

Conservation Officers Report: 2011

2011 was a busy year on the conservation front. The Conchological Society (CS) was involved in a number of widely publicised events as well as a wide range of other activities. Rather than simply giving a simple summary of our actions I have tried to provide background and rationale to give a better understanding of the issues and reasons for our involvements and actions.

Advice and help:

Has been given to many individuals and organisations including identification of specimens, conservation advice and habitat management.

Specific examples include:

1. The identification of a wide range of specimens and digital images sent by individuals and a number of voluntary conservation organisations.
2. Habitat management advice was given to a local conservation group working with Nailsworth Town Council, Glos. The group were checking on habitat management details to maintain or enhance populations of *Helicella itala* and *Abida secale* living on a southerly facing grassland on the edge of Nailsworth.
3. Buglife were given assistance with photographs and molluscan management advice in the production of a series of grazing marsh ditch leaflets (Sheet 1: An important habitat for invertebrates, Sheet 2: Creation & restoration for invertebrates, Sheet 3: Management for invertebrates). The leaflets can be viewed at <http://www.buglife.org.uk/AboutBuglife/publications>
4. 'Westfield Action Group', Harpenden were given detailed advice and support on a number of occasions in relation to potential threats to a population of Roman snails, *Helix pomatia*. The snails, which were living on undeveloped land near to an allotment complex, were (and are) potentially threatened by development plans.
5. The Environment Agency (Warrington) was given advice on the possible consequences of suspected metaldehyde pollution of the Llangollen Canal. Dr. David Aldridge (Aquatic Ecology Group, Cambridge University) is thanked for providing expert advice.
6. The London Wildlife Trust were given assistance in preparing a presentation for the Port of London Authority by the provision of information and images on the Thames Door Snail *Balea biplicata* and the Swollen Spire Snail *Mercuria similis* (Paul Sterry, Nature Photographers, is thanked for producing images from supplied specimens)
7. Various assistance was given to Heather Mansfield in producing a Roman snail article for IEEM (IEEM, 'In Practice' 2011: 72: 26 – 29).

Proposed sale of England's National Forests

It was in October 2010 that the intentions of the coalition government to sell off many of England's state-owned woodlands came to light (the administrations in Scotland and Wales had rejected similar plans). Three clauses in the Public Bodies Bill, then being debated in Parliament, would have authorised the Government to sell the whole of the public forest estate to commercial and other interest groups on the open market.

Public debate on the issue really took off on 23rd January 2011 when the Telegraph published a letter backed by a wide-ranging group of public figures including Dame Judi Dench, Dr. Rowan Williams, Bill Bryson and Sir Ranulph Fiennes. This letter marked the launch of a public campaign backed by 100 leading public figures to stop the sell-off plans. The following few weeks saw a torrent of articles and letters in newspapers of all political persuasions. An on-line petition broke all records by receiving 537,000 signatories. The Conchological Society Council decided to study the matter and drafted a letter highlighting our particular concerns. Whilst recognising that, during its 92 year long history, the Forestry Commission (FC) had undertaken or supported many environmentally damaging actions (e.g. the afforestation of rare, open upland and lowland heathland habitats and the "coniferisation" of numerous blocks of ancient woodland) in recent years it had very much amended its 'bad ways'. It was now far more concerned with improving public access and providing interpretation resources, halting much of the blanket conifer afforestation of uplands and preserving and enhancing woodland biodiversity. The CS had been much encouraged by the FC's recent actions in not only maintaining existing ancient woodlands, but also in restoring former ancient woodland sites that had been converted to conifer plantations in the last 100 years. The CS's chief concerns with the sell-off plans related to:

