

Butterfly Conservation Wales
Gwarchod Glöynnod Byw Cymru

Sustainability Committee

SC(3)-21-10 Paper 1

Inquiry into Biodiversity – Evidence from Butterfly Conservation Wales

4 November 2010

Case Study – High Brown Fritillary Conservation in Wales

High Brown Fritillary was once widespread in Wales (over 20 populations in early 1980's). Since then there has been a massive decline in range of 81% by 2004. Last Pembrokeshire site went around 2000 and Powys site in 2003. The remaining locality is the Alun Valley, Vale of Glamorgan.

The Alun Valley and Old Castle Down comprise 254 hectares with 69 hectares potentially suitable for the High Brown Fritillary. In 1995 volunteers began to monitor the adult numbers in the Alun Valley and Old Castle Down. In 2002 a survey found only 15 hectares to be suitable and this was declining in quality. Butterfly Conservation Wales then applied to Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund and larger scale management work was introduced in 2003. This was/is a partnership project involving local volunteers, landowners, commoners, as well as local authorities and CCW.

The project also reached out to local communities:

- 95 people have attended 5 guided walks and workshops to see the butterfly.
- A newsletter was produced to let people know what was happening and several press releases produced.
- And as the local Heritage Centre are a partner they were able to reach local schools and community groups through their talks programme and involve other community groups in the management work.

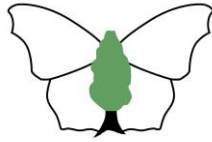
Since then input from volunteers and Glamorgan Heritage Coast staff continues with a CCW/local authority Biodiversity Grant, though at lower levels than before. Approximately 2ha is managed each year.

Three further grants from Countryside Council for Wales and recently the Wales Grazing Animals Project – PONT - has seen 17ha of the private land fenced and this year a pony corral erected.

Former sites within 15km were assessed. Restoration work was recommended on 8. However, only 3% of former sites had potential compared to 27% in Old Castle Down/Alun Valley.

A third Species Challenge Fund grant went a long way to helping build relations on two local commons, Y Graig at Llantrisant and Mynydd Ruthin.

To date this project has only cost £44,000 (not included staff time) and involved over 244 volunteer days in management and monitoring but results have been very successful (see graph below) with a huge increase in butterfly numbers.



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