

## **Habitat Survey 2014 Report**

The Yorkshire Dales National Park has been divided into ten distinct survey areas with the intent of surveying one area each year between 2010 and 2019. The aim of the survey is to assess the condition of BAP habitats across the entirety of the National Park. Up to date knowledge of habitat condition is vital in order for the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) to deliver local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) targets, advise on agri-environment schemes and for development control functions.

2014 was the fifth year of the survey programme and targeted condition assessment of BAP habitats in the Cumbrian parishes of the Yorkshire Dales National Park comprising Dent, Garsdale and Sedbergh. The assessment was commissioned by the National Park Authority and completed by the consultants Haycock and Jay Associates Limited. The condition assessment targeted 799 hectares of habitat (subject to landowner consent). The chosen sites were non-designated and were areas of BAP habitat identified from previous surveys, removing any areas that have been recently surveyed (post 2009) by the YDNPA. Also targeted for assessment was 3286 hectares of land (subject to landowner consent) for which previously no data was held.

Of the 95 landowners that were contacted 41 (43%) allowed access on to the land to survey. The assessment commenced in June 2014 and was completed in December 2014. In total over 1500 of land was surveyed including the condition assessment of 928 ha of BAP habitat (including mosaics with non-BAP habitat)(see Figure 1). Habitat patches ranged in size from small areas (<0.1ha) to much larger management areas (>49ha).

The condition assessment methodology [Appendix 1](#) was based upon that developed for the Environmental Stewardship scheme. The consultants were provided with a map of the area of habitat. The basic format of the survey required walking a 'W' transect and stopping 10-20 times to record a series of attributes.

**Figure 1: Habitats recorded and area (hectares)**

<b>Habitat code</b>	<b>Habitat name</b>	<b>Area (hectares)</b>
G01	Improved grassland	3.1
G02	Semi-improved grassland	2.0
G06	Lowland meadows & pastures	9.5
G07	Purple moor-grass and rush pastures	5.8
G08	Upland calcareous grassland	8.6
G09	Upland hay meadows	6.8

M01	Grass moorland and rough grazing	191.2
M02	Fragmented heath	5.8
M04	Upland heathland	307.2
M06	Blanket bog	256.3
M07	Inland rock outcrops, cliffs & scree	134.2
M08	Upland flushes, fens & swamps	182.3
T06	Mixed woodland	10.6
T08	Semi-natural woodland	6.3
T11	Upland mixed ashwoods	1.0
T13	Wet woodland	9.7
V04	Scrub	0.5
W04	Lowland fen	0.1
W07	Ponds	0.6
F02	Hedgerows	16 lengths (Area N/A)
N/A	Non priority habitat	358.6

## Results

[Appendix 2](#) shows current and historical BAP habitats and condition assessment data for the survey area.

## Discussion

The survey results have substantially updated the level of knowledge of the extent and condition of habitats within the Cumbrian parishes of the National Park. This will provide a strong platform for the future monitoring and planning of biodiversity conservation work within this area of the National Park. The results will be used in-house and will also be made available to the local data centre.

A comparison of these results with previous assessments has been difficult because previous surveys have not always assessed the habitat condition (see Appendix 2). In addition, areas that have been previously assessed have frequently used a different methodology.

The surveyors incurred several problems:

- In some instances the area mapped and the habitat listed was inaccurate and had changed substantially since the previous survey. In this instance the surveyor condition assessed the habitat as appropriate.
- Mosaics of habitats are frequent. In these cases where possible each habitat was assessed independently and an estimation of percent cover of each component was made.