1. The possible reduction of access to woodlands where Society members undertake important invertebrate studies;
2. The possible change in focus in woodlands with high actual or developing biodiversity value to a more commercial use;
3. The apparent difficulties set up in the proposed sale processes, to allow charities and conservation bodies to bid for woodlands (as evident in the document '*Selection criteria for sales of Forestry Commission land in 2011*'). Whilst appearing to establish the principle that preferred status was given to beneficial owners, (1) the short sale timescale allowed, (2) the likely scale of disposals and (3) the requirement that a full market price must be paid, made it unlikely that enough beneficial owners would be forthcoming (especially in view of concerns about the responsibilities that they would be taking on). It seemed, as a result, probable that most woodlands sold under the criteria would have ended up in commercially-motivated private ownership without adequate safeguards for conservation and public access.
4. We also pointed out that the wholesale transfer of English national woodlands into private ownership was not in the manifesto of either of the coalition partners. Therefore no mandate existed to undertake such a momentous and lasting change to the countryside, the largest to English land ownership since the Second World War. David Cameron had promised to make this coalition government "the greenest ever". The amount of money likely to be generated by the full sale of our forestry estate was relatively small when compared to the permanent loss of such a nationally treasured asset.

After Council discussions and consultations, on 7th February 2011 a letter was sent to the Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister, the Rt Hon Caroline Spelman (Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) and a number of our constituency MPs. Only ten days later, following a record number of objections (not least the Conch Soc's own powerful voice!), the Government halted the consultation process.

Writing to the CS about the Government's change of heart, the Rt. Hon Jim Paice stated, "As the Secretary of State announced on 17th February, the consultation on the future management of the public forest estate has been ended and all forestry clauses in the Public Bodies Bill will be removed. The Government has always placed the highest priority on preserving access and protecting our forests. We took a decision to end the consultation on the future of the public forest estate because it is quite clear from the early responses to the consultation that the public and many MPs were not happy with the proposals we set out". He went on to state, "We will establish an independent Panel to consider forestry policy in England. It will report with its findings this autumn. The Panel will advise on the future direction of forestry and woodland policy in England, on the role of the Forestry Commission, and on the role of the public forest estate. It will include representatives of key environmental and access organisations alongside representatives of the forestry industry". The independent Panel on Forestry issued its first progress report in December 2011 and this can be viewed at www.defra.gov.uk/forestrypanel/ ; a final report is expected in 2012. The outlook for English publicly owned forests now seems brighter than at the start of 2011, but much will depend on the outcomes contained in the final forestry recommendations. We are 'not out of the woods' yet!

Fig 1: Image of woodland potentially affected by Forestry Commission privatisation

Wildlife & Countryside Act: The 5th Quinquennial Review of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981.

Submissions for the 5th Quinquennial Review were sent to JNCC on 21st May 2008; JNCC reviewed the proposals and then submitted their edited version to Defra for final consideration. I previously described (Mollusc World 21:10) that the CS were able to include our recommendations in the larger Buglife submission. In August 2011 (39 months since the consultation ended!) Defra and the Welsh Government (the review process did not apply to Scotland) published their review responses. The table below details the outcomes of the review for Mollusca:

Species:	5 th Quinquennial Review recommendation:	Outcome of the review:
1. Little whirlpool ram's-horn snail <i>Anisus vorticulus</i>	Add to Schedule 5 and the ditches that snail lives in be protected under Section 9(4)(a)	Recommendation not forwarded to Defra by JNCC. <i>A. vorticulus</i> was not included in the JNCC shortlist as they considered that the snail had adequate protection by its listing on EU Habitat and Species Directives IIa and IV.
2. De Folin's lagoon snail <i>Caecum armoricum</i>	Downgrade from full protection to Section 9(4)(a) only	Recommendation not forwarded to Defra by JNCC

3. Lagoon sea slug <i>Tenellia adspersa</i>	Downgrade from full protection to Section 9(4)(a) only	Recommendation not forwarded to Defra by JNCC
4. Lagoon Snail <i>Paludinella littorina</i>	Removal from Schedule 5	Recommendation agreed: removed from Schedule 5 of the WCA
5. Northern hatchet shell <i>Thyasira gouldi</i>	Removal from Schedule 5	No action taken by JNCC as only present in Scottish waters. Recommendation to be considered by the Scottish Government in 2012.

With the exception of action on *P. littorina*, outcomes of the Fifth Review are a disappointment. The decisions for *C. armoricum* and *T. adspersa* seem unreasonable. Both species were removed by JNCC from the shortlist submitted to DEFRA because they considered the species “too vulnerable to reduce protection”. JNCC did not seem to appreciate that these species are small, not easy to find and not threatened by collectors; it is habitat protection that is key to their protection and this is what was proposed by Buglife and CS (by downgrade on Schedule 5 to Section 9(4a) which only relates to habitats). The retention of these two species with full Schedule 5 protection only creates unnecessary obstacles for those undertaking surveys, monitoring and research.

