



The wood white *Leptidea sinapis* is a delicate, slow-flying butterfly usually encountered in sheltered situations, such as woodland rides or scrub edges. The males fly almost continuously in fine weather, patrolling to find a mate, whereas females spend much of their time feeding on flowers or resting. In the characteristic courtship display the male lands opposite the female and waves his head and antennae backwards and forwards with his proboscis extended.

This butterfly is locally distributed in the UK and has declined severely in many areas since 1950. Herefordshire contains 20 major populations, representing around 15% of its national distribution. Many of the colonies are on Forestry Commission land, one colony is on a Herefordshire Wildlife Trust reserve and three colonies are privately owned woodland.

It feeds on various legumes such as meadow vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis*, bitter-vetch *L. linifolius*, tufted vetch *Vicia cracca*, common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, and greater bird's-foot-trefoil *L. pedunculatus*. It breeds in tall grassland or light scrub in partially shaded or edge habitats and most colonies breed in woodland rides and clearings. A few smaller colonies occur on disused railway lines and around rough, overgrown field edges.

Threats

- Isolated and fragmented populations
- Fragmentation of habitat by roads and arable farming
- Unsympathetic habitat management, mowing and scrub clearance
- Damage and disturbance through recreational use of habitat
- Decline of coppicing and other woodland management
- Deer damage preventing coppice regeneration
- Overgrown and increasingly shaded woodlands

Current Action

- Haugh Wood is monitored and appropriately managed (FE, BC)
- Wigmore Rolls regularly visited and managed (FE, BC)
- Management in Queenswood, Dymock (FE, BC)
- Sympathetic management on SSSIs where populations occur (NE)
- Targeted Woodland Defra Grant schemes (FC)
- 'Taking a Stand for Wood White' HLF funded project (BC)

	Objective	Action
A	Locate and map existing populations and investigate historic sites	1, 3
B	Monitor populations	1
C	Increase sympathetic ride management and programmes of coppice restoration	2
D	Reduce deer damage on coppice regeneration	5
E	Protect known colonies through targeting funding and protection through site designations	2
F	Increase awareness of habitat requirements	4

	Actions	Target
1	Monitor populations annually	Annual
2	Maintain existing populations and increase numbers through DEFRA funded projects	Annual
3	Map distribution and publish in BAP Atlas	2020
4	Publicise habitat requirements to landowners and advice on beneficial management	2020
5	Implement deer management plans	Annual

Lead Partner	BC
Key Partners	FE, HWT, DI, FC