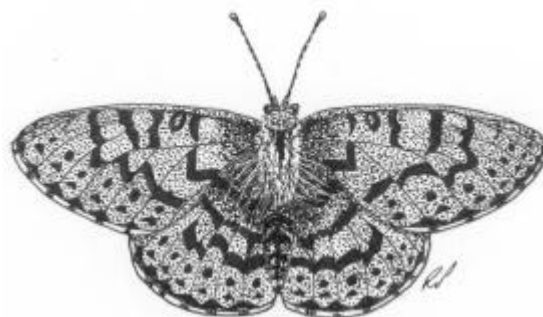


PEARL-BORDERED FRITILLARY *BOLORIA EUPHROSYNÉ* SPECIES ACTION PLAN

1. INTRODUCTION

The pearl-bordered fritillary butterfly is a UKBAP priority species in rapid decline³⁹, and has not been recorded in Glamorgan since 1990 at its last known site in Caerphilly county borough. It has very specialised habitat requirements, and some suitable habitat may still occur in the area.

Relevant Legislation/Species Status	
priority (P) or species of conservation concern (S)	P
EC Habitats Directive	-
Conservation Regs 1994	-
Berne Convention 1982	-
Bonn Convention 1979	-
CITES 1975	-
WCA 1981	Sch. 5
Other Species Status	Nationally Notable



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2. CURRENT STATUS

2.1 UK and Wales

The pearl-bordered fritillary was formerly widespread and locally abundant across much of Britain, but it has declined very rapidly in the last 50 years in the south of England and Wales. It is still widespread and abundant in northwest England and in the Highlands of Scotland. In both southern England and Wales few large colonies are known, many are small and highly vulnerable to extinction with a loss rate typically of around 40% per decade.

In England, the species breeds both in coppiced woodland and on bracken slopes with violets. In Wales its remaining colonies are scattered, on bracken slopes and commons, with a small number in coastal Ceredigion, an apparently isolated site in Radnorshire and several colonies in Montgomeryshire. It does however still occur in Herefordshire and Gloucestershire.

2.2 Caerphilly County Borough

Pearl-bordered fritillaries may still occur in Caerphilly county borough, although given the loss in the last 15 years of most other sites in southeast Wales, it seems very unlikely. In the late 1980s records regularly flowed from Draethen Forest where it appeared to breed in a clearing with a northerly aspect with scattered bracken and unshaded rock strewn areas. This type of habitat is known to be suitable only for a temporary period for this species and it may be that it colonised from previously more suitable habitat in the area.

Potentially suitable extensive areas of bracken still occur in Caerphilly county borough, particularly on slopes with a warm microclimate usually associated with a somewhat southerly aspect. Areas with violets thriving in the summer bracken canopy are favoured. The ffridd/coedcae of the valley sides and other bracken stands may be particularly important for this species.

2.3 Links with habitat

- *Ffridd/Coedcae* (often on/adjacent to *Common Land*)

3. CURRENT FACTORS AFFECTING THE SPECIES

- Reduction of coppicing and other changes in woodland management practice leading to fewer clearings which are farther apart, consequently impeding colonisation. The decline in coppicing has left the species dependent on well-drained bracken habitats in Wales and southwest Britain.
- Cessation of grazing and traditional forms of bracken management: bracken stands need to be extensively grazed, preferably by cattle, to prevent them becoming too dense thus shading out the violet foodplants on which the breeding cycle depends. The shift in balance of stock to sheep and their overall huge increase in numbers in Wales in the last twenty years has tended to lead to two equally unfavourable extremes: either sparse and overgrazed bracken slopes lacking diversity of plant species (including violets) or dense impenetrable bracken stands where the violets are shaded out. Also bracken cutting for bedding has declined substantially, again leading to too dense stands.
- Agricultural improvement: intensification of agriculture combined with a negative perception of bracken has led to considerable loss of this habitat type. Until just a few years ago the FC were still actively encouraging removal of bracken in Wales.

4. CURRENT ACTION

- 4.1 Arrangements are being made to provide training in assessment of high brown fritillary habitat (which is similar to that for pearl-bordered fritillary) and its condition. This should enable more targeted survey work to begin, potentially of benefit for both species.
- 4.2 Leaflets are now available from BC to publicise the potential of bracken habitats for fritillary butterflies.
- 4.3 BC are currently surveying suitable habitat on behalf of Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council. Some sites are located within Caerphilly county borough.

5. OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

5.1 UK Objectives and Targets

- 5.1.1 Halt the current decline by the year 2005, through viable networks of populations in core areas of distribution.
- 5.1.2 Encourage restoration of suitable habitats throughout its former range with the long-term aim of re-introducing the species to at least 3 sites per previously occupied county.

5.2 Caerphilly Objectives and Targets

- 5.2.1 Survey and assess condition of potential habitat in Caerphilly county borough, particularly the Draethen area (Target: 2004).
- 5.2.2 Restore and manage potential habitat into good condition (Target: 2006).

- 5.2.3 Re-introduce the species to suitable sites where habitat in good condition has been identified and is actively maintained. (Target: 2011)*

6. ACTION AND KEY PARTNERS

Action	Key Partners		Year to be complete or in place by:								
	Lead	Partners	2003	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
6.1 Policy and Legislation											
6.1.1 Ensure Policies and Strategies do not adversely affect potential or known habitat.	CCBC	CCW WDA FC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.1.2 Consider the requirements of pearl-bordered fritillaries when reviewing agri-environment schemes, with particular attention to the issue of bracken control.	CCW	NAWAD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.2 Site Safeguard and Management											
6.2.1 Encourage favourable management of sites in recently occupied and potentially suitable areas, including appropriate woodland management, e.g. through the Woodland Grant Scheme.	BC	CCW CCBC Coed Cymru CMCS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.3 Species Management and Protection											
6.3.1 Following feasibility assessments and habitat restoration, seek to restore populations to at least 3 sites in Caerphilly county borough. Discuss with BGCBC the opportunity for coordinated action in the neighbouring area where the species also formerly occurred in last 20 years.*	BC	BGCBC CCBC CCW			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.3.2 Continue to implement wildlife legislation.	Gwent Police	CCW	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.4 Advisory											
6.4.1 Raise the awareness of landowners and managers of pearl-bordered fritillary conservation requirements in order to promote favourable habitat management.	BC	CCBC CCW NFU FUW NAWAD CMCS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6.5 Future Research and Monitoring											
6.5.1 Survey significant areas of bracken in the county borough for potential habitat, particularly those well-established and well-drained areas with a warm (close to southerly) aspect below 150m.	BC	-	✓	✓							
6.5.2 Encourage farmers, walkers and members of the public to report any fritillary butterfly sightings promptly.	CBP	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

* This objective and subsequent action should be considered carefully in the light of survey and habitat condition assessment results, together with a realistic view of restoration and management success, in accordance with the current version of Butterfly Conservation's *Policy on Introductions and Re-introductions*⁵ and in consultation with the Glamorgan Biodiversity Advisory Group (GLBAG).

Action	Key Partners		Year to be complete or in place by:								
	Lead	Partners	2003	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
6.6 Communications and Publicity											
6.6.1 Promote the importance and wildlife value of bracken slopes and coedcae/ffridd for this butterfly species, e.g. through the production of a 'Biodiversity Briefing Note'.	CBP	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