

# Back from the Brink – Species summary

## Juniper

**BftB project:** IPO4 Limestone’s Living Legacies

**Project lead organisation:** Butterfly Conservation

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**Partner organisation for species:** Plantlife

<p><b>Species name – common &amp; scientific</b></p>	<p><b>Juniper</b> <i>Juniperus communis</i></p>
<p><b>Photograph</b></p>	 <p>©Alex Hyde / Back from the Brink</p>
<p><b>Taxon group</b></p>	<p>Family Cupressaceae</p>
<p><b>Conservation status</b></p>	<p>Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Classified as Least Concern in the Great Britain Vascular Plant Red Data List (BSBI 2005). Near Threatened in the England Vascular Plant Red Data List.</p>
<p><b>UK distribution</b></p>	<p>Juniper has a highly disjunct distribution across England. Virtually absent in the Midlands, in the southern lowlands it has severely contracted in range and abundance over the past 50 years. Northern populations are faring relatively well, with good stands in the Lake District and North Pennines, but it has been eliminated from many moorland sites by burning.</p>
<p><b>Habitat associations</b></p>	<p>Juniper is a bush of calcareous grassland. Seeds require bare subsoil, often with rubble and bedrock exposed and little topsoil present, to germinate and will mature into male or female plants. Juniper has specific management requirements requiring ground disturbance to create bare soil for seed germination followed by a long period without disturbance to enable the seedlings to grow.</p>

<b>BftB work carried out:</b>	
<b>Survey &amp; Monitoring</b>	Following Plantlife's methodology, surveys to document all existing Juniper bushes, saplings and seedlings were carried out at Painswick Beacon and Juniper Hill. This included documenting the success of work started by Plantlife in 2010 to establish Juniper seedlings in a new bare ground scrape at Painswick Beacon.
<b>Sites habitat management works</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two scrapes were created underneath mature female Juniper bushes. One at Juniper Hill in 2018 created (and fenced) by volunteers by hand and one larger scrape created by contractors at Rodborough Common in 2019.</li> <li>• Scrub removal and electric fence installed by volunteers at Juniper Hill in 2020 to enable the reintroduction of sheep grazing.</li> <li>• Cattle handling system installed in 2018 to enable Painswick Beacon Conservation Group to continue cattle grazing at Painswick Beacon.</li> <li>• New targeted paddock grazing system at Painswick Beacon started in 2018 to benefit a range of species including Juniper.</li> <li>• Set up of new paddock grazing system at Rodborough Common from 2018 to benefit a range of species including Juniper.</li> </ul>
<b>Conservation 'interventions' incl. reintroductions &amp; translocations</b>	In partnership with the National Trust, 57 Juniper saplings were planted out at Rodborough Common in 2020 by volunteers.
<b>Technical advice provision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site advice visits to Painswick Beacon to advise on grazing for various target species including Juniper. Advice also given on targeted interventions (e.g. scrub/tree removal) to protect specific Juniper bushes from being shaded/crowded out.</li> <li>• Site advice visit to Juniper Hill to discuss management for various target species including Juniper.</li> <li>• Site advice visit to Rodborough Common to advise on creation of scrape for Juniper following Plantlife/Buglife recommendations.</li> </ul>
<b>Links made with other taxa / conservation work?</b>	<p>Juniper has benefitted from scrub control and targeted grazing primarily aimed at Large Blue and Duke of Burgundy at sites such as Rodborough Common, Painswick Beacon and Juniper Hill.</p> <p>Scrape created at Rodborough Common also aimed to benefit Rugged Oil Beetle, Dingy Skipper, Grizzled Skipper and Small Blue all of which need bare ground either for nesting or to encourage colonisation by larval food plants.</p>
<b>Wider engagement &amp; advocacy activities?</b>	Juniper Identification and Survey training workshop for volunteers led by Plantlife in 2019 attended by 8 people.
<b>BftB results obtained:</b>	
<b>Recorded Distribution (in BftB focal areas)</b>	All bushes, saplings, and seedlings in the northern half of Painswick Beacon and at Juniper Hill documented and grid referenced by volunteers in 2019 following Plantlife methodology covered on training workshop. The age, sex and condition (e.g. any damage/growth type) of each bush/seedling also documented to produce a comprehensive inventory and to highlight any further work that needs doing to protect individual plants.

<p><b>Recorded Abundance of species populations</b></p>	<p>See results of Juniper surveys at Painswick Beacon and Juniper Hill carried out between Sept-Dec 2019 by volunteers. Notable results included a total of 67 saplings counted in the scrape created by Plantlife in 2010. A total of 28 seedlings were counted in 2019 in the new scrape at Juniper Hill created by volunteers in 2018.</p>
<p><b>Other results documented?</b></p>	<p>See Plantlife report 'Breaking New Ground for Juniper – Painswick Beacon', 2019 for results of surveys of scrape and cages created by Plantlife carried out in May/June 2019 by Cath Shelswell.</p>
<p><b>Species Recovery Curve progress made</b></p>	<p>Species recovery curve score moved from 3 to 7: Scrapes created at Juniper Hill and Rodborough Common. 28 seedlings discovered in the scrape at Juniper Hill the following year. Areas immediately surrounding female Juniper bushes stripped of turf to encourage seedling germination at Painswick Beacon. Juniper seedlings germinated from seed planted out at Rodborough Common. Grazing reintroduced at Juniper Hill.</p>
<p><b>Recommendations for future work:-</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearance and tree felling as required to recover old bushes from secondary woodland and scrub encroachment.</li> <li>• Specific recommendations for individual bushes suffering from shading or encroachment by trees as per Painswick Beacon site advice visit in 2019.</li> <li>• Potential for moving saplings growing in scrapes to other parts of the site – further advice needed from Plantlife on this.</li> </ul>