Matt Shardlow (Buglife CEO) made many representations to JNCC and Defra both to try to make sense of what appeared to be, at best, a flawed process and also to highlight many of the illogicalities in JNCC’s reasoning for not forwarding suggestions (not just our molluscan ones, but for many other invertebrates) to Defra. In one letter to DEFRA on 29th January 2010 Buglife say, “*We should clearly state at this point that on the basis of the information we have seen we do not accept that the JNCC has ‘carefully considered’ our suggestions. You have provided no evidence whatever in support of the suggestion that this is so. Moreover, so far as that can be discerned, most of the opinions on which the JNCC purports to base its decisions seem to be wide of the mark or mistaken*”. “*As JNCC no longer employ any invertebrate specialist and Natural England only employ two people to oversee the conservation of 40,000 species, if you have the objective of halting biodiversity loss at heart then you may need to find more effective ways of getting access to the knowledge that exists in Buglife’s 28 member organisations*”.

In a different letter to all Buglife member organisations, Buglife have advocated a different way to feed proposals to DEFRA for the next WCA QQR. They say, “*Many will recall that the consultation process leading up to the JNCC recommendations left a lot to be desired. Sound proposals appeared to be rejected (by JNCC) with little consideration, or by giving contradictory reasoning. We will be renewing our offer to DEFRA to set up an NGO and Agency group (probably under Invertebrate Link) to develop recommendations at an early stage for the next QQR (Sixth QQR)*”. The CS will endeavour to work with or within this body.

Fig 2: Image of *Paludinella littorina*

***Anisus vorticulus* – possible Special Areas of Conservation (Natural England Consultation 2010)**

I wrote in my last Officer's Report for 2010 (*Mollusc World* 27: 30) about the Natural England (NE) consultation seeking proposals for Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for the little whirlpool ram's-horn snail *Anisus vorticulus*. Early in 2011 NE announced the outcomes of the consultation process. These confirmed that 4 main areas would become SACs for the snail. These were the Arun Valley pSAC (including all of Amberley Wild Brooks and Pulborough Brooks), the Pevensy Levels pSAC and the addition of the snail as a feature of the existing Broads SAC (chiefly lying in Norfolk together with small areas of north Suffolk). These designations are clearly to be welcomed, although possibly slightly spoilt by the omission of a number of small and isolated populations. I pointed out in the previous report that it is really desirable to maintain all UK / English populations because significant genetic differences have been demonstrated to exist between populations of the snail both between different areas and also within some regional blocks. In their reply NE accepted that all known *A. vorticulus* populations would not be within SACs, but they did however note that, "*Anisus* is of course a European Protected Species and as you know is strictly protected wherever it occurs – whether within or outside designated areas". On a hopeful note they also stated that, "we will seek to prioritise possible *Anisus* boundary changes early on in the review and carefully assess your data as part of this exercise. As a result it may be that extensions to the existing SSSI(s) (and where appropriate the associated SACs) are recommended through this analysis, and we would seek to take forward these recommendations concurrently through any future consultation process for both SSSI notification and SAC designation".

Late in 2011 NE did indeed commission a series of small surveys to assess the status of a number of small populations and historical sites (such as a small pond in the Thames valley) of the snail not lying within SACs.

Fig 3: Image of an *Anisus vorticulus* ditch

British Wildlife

Molluscan 'wildlife reports' continued in 2011 with reports in February, June and October. The February issue focussed on describing or explaining key highlights from the Marine Recorder's Report of 2010, as well as paying tribute to the late Terry Wimbleton, who had contributed much material that had found its way into British Wildlife. Reports were also included on the supposed find of new populations of *Cochlicella barbara* on the Isles of Scilly. Publicity was also given to the Kerry Slug National Survey led by Dr. Rory McDonnell (see also *Mollusc World* 23:28 for more on this *Geomalacus maculosus* initiative).

