



## 2. FACTORS AFFECTING THIS HABITAT (AND ITS ASSOCIATED WILDLIFE) IN GWYNEDD

- Lack of provision of garden space with new houses.
- Loss of garden space on front gardens to hard-surfacing (e.g. for parking and to minimise mowing) and on large back gardens to hard landscaping (e.g. decking) or housing development.
- Use of garden chemicals and slug pellets
- Decline in growing of fruit and vegetable in favour of more ornamental non-native shrubs and a desire for tidiness (lack of wild corners, regularly mown lawns, removal of dead wood, less compost heaps).
- Introduction of some non-native plants, especially into garden ponds e.g. floating pennywort *Hydrocotyle ranunculoides* and Australian swamp stonecrop *Crassula helmsii* are garden escapes which have invaded many town and countryside ponds, lakes and rivers and both now threaten local habitats and species.
- Use of peat cut from wetland habitats - peat-free compost is a suitable alternative.
- Cat predation on birds and other species.

## 3. ASSOCIATED GWYNEDD SAPS / HAPS

Lowland meadows and pasture, River corridors, Wetlands, Invasive plants.

Lesser horseshoe bats, Barn owl, Adder, Hornet robberfly, Waxcaps

## 4. CURRENT ACTION IN GWYNEDD

### 4.1 Site and habitat protection

- Gardens have no legal protection although trees are protected in conservation areas and through Tree Preservation Orders.
- Individual species (including great crested newts, bats and badgers) may be protected under various legislations (see section 1.1).
- Gwynedd Council guidelines for new Social Housing developments encourage a garden area of 40m<sup>2</sup> for houses and 30m<sup>2</sup> for bungalows.

### 4.2 Management and programmes of action

- The Snowdonia Wildlife Gardening Partnership (made up of local authorities, statutory bodies, academic institutions, members of the horticulture profession, voluntary organisations and community groups) promotes wildlife gardening in northwest Wales. Supporting a full-time officer, the Partnership gives practical advice on wildlife gardening in private gardens as well as on community, school and business grounds. The distribution of the Partnership's leaflets, and the annual 'Wildlife Gardening Competition', both raise awareness of the importance of gardening for wildlife.
- Many private gardens and allotments are managed with conservation in mind e.g. by erecting bird/bat boxes, planting native trees and shrubs, composting and managing areas as meadows.
- Gwynedd Council's Green Schools scheme assists schools in adopting environmentally friendly policies and activities that include managing school grounds for the benefit of wildlife. The scheme has 3 levels: a bronze, silver and a gold award each with their specific requirements for their attainment e.g. silver requires the design of a wildlife garden while gold requires the development of this wildlife garden design.

- Eco-Schools Wales (supported by a wide variety of partners including Waste Awareness Wales, Foundation for Environmental Education, CCW and WAG) is a programme helping schools to adopt more sustainable practices. As an award scheme programme, the requirement of Eco-Schools includes the wildlife-friendly design, development and management of schools grounds.
- British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV) provides practical assistance and advice for community projects (including community and school gardens), always with conservation in mind.
- Gwynedd Council provide free compost bins to the public.
- CCW's Plant for Wildlife campaign encourages people to "go out to their garden - and plant for wildlife". Its aim is to help people get more pleasure from their gardens by bringing wildlife into them.
- RSPB have a free 32-page booklet "The birds in your garden" which gives tips and advice on attracting birds to gardens.
- The Wildlife Trusts and the Royal Horticultural Society have a web page ([www.wildaboutgardening.org](http://www.wildaboutgardening.org)) that gives advice on wildlife friendly gardening.

### 4.3 Survey, research and monitoring

- Green Schools and Eco-Schools schemes encourage children to record and monitor wildlife on their school ground/garden.

