

Back from the Brink – Species summary

Western Wood-vase Hoverfly

BftB project: IP02 Ancients of the Future

Project lead organisation: Buglife

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Species name – common & scientific	Western wood-vase hoverfly (<i>Myolepta potens</i>)
Photograph	 <p style="text-align: center;"><i>C Will George / Back from the Brink</i></p>
Taxon group	Invertebrate-Diptera (Syrphidae)
Conservation status	Critically Endangered
UK distribution	Only extant population known from Moccas Park, Herefordshire though recent (2015) records also exist from the Forest of Dean.
Habitat associations	Ancient trees in parkland, wood pasture or woodland. Larvae develop in rain filled rot holes in mature Horse chestnut at Moccas Park, but the species is also recorded from Beech, Poplar, and oak in Europe.
BftB work carried out:	
Survey & Monitoring	<p>Surveys at Moccas Park in 2019 were undertaken by an expert Dipterist using a variety of methods including emergence traps, vane traps, malaise traps, and water traps. Samples of rot hole materials were also taken to rear any emerging larvae.</p> <p>Only four females were observed during this survey and no males, suggesting that the survey was carried out a little late and all the males had emerged already. However, this survey did confirm the species is still present at the site as it had not been recorded or surveyed for since 2002.</p>

Sites habitat management works	Horse chestnut trees planted, and nectar scrub planted at Moccas Park.
Conservation 'interventions' incl. reintroductions & translocations	None specific to this species beyond the provision of management advice
Technical advice provision	Advice given to Natural England around habitat requirements of Western wood-vase hoverfly.
Links made with other taxa / conservation work?	Habitat requirements overlaps with lichen <i>Bacidia incompta</i>
Wider engagement & advocacy activities?	An arboriculture workshop was held at Moccas Park and adjacent landowners have also been engaged about ancient tree management. Arts event held. Seed collection carried out. Film made of biodiversity around the park
BftB results obtained:	
Recorded Distribution (in BftB focal areas)	Recorded from Moccas Park
Recorded Abundance of species populations	Just four females were recorded from fairly intensive survey in 2019.
Species Recovery Curve progress made	The species has moved from 1 to 2 . However, it perhaps should have been initially identified at step 2 as we know the distribution to be extremely restricted, so the increase from 1 to 2 is not a result of project actions. We know little about its autoecology or habitat associations bar aerial rot holes in very mature Horse chestnut trees in a small number of locations. We know there is the need to protect existing mature trees, plan for future maturing trees and to use innovative approaches to bridge the age gap (e.g. veteranisation).
Recommendations for future work:-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-survey at Moccas Park to establish if the population is still viable as 1 year's data does not give enough data. • Protect and maintain existing ancient Horse chestnut at Moccas Park to aid longevity. • Plant and protect more Horse chestnut at Moccas Park.