The June issue described the recent launch by the National Museum of Wales, of the web-based Marine Bivalve Shells of the British Isles (Oliver *et al* 2010). This new guide covers 363 species, doubling the number in the former standard work N. Tebble's British Bivalve Seashells (BMNH, 1966). The website can be viewed at <http://naturalhistory.museumwales.ac.uk/britishbivalves/>. Other information described work undertaken by SNH in monitoring *Vertigo angustior* which also resulted in discovery of the first population of the blind snail *Cecilioides acicula* in western Scotland. The SAC consultation for *Anisus vorticulus* was described (see this report above). Finally it reported

on the activities undertaken by the National Trust to minimise potential damage to Roman snail *Helix pomatia* populations at Chedworth Roman Villa near Cirencester.

The October report contained a summary and discussion of the 2010 Non-marine Officer's report. The further finds of *Balea perversa* and *B. heydeni* were described, as was the exciting news of the discovery of *Pupilla pratensis* new to Ireland. Further discussion of possible *Cochlicella barbara* sites were included. Upon examining some suggested *C. barbara* from the Isles of Scilly and the Solway Firth, Ben Rowson concluded that they were no more than forms of *C. acuta*, although he did consider that some populations of 'true' *C. barbara* are present in the UK. The report concluded with a summary of the fifth Quinquennial Review of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (see above – this report).

Fig 4: Image comparing shells of *Cochlicella acuta* & *C. barbara*

Assistance with Conservation Information Leaflets:

2011 saw the publication of further documents aimed at providing information and/or site management advice for molluscs of conservation importance; the Conservation Officer was able to assist in their production and also to ensure that the CS web link and logo were included.

Early in 2011 the Suffolk Wildlife Trust released a series of 50 species leaflets to celebrate 50 years of the Trust's existence. Number 8 in the series concerns the Little Whirlpool Ram's-horn Snail *Anisus vorticulus*. Suffolk supports nationally important populations of this European Protected Species and the document provides a concise statement about the snail's distribution, ecology and management; it can be viewed at www.suffolkwildlifetrust.org/species-and-habitats/species-8

Since 2008 **Roman Snails** *Helix pomatia* have been protected under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act making it illegal to intentionally kill, handle or possess them without a NE licence. *H. pomatia* frequently occurs in locations where it may be affected by development that can cause habitat disturbance or loss. In October 2011 Natural England published the first edition of the information document 'Roman snails and development'. This technical information note, TIN103 (which can be downloaded from <http://naturalengland.etraderstores.com/NaturalEnglandShop/TIN103>) has been written for developers and land use planners, but is also of use to ecological consultants, local authorities and wildlife organisations. Since the note was first published Matt Shardlow of Buglife has made suggestions for a couple of small changes, which should appear in a revised edition. Although the publication correctly states that *H. pomatia* is found in the three areas of the Chilterns, North Downs, Cotswolds / Mendip fringes, it does not mention the important, small and isolated populations present between Ipswich and Cambridge (or very confirmed ones on the South Downs). Perhaps this leaflet has been published in good time; the construction of the Government's proposed high-speed rail link (HS2) between London and Birmingham will (if built!) plough through areas of the Chilterns which are a stronghold area for the snail.

Fig 5: Image of Roman snails *Helix pomatia*

Pond Conservation Network Project:

On 8th December 2011 I attended a meeting led by Pond Conservation, Natural England and The Amphibian and Reptile Conservation. The meeting was attended by 22 delegates from 12 NGO and governmental bodies. I describe below the background to the initiative and some of the issues raised.

Background: Species and habitat surveillance are the keys to biodiversity protection. This provides essential information that describes distribution, abundance and change in species and habitats. At best, such environmental data can help interpret trends and identify threats. The UK has a long tradition of biodiversity surveillance, undertaken both by statutory and voluntary sector organisations. Traditionally, however, the best-established (or most well-known) programmes tend to focus upon the most conspicuous or ‘popular’ taxa (birds, plants, butterflies) and the most economically important habitats (e.g. rivers). These surveillance schemes have also received the majority of statutory funding support. There is wide recognition, significantly now by Government agencies, that to adequately protect biodiversity requires provision of good quality surveillance data covering a wider range of species and habitats than are currently monitored. There is also acceptance that this needs to be accompanied by a better spread of resources. Given the number of habitats and species for which surveillance data would be beneficial, one option is to encourage greater, and more structured, volunteer monitoring as a way to collect data from a wider range of taxa and habitat types. There are clear opportunities here for CS, should it so wish, to organise and encourage volunteer effort to contribute to a wider surveillance programme involving many other similar organisations.

