

## **Consultation matters determined by the Species Recovery Technical Advisory Group**

**26<sup>th</sup> June 2025**

### **1. Proposed additional priority species**

#### **1.1 House sparrow**

House sparrow does not meet the Natural England criteria for inclusion on LNRS species longlist<sup>1</sup>, from which priority species are derived.

Whilst this species will not be added as a priority species, measure will be added for House sparrows (and Starlings) alongside the other urban birds under the urban ambition. Reference will also be made to reducing/removing pesticides in gardens for the benefits of House Sparrows.

#### **1.2 Skylark**

Skylark was identified as a species on the LNRS longlist and one that would benefit from the LNRS but, as it did not require specific or targeted recovery measures beyond that provided by the wider LNRS actions of better, bigger, more and connected habitats, was not suitable as a priority species.

Whilst this species will not be added as a priority species, unmapped measure will be added will be for Skylarks under the land management ambition.

#### **1.3 Swallow**

Swallow was identified as a species on the LNRS longlist and one that needs improvements in environmental quality but judged lower priority than other bird species; excluded to reduce length of list as requested by LNRS guidance.

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<sup>1</sup> Natural England criteria for inclusion on LNRS species longlist: Native species that is –

- Red List Threatened or Near Threatened.
- Not assessed but there is strong evidence they meet the criteria for Threatened status.
- Considered to be nationally extinct that has re-established or been rediscovered.
- Identified by NE as a suitable candidates for conservation translocation.
- Of local significance with strong evidence they meet the criteria for Threatened status.

Whilst this species will not be added as a priority species, unmapped measure relating to provision of nesting sites for Swallows in farm buildings will be added under the land management ambition.

#### 1.4 Barbastelle bat

Barbastelle bat is not a species currently present in Kent, although noted that there is good potential for them to come especially with NNR work. Natural England have confirmed that a species not currently in the strategy areas can be a priority, if the return of that species to the county is an aspiration. Kent Bat Group confirmed that whilst it would be nice to see its return, there are likely others to prioritise for such a focus over the Barbastelle.

Whilst this species will not be added as a priority species, provision for this, and other species extinct from county, will be made under the species ambition (see section 5 for details).

#### 1.5 Weasel

Weasel does not meet Natural England criteria for inclusion on LNRS species longlist – best available data suggests this is a species of least concern.

Whilst this species will not be added as a priority species, it is noted that it will benefit from the wider action of the LNRS.

#### 1.6 Slow worm

Slow worm was identified as a species on the LNRS longlist and one that would benefit from the LNRS but, as it did not require specific or targeted recovery measures beyond that provided by the wider LNRS actions of better, bigger, more and connected habitats, was not suitable as a priority species. Will not be added as a priority species.

#### 1.7 Juniper

Juniper was identified as a species on the LNRS longlist and one that would benefit from the LNRS but, in absence of specific or targeted recovery measures, was not suitable as a priority species.

On review, and with the use of Plantlife's management handbook<sup>2</sup> for potential measures, Juniper will be added as a priority species.

#### 1.8 Native oyster

Native oyster is identified as a species on the LNRS longlist. However it is not included as a priority species as it is already covered by priority CL5 *Sustainable management of native oyster beds to allow them to reach their habitat building potential. under coastal ambitions*, recognising its role as a habitat building species.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/ManagingJuniper.pdf>

### 1.9 Saltmarsh and SPA specific species

These suggested additions are too broad for inclusion. Eligible species related to saltmarsh habitats and SPA species have already been included.

### 1.10 River and Sea Lamprey

River and Sea Lamprey are both species of least concern but meet the local significance criteria for inclusion. On advice of ZSL, River and Sea Lamprey will be included as priority species.

### 1.11 Smelt

Smelt are species of least concern but meet the local significance criteria for inclusion. On advice of ZSL, they Smelt will be included as priority species.

### 1.12 Dwarf and Common Eelgrass

These are not included as priority species as both are already covered by priority CL3 *Reverse the decline in seagrass off Kent's coast to safeguard this important habitat for marine species and their breeding grounds and nurseries; and to preserve its vital function as a blue carbon store.*

### 1.13 Outstanding additions for consideration

The following need to be assessed against the Natural England criteria for inclusion on LNRS species longlist, before being considered for inclusion as a priority species:

- Allis Shad
- Atlantic Salmon
- Common Sturgeon

### 1.14 Other proposed priority species

For completeness of reporting, the following were also suggested as priority species through consultation responses – these were already included as a priority species within the consultation draft and remain as priority species.

- House Martin
- Wading birds
- Beaver
- River species – priority species includes the White-clawed Crayfish, the Common Eel (European Eel), Grey Wagtail, Kingfisher, caddisfly, European Water Vole, Frogbit and Opposite-leaved Pondweed.

## 2. Amendments to text on existing species, associated habitats and measures

### 2.1 Amphibians

Pressure of light pollution to be added to threats to amphibians.

## 2.2 Beetles

Introduction text to be updated by KMBRC.

## 2.3 Birds

Associated habitats of ancient woodland and traditional orchards to be added for Lesser Spotted Woodpecker.

