

Midland Metro

G2.3 Individual Species

Effects on individual species are primarily assessed by combining the following considerations.

- The extent of likely changes in population sizes.
- The rarity of species.
- The background of environmental impact on species from sources other than those under consideration in this assessment, including recent historical changes in population sizes, and the extent to which they are currently threatened.

High importance is attached to species that are the subject of statutory protection or non-statutory designation for rarity or vulnerability. Protection categories and designations relevant to this assessment include the following.

- Species protected under the *Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc) Regulations 1994* (SI No 2716) (or other instruments giving effect to the *EC Habitats and Species Directive (92/43/EEC)*).
- Species protected under the *Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981* and amendments.
- Species included by the World Conservation Union (IUCN) ([1]) on the Red Data List for Great Britain.
- Species included in British Red Data Books and subsequent reviews (Wigginton (1999) and RSPB et al (2002)).
- Species native to Great Britain and considered by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre to be threatened at world level and for birds also at a European level (Tucker & Heath, 1994).
- Species considered by Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) to be endemic to Great Britain.
- Nationally Rare plant species defined by JNCC as those occurring in one to fifteen ten kilometre grid squares in a Nature Conservancy Council (NCC) region, and having no higher category of designation (Nature Conservancy Council, 1989).
- Species listed as Nationally Scarce by JNCC ('pink data species')⁽³⁾. For birds Fuller, (1980) suggests nationally rare species are those with a British breeding population of between 1 and 1000 pairs. Batten et al (1990) define a rare breeding bird species as less than 300 pairs. For other animals, national populations are detailed in various publications for example *Atlas of Mammals in Britain* (Arnold, 1993), *Checklist of Protected British Species* (Betts, 1998) and also national groups may provide information on population sizes eg The Mammal Society, Wildlife Trust etc.

Importance may also be attached to regionally and locally rare species, especially those in the following categories:

- County Rarities defined by JNCC as plant species occurring in three or fewer localities (not exceeding 1-km square) in a county or equivalent administrative unit.
- For birds, regional scarcity can be assessed using publications such as *The New Atlas of Breeding Birds in Britain and Ireland: 1988-1991* (Gibbons et al, 1993).
- At a regional level specific studies provide information for other animals for example, *Otter Survey of England 1991-1994* (Strachan & Jefferies, 1996).
- At the county level, information is typically available from statutory agencies and local wildlife trusts and other conservation organisations (eg local bird clubs).

Increased importance may attach to local genetic varieties or unusually restricted populations of nationally common species. Greatly reduced significance attaches to alien species (including UK natives that are alien to the district), introduced species (eg garden escapes) and casual ruderals (as distinct from members of ruderal communities indigenous to the district).

Populations of individual species may be deemed important where they exceed certain threshold sizes (usually some percentage of the total world or European population). For example threshold levels for international and national importance for wintering waterfowl bird populations are given in Pollitt et al (2000). Trends in British European bird populations are provided in for example Marchant et al (1990); Gibbons et al (1993) and Tucker & Heath (1994).