

Parham to Fittleworth Biodiversity Opportunity Area

Joint Character Area Wealden Greensand

Geology Parham to Fittleworth Biodiversity Opportunity Area lies on a mosaic of sandstone and mudstone.



The Biodiversity Opportunity Areas (BOAs) are the regional priority areas of opportunity for restoration and creation of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats. They are a spatial representation of BAP targets and are areas of opportunity, not constraint. The BOAs are the property of the South East England Biodiversity Forum www.sebiodiversity.org.uk. Contains Ordnance Survey data Crown copyright and database right 2010

Parham to Fittleworth has been recognised as a Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) as it represents a priority area for the delivery of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) targets. This is one of 75 such areas across Sussex. The BOA covers approximately 1315 hectares.

This area sits directly at the confluence of the Arun and western Rother Rivers and encompasses floodplain and wetland habitats of high importance including reedbed, fen and grazing marsh. Water abstraction from the aquifer at Hardham is currently under investigation but it is thought to have an impact on the wider wetland area. The area is a known migration route of Otter between Hampshire and the Arun catchment and the area has potential to be of importance to Water Vole. It extends south-east off the floodplain to include Parham Park, a medieval pasture-parkland, which is rich in the biodiversity associated with such a habitat. It also includes Hurston Warren, a SSSI heathland and the only floating bog in Sussex.

BAP Habitat

Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh

Lowland fens

Lowland heathland

Reedbeds

Wood-pasture and parkland

Woodland

BAP Species 85 species recorded, with the following in the last ten years:

Species	Habitat Requirements
Knot Grass <i>Acronicta rumicis</i>	Meadows, gardens and hedgerows, larvae feed on a range of herbs
Slow-worm <i>Anguis fragilis</i>	Open habitats, gardens, heathland, cliff, mixed deciduous woodland, structural variation, hedgerows
Little Whirlpool Ramshorn Snail <i>Anisus vorticulus</i>	Diverse, well-vegetated ditches on grazing marshes, it requires unpolluted, calcareous water, stable water levels
Tree Pipit <i>Anthus trivialis</i>	Newly planted conifers or open heath, mixed deciduous woodland
Water Vole <i>Arvicola terrestris</i>	Rivers, ponds, canals and drainage ditches, reedbeds, fens, grazing marsh, banks, slow-flowing waters
Scaup <i>Aythya marila</i>	Lakes, bogs and rivers, estuaries
a lichen <i>Bacidia incompta</i>	Bark of old trees, often in sap or rain tracks, Elm, Ash and Beech, sometimes on rocks
Bittern <i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	Wet reedbed and marshland
Minor Shoulder-Knot <i>Brachylomia viminalis</i>	Damp woodland, hedgerows, heathland and fens, Willow
Common Toad <i>Bufo bufo</i>	Scrub, rough grassland, fens, reedbed and wet woodland, dense ground vegetation or litter, ponds, large water bodies, hedgerows
Nightjar <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>	Heathland, moorland, open woodland, recently felled conifer plantations, mosaic of bare ground, low vegetation, scrub and trees
Lesser Redpoll <i>Carduelis cabaret</i>	Birch and Alder woods, most common in the north in the summer
Hawfinch <i>Coccothraustes coccothraustes</i>	Woodland, good supplies of fruit, seeds and keys, drinking pools
Cuckoo <i>Cuculus canorus</i>	Woodland, scrub, marshes, heathland, reedbed
Rusty Fork-moss <i>Dicranum spurium</i>	Mature heathland around older heathers
Yellowhammer <i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Open countryside, scrubby areas, woodland edges, hedgerows, insect-rich grassland, seed-rich areas
Reed Bunting <i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	Wetlands including reedbeds, tall rushes and wet grassland with good vegetation cover, gardens, farmland, hedgerows, ditches
September Thorn <i>Ennomos erosaria</i>	Woodland, hedgerows, parkland, gardens, Oak, Lime and Birch
Glandular Eyebright <i>Euphrasia anglica</i>	Short grazed acid grasslands, and heathlands including wet heathland
Field Cricket <i>Gryllus campestris</i>	Sheltered, sunny sites with short turf and dry, hot soil
Rustic <i>Hoplodrina blanda</i>	Gardens, grassland and heathland, docks, plantains, hedgerows
Rosy Rustic <i>Hydraecia micacea</i>	Marshy areas, waste ground, hedgerows
Wryneck <i>Jynx torquilla</i>	Mainly on the ground in open woodland, farmland, occasionally

