

Back from the Brink – Species summary

Large-celled Flapwort

BftB project: IP01 Dorset's Heathland Heart

Project lead organisation: Plantlife

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Species name – common & scientific	Large-celled Flapwort <i>Lophozia capitata</i>
Taxon group	Bryophyte
Conservation status	NERC S.41, Nationally Scarce, Vulnerable (revised British Red List)
UK distribution	Recorded from around 25 sites, mainly in southern England and East Anglia. Since 2000, records have been made in Wareham Forest in Dorset, Whitmoor Common, Wisley Heath and Wyke Common in the Thames Basin Heaths, Ivinghoe Common in Buckinghamshire and West Norfolk. It has not been relocated at pre-20 th century localities.
Habitat associations	Typically found on the winter-wet floor of quarries and sand pits, in woodland glades (on the decaying base of rushes or Purple Moor-grass) on peat in bogs or on damp ground among scattered Heather in wet heathland. A pioneer species, it rarely lasts long in any given situation.
BftB work carried out:	
Survey & Monitoring	Specialist monitoring was carried out at the location of the previous record in Wareham Forest by Dorset Environmental Records Centre on behalf of the project in 2018 and 2019.
Sites habitat management works	Ground disturbance and compaction were carried out using an excavator tracking across the wet heath firebreak (c400m) immediately adjacent to where the species was recorded previously. Turf pares (4) were also created on nearby suitable habitat.
Technical advice provision	Advice was provided to the land managers (FE) regarding ongoing management of the area for the next few years.
Links made with other taxa / conservation work?	This work was carried out together with the creation of bare ground for Marsh Clubmoss which is found in similar habitat.
Wider engagement & advocacy activities?	Awareness was raised about Large-celled Flapwort with local volunteer bryologists (who were going to undertake follow up monitoring should the plant be relocated) and during talks given to Dorset Flora Group and Dorset Recorders.
BftB results obtained:	
Recorded Distribution (in BftB focal areas)	Large-celled Flapwort was not found.
Recorded Abundance of species populations	As above

Other results documented?	Attempts to stimulate regeneration from a potential bank following deliberate disturbance in suitable habitat immediately adjacent to the location where the liverwort had been recorded 10 years previously was not successful.
Species Recovery Curve progress made	1 – 6 – Recovery solutions trialled (<i>partial</i>). Greater understanding of the autecology of the species (including whether it creates a diaspore bank in the UK) could result in different solutions being trialled.
Recommendations for future work:-	Recovery is unlikely although, as an early successional species, it is possible that Large-celled Flapwort may appear as a result of disturbance providing damp bare sandy ground elsewhere, particularly in Wareham Forest. The BFTB location will be maintained by FE as a firebreak.

See NBN Atlas for distribution map: <https://species.nbnatlas.org/species/NBNSYS0000035849>

See Porley, R (2013) England's rare mosses and liverworts. Their history, ecology and conservation. WILDGuides.