

# Back from the Brink – Species summary

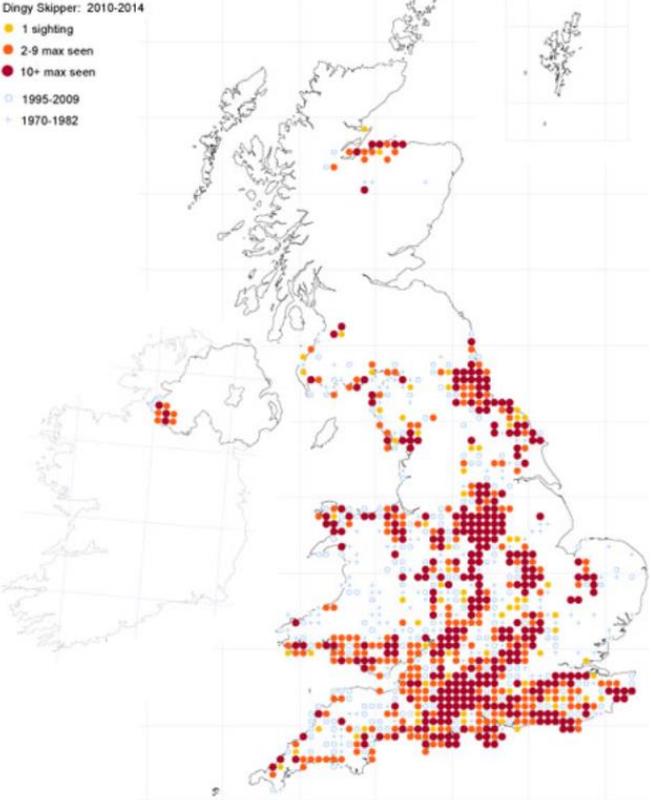
## Dingy Skipper

BftB project: IPO6 Roots of Rockingham

Project lead organisation: Butterfly Conservation

Contact: [info@butterfly-conservation.org](mailto:info@butterfly-conservation.org)

Species name – common & scientific	<p><b>Dingy Skipper</b> <i>Erynnis tages</i></p>
<p>Photograph</p>	 <p>© Dave James / Back from the Brink</p>
<p>Taxon group</p>	<p>Lepidoptera</p>
<p>Conservation status</p>	<p>Section 41 species of principal importance under the NERC Act in England Listed on Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 Northern Ireland Priority Species Scottish Biodiversity List UK BAP status: Priority Species Butterfly Conservation priority: High Fully protected under the Northern Ireland 1985 Wildlife Order.</p>
<p>UK distribution</p>	<p>Found throughout Britain, but in Scotland, it is very restricted and found mainly on the coasts in the far south and in the Moray Firth area in the north. Distribution Trend Since 1970's in Britain: -61%</p>

	<p>Dingy Skipper: 2010-2014</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 1 sighting</li> <li>● 2-9 max seen</li> <li>● 10+ max seen</li> <li>○ 1995-2009</li> <li>○ 1970-1982</li> </ul>  <p style="text-align: center;">Map: Butterfly Conservation</p>
<p><b>Habitat associations</b></p>	<p>Colonies occur in a wide range of open, sunny habitats including chalk downland, woodland rides and clearings, coastal habitats such as dunes and undercliffs, heathland, old quarries, railway lines and waste ground. Suitable conditions occur where foodplants grow in a sparse sward, often with patches of bare ground in a sunny, sheltered situation. Taller vegetation is also required for shelter and roosting.</p> <p>Larval foodplants: Common Bird's-foot-trefoil (<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>) is the usual foodplant in all habitats. Horseshoe Vetch (<i>Hippocrepis comosa</i>) is also used on calcareous soils, and Greater Bird's-foot-trefoil (<i>L. pedunculatus</i>) is used on heavier soils.</p>
<p><b>BftB work carried out:</b></p>	
<p><b>Survey &amp; Monitoring</b></p>	<p>Timed counts carried out at 4 known project sites. Walkover surveys carried out across woodlands with potential habitat. Timed count also carried out in old quarry which is part of a potential rewilding project, and regular surveys are completed on an additional site on edge of project area.</p>
<p><b>Sites habitat management works</b></p>	<p>Site 1 &amp; 2: Scrub clearance. Creation of bare ground/early successional habitat using diggers to scrape off scrub and surface vegetation</p> <p>Site 3: Scrub clearance, using brushcutter and hand tools. Treating of scrub with glyphosate to reduce regrowth. Creation of bare ground/early successional habitat using diggers to scrape off scrub and surface vegetation. Seeding of Common Bird's-foot-trefoil in cleared areas. Scrub control facilitated by providing pesticide training for 1 volunteer.</p>

<b>Technical advice provision</b>	Site visits with landowners. Section on managing woodland for Lepidoptera was included in each of the three landowner workshops and in the video 'Managing woodlands for nature' available on <a href="#">YouTube</a> .
<b>Links made with other taxa / conservation work?</b>	Bare ground creation and disturbance also beneficial for Basil Thyme (where present) and Grizzled Skipper. Early successional habitat also good for several other plant species and invertebrates.
<b>Wider engagement &amp; advocacy activities?</b>	Guided walks, ID & survey training, family engagement events, talks, volunteer work parties, education workshops with schools, surveys and advice to input into rewilding project on neighbouring estate.
<b>BftB results obtained:</b>	
<b>Recorded Distribution (in BftB focal areas)</b>	Breeding populations on 4 project sites. Good populations also recorded at 2 other sites on edge of project area.
<b>Recorded Abundance of species populations</b>	Peak adult count (per hour of counting) Site 1 - 21 (2018), 20 (2021) Site 2 - 18 (2018), 13 (2021) Site 3 - 12 (2019), 7 (2020), 14 (2021) Site 4 - 3 (2018), 4 (2019), 3 (2020), 1 (2021)
<b>Species Recovery Curve progress made</b>	Species Recovery Curve moved from 5 to 7. Bare ground has been created at three of its key sites to promote early successional habitat. Seeding with Bird's-foot Trefoil has also been carried out at 1 site to increase availability of the larval food plant. Scrub control and supply of early successional habitat (through scrapes and/or rotational cutting) has been adopted by sites with Dingy Skipper present. Due to annual variability of butterfly population numbers, we would need several more years of data to observe trends and determine if species is recovering. Landowners/managers have better knowledge of appropriate management for this species and are building in continued habitat management work in order to maintain suitable conditions.
<b>Recommendations for future work:-</b>	Continue with scrub control and creation of rotational bare ground scrapes. Carry out annual timed counts to monitor response of Dingy Skipper to management interventions. Expand surveys to monitor several other (non-project) Dingy Skipper sites within or on outskirts of Rockingham Forest area.