	seen in gardens
Cut-grass <i>Leersia oryzoides</i>	Nutrient-rich, bare mud around trampled margins of old lakes and ponds, ditches, canal banks, riversides, wet meadows, not shaded
White Admiral <i>Limenitis camilla</i>	Woodlands, sunny glades, Bramble, Honeysuckle, partially-shaded locations
Grasshopper Warbler <i>Locustella naevia</i>	Scrub, thick grassland, reedbeds, forestry and gravel pits
Wood Lark <i>Lullula arborea</i>	Heathland, woodland, mosaic of scattered trees, bare ground, short vegetation and taller vegetation, open seed-rich areas
Brindled Beauty <i>Lycia hirtaria</i>	Woodland, hedgerows, parkland, gardens
Dot Moth <i>Melanchra persicariae</i>	Gardens, verges, waste ground, hedgerows
Broom Moth <i>Melanchra pisi</i>	Open woodland, shrub, heathland, Broom, Bracken
Rosy Minor <i>Mesoligia literosa</i>	Grasslands particularly in coastal areas, larvae feed on a range of grasses
Harvest Mouse <i>Micromys minutus</i>	Arable margins, hedgerows, meadows, scrub, reedbeds, tall grass.
Spotted Flycatcher <i>Muscicapa striata</i>	Open woodland and woodland edges, parks and gardens
Polecat <i>Mustela putorius</i>	Wooded areas, fields and farm buildings, cover, shelter and abundant rodents required
Shoulder-striped Wainscot <i>Mythimna comma</i>	Gardens, damp habitats, marshes and fens, Cock's-foot.
Curlew <i>Numenius arquata</i>	Reedbeds, estuaries, damp grassland, heathland, mosaic of tall vegetation for nesting with short vegetation and open habitats for feeding
Tubular Water-dropwort <i>Oenanthe fistulosa</i>	Floodplain meadows, fens, shallow water in ditches, streams, ponds and canals, open areas
<i>Opegrapha prosodea</i>	Marshy areas and other damp habitats, larvae feed on bedstraws
House Sparrow <i>Passer domesticus</i>	Urban areas, farmland, hedgerows
Tree Sparrow <i>Passer montanus</i>	Farmland, woodland edges, hedgerows with mature trees, wetland edges
Grey Partridge <i>Perdix perdix</i>	Farmland, rush pastures, moors, mosaics of bare ground and cover, hedgerows, uncultivated margins
Wood Warbler <i>Phylloscopus sibilatrix</i>	Mixed deciduous woodland, even age-canopy, little understorey, patchy ground cover
White-letter Hairstreak <i>Satyrrium w-album</i>	A butterfly found most commonly in association with Elm, both mature trees and young suckers in hedgerows. Larvae feed on Elm particularly the flowers. Colonisation of new sites can be slow.
Annual Knawel <i>Scleranthus annuus</i>	Pond edges, river shingle, arable margins, heathland, acid grassland on bare ground, dry, well-drained, nutrient-poor soil
Greater Water-parsnip <i>Sium latifolium</i>	Permanently wet, species-rich, tall-herb fen, margins of lakes and large rivers, ditches, reedswamp, not tolerant of shade
White Ermine <i>Spilosoma lubricipeda</i>	Gardens and hedgerows
Buff Ermine <i>Spilosoma luteum</i>	Woodland, parks and gardens
Marsh Stitchwort <i>Stellaria palustris</i>	Pools with seasonal variation, grassland with open sward, damp/wet soil, herb rich, unimproved, fens, reedbed
Turtle Dove <i>Streptopelia</i>	Woodland edges, hedgerows and open land with scattered bushes

<i>turtur</i>	
Blood-Vein <i>Timandra comae</i>	Gardens, fields and waste ground
Great Crested Newt <i>Triturus cristatus</i>	Breeding sites are mainly medium-sized ponds, although ditches and other waterbodies may be used, ponds with ample aquatic vegetation, do not require very high water quality, but usually a neutral pH. Hedgerows, mixed deciduous woodland
Ring Ouzel <i>Turdus torquatus</i>	Short grassy areas
Cinnabar <i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>	Meadows, wasteland, road verges and downland
Lapwing <i>Vanellus vanellus</i>	Farmland, grazing marsh, wet meadows, seeds and insects
Adder <i>Vipera berus</i>	Open heathland, woodland and moors, fens, cliff
Oak Hook-tip <i>Watsonalla binaria</i>	Oak woodland and parkland, larvae feed on oak
Sterile Beardless-moss <i>Weissia sterilis</i>	Lowland calcareous grassland and wheat stubbles in short swards or bare areas

Invasive Non-native Species 12 species recorded, with the following in the last ten years:

Water Fern *Azolla filiculoides*
 Heath Star Moss *Campylopus introflexus*
 New Zealand Pigmyweed *Crassula helmsii*
 Canadian Waterweed *Elodea canadensis*
 Nuttall's Waterweed *Elodea nuttallii*
 Spanish Bluebell *Hyacinthoides hispanica*
 Hybrid Bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta x hispanica = H. x massartiana*
 Himalayan Balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*
 Winter Heliotrope *Petasites fragrans*
 Cherry Laurel *Prunus laurocerasus*
 Rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*

Designated Sites

Arun Valley Ramsar site and SPA series of wet meadows, alluvial grazing marsh and former raised peat bog that is well used by wintering and breeding birds. Several rare species are present including Pea Mussel and Greater Water Parsnip.

Hurston Warren SSSI is an area of heathland and contains a range of habitats including woodland, wet and dry heath, open water and bog. The quaking bog which has developed over an old lake is regarded as one of the best examples of its type in the south east.

Parham Park SSSI is a medieval deer park on Folkestone Sands that has one of the richest epiphytic lichen floras in the region. The site contains woodland, a relict lowland raised bog, Alder carr and a number of ponds and ditches. Two rare beetles can be found as well as one of the largest heronries in Sussex.

Pulborough Brooks SSSI, encompassed in Arun Valley, has been managed for centuries as flood meadows.

Wiggonholt Common SSSI contains an area of heathland, secondary woodland and Bracken. There are a number of uncommon plants including Bird's-foot and Subterranean Clover

Opportunities Identified

- Wetland habitat management, restoration and creation
- Heathland management, restoration and creation
- Policy integration
- Ecological networks

Sussex Biodiversity Partnership

c/o Sussex Wildlife Trust, Woods Mill, Henfield, West Sussex, BN5 9SD.

01273 497551

www.biodiversitysussex.org