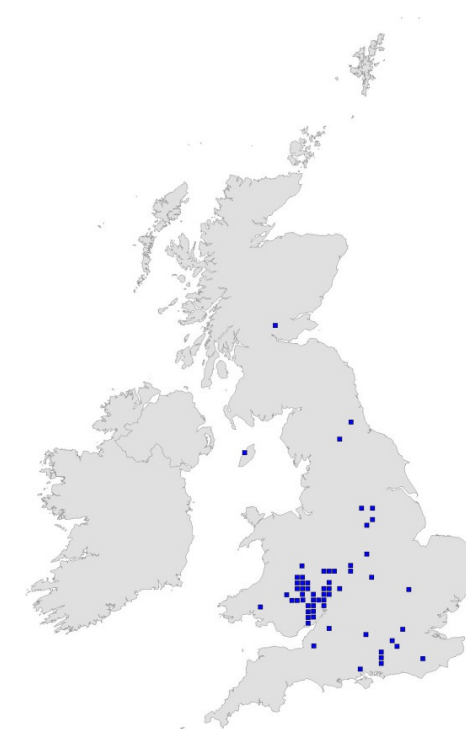
Potential habitat management issues associated with decline:

- Increased use of herbicides around woodland edges
- Woodland management - cessation of coppicing and other disturbance
- Overshading of sites
- Most populations small
- Doesn't compete well with taller competitors although second year plants more robust
- A biennial. Seed is long lived but needs sunny, disturbed sites for germination. The plant can reappear after long absences and can colonise new sites, spreading along corridors where there is suitable habitat

Potential habitat management solutions:	
Prescription	Comment
Thinning	Aim to increase light, creating more open conditions whilst suppressing bramble growth (25-35% canopy gap)
Small group felling	Use to open up canopy around and adjacent to existing populations and encourage sun along trackways
Coppice	Coppice on short to medium rotation (<12 years) joining to rides and glades if possible.
Disturb soil	By digging manually or stripping small areas in sunny locations e.g. banks, ride edges and glades (though taking care not to remove topsoil)
Use horses for light extraction work	To drag logs and disturb soil along ride and track edges
Create/maintain rides/maintain connectivity	Maintain rides and create new ones especially linking open habitats to create corridors for seed dispersal. Link glades and new coppice areas and link woods to hedgebanks and woodland edges where plant exists
Create/maintain glades	Create open areas around and adjacent to existing plants
Grazing	Light grazing is beneficial, removing competition from taller plants. Tolerant of heavy grazing but not overgrazing.
Manage woodland edge	Maintain open sunny woodland edge and manually disturb soil on banks in vicinity of existing plants
Traditional ditch management	To return accumulated soil to adjacent banks and track edges



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