



Pale Sedge (*Carex pallescens*)



Biodiversity Action Plan | Cummey Yannoo Beiyen-Feie

Background

A medium sized sedge, of grassland and woodland edge.

This Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) has been reformatted from a Rare Species Action Plan, produced by Wildflowers of Mann in 2004, and approved by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry in the same year.

Description



This sedge has a pale appearance, making it distinctive from the darker green and glaucous sedges. The distinctive crinkled bracts are a diagnostic feature.

British Isles Distribution

The species is well distributed across Europe, northern Asia and North America. In the UK it is very widespread, but greatly diminished in lowland England. While normally associated with mesotrophic sites, in the uplands of northern England and particularly Scotland it is also known from more acid flushes in moorland.

Isle of Man Distribution

On the Isle of Man, Allen records it from Kella (Sulby Curraghs, Rhendoo Curraghs and the Narradale Road (SC396994119). It has now gone from the first two of these sites, but occurred in quantity from the Narradale Road, in response to MWT management as a Conservation Verge - essentially a linear wet meadow site. Conservation Verges are no longer managed, thus some reduction on abundance of the species can be expected here.

Phase 1 and 2 surveys in the early 1990s, found two more sites - the MWT Moaney & Crawyn's Meadows Nature Reserve (SC375957) and Jonny Crellin's Ballachurry Meadows ASSI at Ashcroft St Jude's (SC40479632). Both of these sites are traditional, wet meadows that show some degree of mineral flushing. Both are within Areas of Special Scientific Interest.

The final site for the species is an upland fringe, wet woodland, pasture site at Glen Roy (SC41038364), where the woodland is probably ancient in origin. The site is within the Ancient Woodland Inventory. While the two oldest records of the species are on sites that have now been agriculturally improved, it is difficult to see what the current rate of decline is, or if the species is stable.



Habitat and Ecology

Pale Sedge is a distinctive pale green tussocky sedge of mid-size (about 40-60 cm). Its distinguishing features are its paler colour and crimped bract. It occurs in a range of nutrient poor habitats such as meadows, marshes, stream sides and woodland edge. In northern Britain, it occurs in moorland. In woodland it typically grows in the rides of coppice woodland, just at the edge of trampled paths, particularly around moist W8 woodland.

Legal protection

Listed on Schedule 7 of the Wildlife Act 1990 and amber-listed under *Plants of Conservation Concern in the Isle of Man 2022*. Found on a Conservation Verge Wildlife Site.

Threats

Habitat loss or lack of traditional management (rough grazing or meadow management).

Reason for BAP

The value of introducing the species to Hairpin Woodland Park will be to create another viable population. This will counter past and potential future losses from existing populations. It will also help to create a diverse and authentic coppice woodland, adding a typical trackside species.

Aims

To create further sustainable populations of this species.

Linked BAPS

Woodland and Calcareous Biodiversity Action Plan and Action for Wildlife projects.

Delivery Options

Active

Challenges

Delivery Plan

Strategy

The scope for the species at Hairpin Woodland Park is rather limited. There is just 30-40m of mineral-rich, flushed trackside, as well as much more sub-optimal track and trail sides in the coppice areas.

Whether this is sufficient to allow for a sustainable population to develop, will rather depend on how the species reacts to the site. An introduction of 30 plants should allow for an appraisal of its viability, with 20 plants put along the track side. The remainder will be introduced in sub-optimal locations, in damper sites by coppice trails.

Lead

Manx Wildlife Trust

Collect seed

2017

Manx Wildlife Trust

Raise plants in pots

2018 onwards

Manx Wildlife Trust /Isle of Man College

Plant in Hairpin Woodland Park

2018 onwards

Manx Wildlife Trust

Monitor

2019 onwards

Manx Wildlife Trust



Annual Updates

Year	
2017	Seed collected and plants established in cultivation.
2018	Glen Roy population larger than thought. Extending outside woodland area around reservoir. 1 st plant planted at Hairpin Woodland Park.
2019	10 plants planted at Hairpin Woodland Park, but only 2 survived.
2022	Some plants put in at MWT Billown Nature Reserve extension site. Survival poor.
2023	1 plant alive at Hairpin Woodland Park but doing well. Further reinforcement planting needed.