## 5. ACTION PLAN OBJECTIVES

1. To raise awareness of the importance and value of gardens for biodiversity
2. To improve the quality of gardens, allotments and school/community grounds for wildlife
3. To improve knowledge of the wildlife using or residing in gardens
4. To raise awareness of the wider impacts that gardening practices can have on biodiversity

## 6. PROPOSED ACTIONS

Code	Action	Partner(s) <sup>9</sup>
<b>Policy and legislation</b>		
1	Through the relevant legislation, ensure trees in conservation areas and/or those covered by TPOs are protected from development TARGET/TIMESCALE: Ongoing	<b>GC</b>
2	Through the planning process, aim to protect allotments and school or community grounds from development TARGET/TIMESCALE: Ongoing	<b>GC</b>
<b>Species / habitat management and protection</b>		
3	Provide practical and/or advisory assistance to schools in designing and/or restoring wildlife-friendly gardens on their grounds TARGET/TIMESCALE: 3 school projects to be completed, By 2008	<b>GC, SWGP, CCW, BTCV, NWWT</b>
4	Provide practical and/or advisory assistance to community groups in designing and/or restoring wildlife-friendly gardens TARGET/TIMESCALE: 3 community projects to be completed, By 2008	<b>SWGP</b>

<sup>9</sup> Lead partner for this action is indicated by bold typeface, see section 7.2 for explanation of abbreviations

<b>Advisory</b>		
5	Provide and collate best practice advice on wildlife-friendly gardening to the general public, gardeners, schools and community groups TARGET/TIMESCALE: Ongoing	<b>SWGP, CCW, GC, BTCV, NWWT</b>
<b>Survey, research and monitoring</b>		
6	Promote the recording and monitoring of wildlife on school grounds/gardens by schoolchildren through the Green Schools/Eco-Schools scheme TARGET/TIMESCALE: 15 schools, By 2008	<b>GC</b>
7	Encourage private gardeners to record/observe wildlife in their gardens through preparation of a recording form and encouraging records to be passed to GC TARGET/TIMESCALE: 50 wildlife records, by 2010	<b>SWGP, GC, CCW, NWWT, RSPB</b>
<b>Communications and publicity</b>		
8	Promote the adoption of the Green Schools scheme among Gwynedd schools and where already adopted, encourage progression from bronze and silver to the gold awards TARGET/TIMESCALE: 6 schools to achieve gold status, 16 schools to achieve silver and 24 schools to achieve bronze, By 2008	<b>GC</b>
9	Promote the adoption of the Eco-Schools scheme and encourage progression from bronze and silver to the green flag award TARGET/TIMESCALE: Ongoing	<b>GC</b>
10	Raise awareness of the importance of gardens for biodiversity by distributing leaflets, giving talks and organising open days at existing wildlife gardens TARGET/TIMESCALE: 10 talks, By 2007	<b>SWGP, GC, CCW, NWWT, RSPB</b>
11	Promote the use of peat alternatives and peat free compost through distribution of leaflets and submission of occasional press releases to local newspapers TARGET/TIMESCALE: 2 press releases, By 2008	<b>GC, SWGP, CCW, NWWT</b>
12	Continue to promote and offer free compost bins to Gwynedd residents TARGET/TIMESCALE: 1000 compost bins to be provided per year, Until 2008	<b>GC</b>
13	Hold wildlife gardening promotional/demonstration events, involving sympathetic local garden centres and popular gardens open to the public TARGET/TIMESCALE: 2 demonstrational events, By 2008	<b>GC, SWGP, BTCV</b>
14	Promote the stocking of native plants at garden centres, and urge centres to stop stocking potentially invasive non-native plants TARGET/TIMESCALE: 3 garden centres on board, By 2008	<b>CCW, SWGP, GC, EAW, NWWT</b>

## 7. PARTNERS & OPPORTUNITIES

### 7.1 Overall lead partner for HAP

Gwynedd Council (GC)

Snowdonia Wildlife Gardening Partnership (SWGP)

### 7.2 Key partners

Countryside Council for Wales (CCW)

BTCV Cymru

North Wales Wildlife Trust (NWWT)

RSPB Cymru

Environment Agency Wales (EAW)

Snowdonia National Park Authority (SNPA)

## 7.3 Opportunities

General public, Schools, Community groups

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Line drawings: English Nature

## 9. ABBREVIATIONS

BAP: Biodiversity Action Plan, HAP: Habitat Action Plan, LBAP: Local Biodiversity Action Plan, SAP: Species Action Plan, NGIP: Natur Gwynedd Implementation Project, TPO: Tree Preservation Order, GSS: Green Schools Scheme.

Version 1, 2006

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<sup>1</sup> Williams, A, 2005. Snowdonia Wildlife Gardening Project. Snowdonia Wildlife Gardening Partnership.