

# Back from the Brink – Species summary

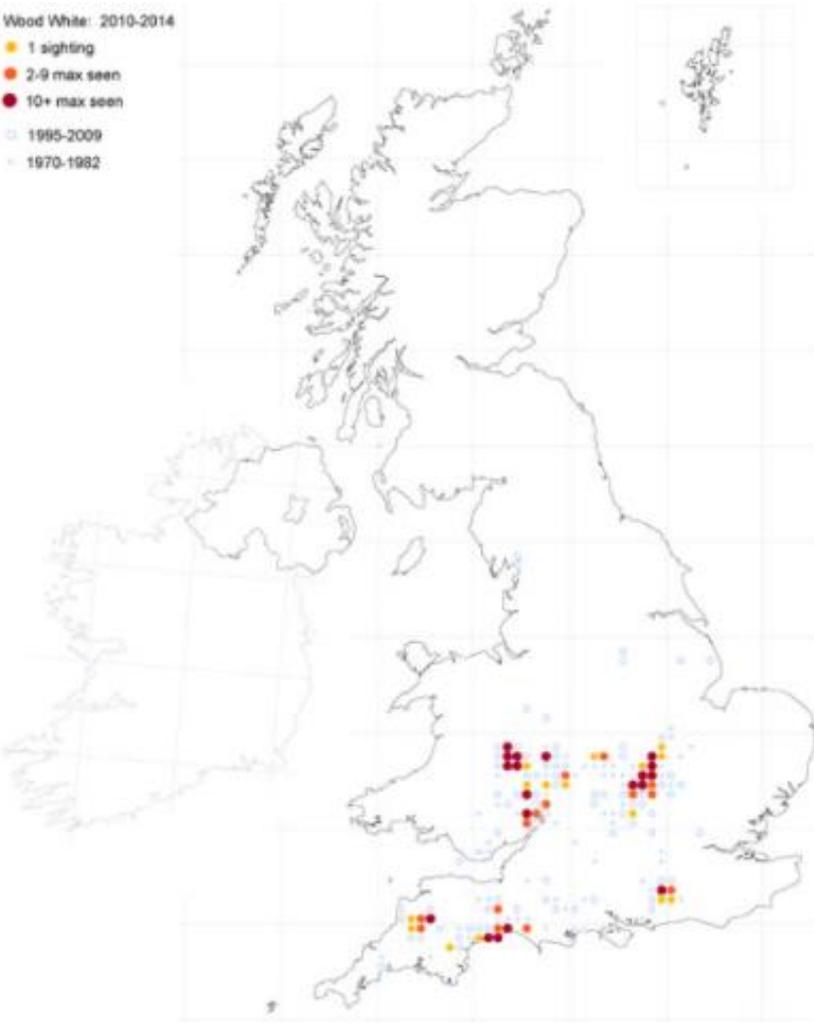
## Wood White

**BftB project:** IPO6 Roots of Rockingham

**Project lead organisation:** Butterfly Conservation

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<b>Species name – common &amp; scientific</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Wood White</b> <i>Leptidea sinapis</i></p>
<b>Photograph</b>	 <p style="text-align: center;">© Dave James / Back from the Brink</p>
<b>Taxon group</b>	<p>Lepidoptera</p>
<b>Conservation status</b>	<p>Section 41 species of principal importance under the NERC Act in England Listed on Section 7 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 UK BAP status: Priority Species Protected under Schedule 5 of the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act (for sale only) Butterfly Conservation priority: High</p>
<b>UK distribution</b>	<p>This rapidly declining species used to be found across much of southern England and into eastern Wales. Its strongholds are now the woods of the West Midlands and Northamptonshire and the coastline of East Devon. Distribution trend in Britain since the 1970s = -89%</p>