Associated habitat of saline lagoons to be added for Sandwich Tern, Ringed Plover, and Waders and wildfowl.

## 2.4 Crustaceans

For White-clawed Crayfish, add measure "Promotion and use of biosecurity measures to prevent the spread of crayfish plague".

In recognition that existing potential measure for White-clawed Crayfish conflicts with other species needs i.e. fish passage and aquatic habitat connectivity and is also at odds with a number of freshwater potential measures, it will be amended to: *In rivers known to have White-clawed Crayfish, in-river structures should only be removed after detailed survey and full consideration of whether such structures may be protecting the native Crayfish from invasive Signal Crayfish and other non-native crayfish species.*

For measures relating to removal of in-river structures, footnote regarding the need to consider the impact of the removal on other ecology to be added.

## 2.5 Fish

Associated habitats of coastal & floodplain grazing marsh, mesotrophic lakes and other standing open water to be added for Eels.

Associated habitat of sub-littoral habitats to be added for Short-snouted seahorse and Spiny seahorse.

## 2.6 Fungi

Introduction text to be updated by KMBRC.

## 2.7 Grasshoppers, Crickets and Allies

Introduction text provided by Kent Field Club.

## 2.8 Lichens

Introduction text to be provided by KMBRC.

## 2.9 Mammals

It was determined that the consideration of light pollution did not need to be included under potential measures for bats. It was also noted that light pollution was something that could not be dealt with under habitat based potential measures – however could be addressed under supporting measures, best dealt with under urban priorities.

It was determined that traditional orchards did not need to be identified as an associated habitat for any of the bat priority species – whilst these can offer roost and forage potential, they will only do so when next to a suitable and primary habitat for the bat species. It was determined that under the traditional orchards priority WTH9, all bat priority species should be listed.

It was determined that all associated habitats for Brown Hare were correct and appropriate, as this species was regularly recorded on all.

Associated habitats for Beavers to include: Aquatic marginal vegetation; Reed beds; Lowland fen; Other swamps; Eutrophic standing waters; Other standing water; Canals; Rivers; Coastal & floodplain grazing marsh; Other rivers & streams; Wet woodland  
Beavers to be listed under all freshwater priorities; wet woodland priority (WTH6); and coastal and floodplain grazing marsh priority (GL2).

## 2.10 Moths

It was determined that the consideration of light pollution did not need to be included under potential measures for moths. It was also noted that light pollution was something that could not be dealt with under habitat based potential measures – however could be addressed under supporting measures, best dealt with under urban priorities.

## 2.11 True Bugs

Introduction text to be provided by KMBRC.

## 2.12 Vascular Plants

Agreed that proposed that potential measure for Dwarf Milkwort "*On sites where species is currently present, and areas where it was previously known, manage to provide open conditions in short turf*" includes expansion of sites for this species rather than just protect existing sites.

Revised measure to be reviewed and confirmed by Kent Botanical Recording Group.

# 3. Mapping

The following approach for the mapping of areas in which to focus priority species measures was agreed.

A heat map, per species assemblage will be created, which will be clipped to the particular habitat that assemblage is referring to. Areas of most species density will be drawn from this and given a 1km buffer (to reflect modelling and dispersal distances), to create target areas for that species assemblage.

It is noted that this will focus on existing habitat. In order to identify new areas for species this map can be used alongside the other potential measures mapping. The process will be to overlay the priority species map for, say, grassland assemblage with the extend/create potential measures maps for grassland, in order to identify which of the areas identified for the measure would be most beneficial in joining up areas of significance for priority species (i.e. potential measure mapped to gap between two areas of importance for the priority species); or extending existing areas of significance for priority species (i.e. potential measure mapped to, and beyond, existing area of importance for the priority species.)

Such maps will be created by users themselves, with the use of the online mapping tool and layers function. The selection of different measures overlaid with a priority species map will allow users to identify and focus on priority species for both existing areas (management – “better”) and new (“bigger” and “more”).

The draft maps will be created from KMBRC data records and be supplemented with SRTAG knowledge of on the ground sites of note, if missed by desktop mapping approach.

These maps can be backed up by individual species records as required, via KMBRC

Draft maps will be shared with the SRTAG and signed off by end of July.

#### **4. Presentation of priority species within LNRS document**

Agreed that priority species will be presented as follows in the final LNRS document:

- The species chapter will still present each species group, with the introduction as per the consultation draft.
- Following the introduction, priority species whose requirements will be met by the habitat potential measures will simply be listed (a reference table will be appended, so associated habitats of that species can be noted).
- Priority species that require bespoke measures will be listed, with the action required, in the species chapter.
- In the habitat priorities, species provided for by potential measures will be listed.

A standalone more detailed species toolkit, with links to guidance etc, will be developed following publication to support the LNRS. Will ensure an explanation of the process of selection and presentation is included so readers can understand differences of species in species section and those associated with habitats.

Reworked species chapter will be shared with the SRTAG and signed off by end of July.

## **5. Other matters**

It was agreed that, at this stage, priority species would not include those not currently found in the county but whose return would be an ambition. However, to address this, the requirement to consider long list of species will be amended to include the need to also consider currently absent species, with a list provided in the species recovery toolkit for guidance.