



Purple milk vetch (*Astragalus danicus*) Species Action Plan 2009-2013



Plan Lead Organisation	Wildflower Ark
Plan Coordinator	Helen Herring
Action Group	Wetland and Coastal
Associated Plans	Sand dunes and dune grassland
Latest version	Published February 2009



Description

This attractive member of the Fabaceae or pea family has dense flower heads of blue-purple flowers. It is a low growing herb with hairy pinnate leaves and dark brown pea pods that are covered with white hairs. It is a native perennial herb of short unimproved turf on well drained calcareous soils, predominantly on chalk and limestone but also on coastal sand dunes grasslands. National populations were stable until 1930, since when it has declined substantially on the chalk of S.E. England and limestone in N.E. England, largely because of agricultural improvement and lack of grazing. Populations elsewhere are regarded as stable at the present.



Current factors causing loss and decline

- ◆ Habitat loss of unimproved calcareous grasslands by agricultural intensification.
- ◆ Loss of habitat by natural succession due to lack of grazing or cutting.
- ◆ Loss of sand dunes and coastal sand dunes due to coastal squeeze.



Conservation Status

UK Biodiversity Action Plan Priority Species (2007).
Vascular Plant Red data list for Britain (2005).



The Species in the Tees Valley

It occurs in sand dunes and coastal grassland along the coast of the Tees Valley. The most recent records indicate its presence at Seaton Dunes and Common, Hart Warren Dunes, South Gare, North Gare, Coatham Dunes, The Stray Redcar, Coatham Marsh Nature Reserve.



Current Activity in the Tees Valley

Sites where the species has been recorded are currently being revisited by the Tees Valley Wildlife Trust to assess population sizes and range in the Tees Valley.

Further Information

Cheffings, C. and Farrell, L. (2005). The Vascular Plant Red Data list for Great Britain. NCC.

Preston C. Pearman, D. and Dines, T. (2002) New Atlas of the British and Irish Flora. Oxford University Press.

Vision Statement

To have up to date information on distribution and abundance of purple milk vetch and ensure favourable management on all sites where the species occurs or has been recorded in the recent past.

Targets

PM. T1 Establish number, location and condition of all known sites in the Lower Tees Valley and set up a monitoring programme.

Goal: Publish a database of all current and past records collected.

PM.T2 Maintain current populations by securing favourable management on key sites.

Goal: Establish favourable management practices on 70% of all key sites.

Actions

Code	Action	Organisational lead	Action contact	Partners	End date
PM.A1	Collate all past and present records, visit all known sites and assess population and condition and set up a database of all sites and baseline condition and monitoring programme. Send all records to regional records centre, County BSBI recorder and the NBN network.	Tees Valley Wildlife Trust	Sue Antrobus	Wildflower Ark	July 2010
PM.A2	Inform landowners of all sites of presence of purple milk vetch and its national and local status and recommend appropriate management where necessary.	Tees Valley Wildlife Trust	Sue Antrobus	Wildflower Ark	Sep 2010
PM.A3	Protect sites through Local Site designation reviews where sites meet selection criteria.	TVBAP steering group	Jeremy Garside	Hartlepool BC, Stockton BC, Redcar and Cleveland BC	Dec 2011