	<p>Wood White: 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>○ 1970-1992</li> </ul>  <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Map: Butterfly Conservation</i></p>
<p><b>Habitat associations</b></p>	<p>The Wood White breeds in tall grassland or light scrub, in partially shaded or edge habitats. In Britain, most colonies breed in woodland rides and clearings, though a few large colonies occur on coastal undercliffs. A few smaller colonies occur on disused railway lines and around rough, overgrown field edges (for example in north Devon). In Ireland, more open habitats are used, often far from woodland, including rough grassland with scrub, road verges, hedges, and disused railway lines.</p> <p>Caterpillar foodplants: Various legumes are used, commonly Meadow Vetchling (<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>), Bitter-vetch (<i>L. linifolius</i>), Tufted Vetch (<i>Vicia cracca</i>), Common Bird's-foot-trefoil (<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>) and Greater Bird's-foot-trefoil (<i>L. pedunculatus</i>). (Note that some vetches are not used, notably Bush Vetch, <i>V. sepium</i>, and Common Vetch, <i>V. sativa</i>).</p>
<p><b>BftB work carried out:</b></p>	
<p><b>Survey &amp; Monitoring</b></p>	<p>Wood White had not been recorded in any of the project sites since 2010. In 2018 a population was discovered at Site 1, a private woodland with limited public access. This population was monitored through UK BMS timed counts on an annual basis. Six nearby woodlands were also visited to see if Wood White was spreading, particularly after numbers increased at Site 1.</p>

<b>Sites habitat management works</b>	Changes to rotational management of rides and ditches through a Countryside Stewardship agreement have improved conditions for Wood White on known site. Ride widening in nearby woodlands has improved habitat for future colonisation.
<b>Technical advice provision</b>	Site visits with landowners. Advice and maps provided re: changes in ride management at Site 1- incorporated into Countryside Stewardship agreement. 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>	Creating more open habitat within woodlands, through ride widening and scalloping, and implementation of rotational mowing regime could also benefit other Lepidoptera including Dingy, Grizzled & Chequered Skippers. Increased abundance of invertebrates in open habitats could also increase foraging areas for target bird & bat species.
<b>Wider engagement &amp; advocacy activities?</b>	ID & survey training workshops, craft activities at family engagement events, site visits with landowners, species mentioned in project talks, education workshops with schools
<b>BftB results obtained:</b>	
<b>Recorded Distribution (in BftB focal areas)</b>	Breeding population at 1 site. Occasional individuals recorded at 3 other sites.
<b>Recorded Abundance of species populations</b>	At Site 1: Timed counts of 11-12 individuals in 2018 & 19. Timed counts in 2020 and 2021 showed an increased to around 50 individuals.
<b>Species Recovery Curve progress made</b>	Species Recovery Curve moved from 6 to 7. Wood White had not been recorded in any of the project sites since 2010. In 2018 a population was discovered with timed counts of 11-12 individuals in 2018 & 19. Changes to rotational management of rides and ditches through a Countryside Stewardship agreement have improved conditions for Wood White on this site. Timed counts in 2020 and 2021 showed an increased to around 50 individuals. With high numbers in 2020 & 2021, nearby woodlands were surveyed, and sightings were also made in two nearby primary woodlands as well as a further woodland that falls to the west of the project area. Although only in small numbers at the moment, it is hopeful that they will be able to establish populations on some of these sites in the future. Recent work at nearby woodlands has increased amount of open habitat at these sites making them more suitable for future colonisation. With rotational management having been adopted at current known site, and further rotational mowing taking place on nearby sites, current recovery is at 7. If numbers stay consistently high over the next 5 years and they managed to colonise additional areas, progress could be made to 8 over next few years.
<b>Recommendations for future work:-</b>	Rotational management should be maintained at Site 1, and rotational mowing of rides in nearby woodlands encouraged to provide suitable habitat for colonisation. Additional scallops could be created in nearby woodlands to increase suitable habitat. Annual timed counts at existing site should continue along with walkover surveys at nearby woodlands to check for colonisation.