

Bog-mosses



Scientific Name:
Sphagnum species

Current factors causing loss or decline

There is little information to assess population changes, however populations will have declined with the loss of wetlands habitats.

- Wetland habitat loss
- Drainage of wetlands
- Vegetation degradation by past land use (e.g. grazing and burning of bogs or heaths)
- Nutrient enrichment or pollution at bog and fen sites
- Bog woodlands may also have suffered from drainage or felling

Current action

Bog-moss is recognised under Annex Vb (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora): “plant species of community interest whose taking in the wild and exploitation may be subject to management measures” (although this has not been translated into UK law).

There are no specific measures for protection in the local area, although most of the populations of interest are found within existing SSSIs or City-wide SINC.

This action plan has very strong links with local habitat plans, notably Lowland Raised Bogs but also Fens and Wet Woodlands (Carr).

Current status

Bog-mosses (*Sphagnum* spp.) comprise a distinct group of bryophytes (mosses and liverworts) characteristic of cool temperate or sub-arctic climates. They are typically associated with water-logged or flushed, usually organic, peaty soils, such as occur in fens, mires, bogs and wet woodlands. Unlike most other mosses they can dominate extensive areas of vegetation, forming characteristic lawns or hummocks in a range of mires.

Bog-mosses are very sensitive to ground water conditions, the different species being good indicators of nutrient or pH status and they are also sensitive to pollution. A number of species are important in the formation of peat bogs and their abundance can be a useful indication of the condition of the crucial surface vegetation.

Name	Habitat	Frequency
<i>S. palustre</i>	Bogs, Fens and Wet Woods	Frequent
<i>S. papillosum</i>	Raised Bogs	Local
<i>S. magellanicum</i>	Raised Bogs	Local, rare
<i>S. squarrosum</i>	Fens and Wet Woods	Occasional
<i>S. compactum</i>	Wet heaths	Rare
<i>S. fimbriatum</i>	Bogs, Fens and Wet Woods	Frequent
<i>S. capillifolium</i>	Bogs and Wet Heaths	Occasional
<i>S. subnitens</i>	Bogs, Fens and Wet Heaths	Occasional
<i>S. molle</i>	Raised Bogs	Rare
<i>S. contortum</i>	Base rich Fens	Very rare
<i>S. auriculatum</i>	Flushed Bogs and Fens	Rare
<i>S. cuspidatum</i>	Bog pools	Rare
<i>S. tenellum</i>	Raised Bogs	Rare
<i>S. recurvum</i>	Bogs, Fens and Wet Woods	Common
<i>S. riparium</i>	Fens	Possil Marsh

Main Locations of Bog-moss in Glasgow



Over 200 species of bog-moss are known world wide, with about 40 occurring in Europe and most of these found in the UK. Scotland, particularly the north and west, is especially important for supporting a rich diversity and abundance of bog-mosses. In the Glasgow area there are at least 15 species, with several others found nearby, which may also be present in the City. Two of the species are of national or regional interest: *Sphagnum riparium* (found in the fen at Possil Marsh) is a Nationally Scarce Species (known from 22 localities in the UK) and *S. molle* (recorded from Commonhead Moss) has only a handful of records from central Scotland.

Objectives and targets

Key priorities are to recognise the variety and richness of local bog-mosses and to ensure that populations and species of local interest are identified and conserved.

Object 1: Establish current distribution and status of populations of key species and other species of interest.

Target 1: Survey known populations of interest and search for new populations at candidate sites.

Object 2: Maintain the current diversity and distribution of bog-mosses within the City.

Target 2: Try to ensure no further loss or damage to key populations.

Object 3: Promote the value and interest of bog-mosses as indicators of habitat quality.

Target 3: Provide information and encourage appreciation of bog-mosses to land managers through site assessments and management plans.

Proposed Action with Lead Authorities

Action	Lead	Delivery	Objective
Policy and Legislation			
Ensure protection of known key species and sites in any developments subject to Planning Applications.	GCC-LS	GCC-DRS, SNH, SEPA	2
Ensure Policy Planning Guidelines include adequate protection policies for water levels and quality.	GCC-LS	GCC-DRS, SNH, SEPA	2
Site Safeguard and Management			
Encourage owners, managers and users to implement sympathetic habitat management at suitable sites.	GCC-LS	GCC-LS, SNH, SEPA, SWT, FWAG	2, 3
Oppose development applications that will cause damage to the key bog-moss species (e.g. <i>S. riparium</i> , <i>S. molle</i> and <i>S. magellanicum</i>).	GCC-LS	GCC-DRS, SNH, SEPA	2
Species Management and Protection			
Encourage sympathetic species management at key sites of rare species or other populations of interest.	GCC-LS	GCC-LS, SNH, SWT, FWAG	2
Advisory			
Ensure information and guidance on conservation management of bog-mosses and associate habitats are available.	GCC-LS	GCC-LS, SNH, SWT	3
Future Research an Monitoring			
Survey to establish the distribution of key species (<i>S. riparium</i> , <i>S. molle</i> and <i>S. magellanicum</i>) and highlight populations of interest for other species.	GCC-LS	GCC-LS	1
Communications and Publicity			
Promote bog-mosses as important indicators of mire and wetland ecosystems.	GCC-LS	GCC-LS, SNH, SWT	3
Links with other Plans			
Co-ordinate with management for Raised Bogs, Fens and Wet Woodlands.	GCC-LS	ALL	1, 2, 3
Review the plan in 2010.	GCC-LS	ALL	1, 2, 3

Biodiversity Officers, Land Services, Glasgow City Council, 37 High Street, GLASGOW G1 1LX **Tel:** 0141-287 5665/7026 **Fax:** 0141-287-3519

Glasgow City Council: Development and Regeneration Services(**GCC-DRS**), Glasgow City Council: Land Services(Conservation Group) (**GCC-LS(CG)**,

Glasgow City Council: Culture and Leisure Services (**GCC-CLS**), Glasgow City Council: Education Services (**GCC-ES**), Glasgow City Council: Land Services Countryside Ranger Service (**GCC-LS(CRS)**,

Scottish Ornithologists' Club (**SOC**), Greenspace for Communities(**GJC**), British Waterways(**BW**), Forestry Commission (**FC**), Farming Wildlife Advisory Group (**FWAG**), The WISE Group (**TWISE**),

Glasgow Natural History Society (**GNHS**), Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (**RSPB**), Scottish Environment Protection Agency (**SEPA**), Scottish Natural Heritage (**SNH**), Scottish Wildlife Trust (**SWT**),

Clyde Amphibian and Reptile Group (**CARG**), Butterfly Conservation (**BC**).