The pond surveillance network project: The ‘fledgling’ pond surveillance project (part funded by DEFRA and Natural England) aims to use ponds as a pilot habitat to investigate volunteer-based biodiversity surveillance, based around specific habitats. The idea is to establish whether benefits will arise (both for data collection and to NGOs in other ways) by agreeing a network of pond sites that can be used by volunteer groups to record their own specialisms and, where possible, other taxa and associated environmental data.

The scoping meeting: Following introductory presentations, the meeting used discussions and a series of structured workshops to explore some of the issues and logistics related to the introduction of this scheme. Details considered included the advantages, gains and challenges for statutory bodies and NGOs (both separate and mutual) of having an involvement in the scheme. Detailed decisions were not reached at this scoping meeting, which was designed to generate ideas. Detailed feedback will be possible in 2012 following the release of the summary document explaining the outcomes of the meeting and the next steps in the project.

Fig 6: Image of *Omphiscola glabra* pond

Biodiversity 2020: developing indicators to measure success

DEFRA has published ‘England Biodiversity Indicators’ annually since 2003. DEFRA state that, following a recent review, they have revised the list to 26 ‘robust indicators’. The Society was invited to comment upon the indicators in the newly launched ‘Strategy for England’s Wildlife and Ecosystem Services, Biodiversity 2020’. The use of indicators is proposed for two reasons:

1. The new biodiversity strategy provides a response to the international goals and targets for the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) agreed in Nagoya in 2010. Signatories to this (England in this case) agreed to use indicators to report on progress at a national level.
2. Indicators provide a means of synthesising and communicating complex information to a broad audience, also allowing a wide range of others to judge progress. They are used to inform policy decisions in non-biodiversity sectors (e.g. transport policy) that have an important impact on biodiversity conservation.

The Society was invited to study and comment upon 17 'indicator topics' (broadly the biodiversity indicators) grouped into 4 'priority areas' as shown below (Table 6):

Strategy Priority Areas	Proposed Indicator topics
A more integrated large-scale approach to conservation on land and sea	1. Extent & condition of selected habitats
	2. Extent & condition of protected sites
	3. Habitat connectivity
	4. Status of priority species
	5. Trends in abundance & distribution of selected species (birds, butterflies, bats and plants)
	6. Status of habitats & species providing essential services (e.g. water quality & regulation, carbon capture, pollination & public enjoyment)
	7. Genetic diversity in native breeds of farm animals and cultivated varieties of agricultural and horticultural crops
Putting people at the heart of biodiversity policy	8. Awareness, understanding and support for biodiversity conservation
	9. Taking personal action for biodiversity
	10. Valuation and accounting for biodiversity
	11. Integrating biodiversity considerations into local decision making
	12. Innovative financial mechanisms
	13. Sustainable consumption
	14. Expenditure on domestic and international biodiversity
Reducing environmental pressures	15. Trends in pressures on biodiversity (climate change, impacts, pollution, invasive species)
	16. Integration of biodiversity into key production sectors (agriculture, forestry, fisheries)
Improving our knowledge	17. Availability of biodiversity data and information for decision making.

Associated with these indicator topics was the invitation to contribute on selected areas where significant further development was required. The framework document was complex and in my opinion ambiguous in many sections. There were, however, a small number of areas where CS expertise might be of use. These related to the use of selected Mollusca to act as (1) indicators of certain UK Priority Habitats (2) as possible indicators of habitat connectivity and (3) species indicators of the status of the UK BAP priority process.

I will report back to CS with further details and associated web-links when the outcomes of this biodiversity indicators strategy are released.

Adequacy of biodiversity monitoring to meet EU policy objectives

In October 2011 CS were invited by The Institute for European Environmental Policy to respond to a rather daunting and partially ambiguous list of questions linked to EU FP7 Project – SCALES: “Securing the Conservation of biodiversity across Addministrative Levels and spatial, temporal and Ecological Scales”. This project was trying to undertake a review for the EU on the adequacy of biodiversity monitoring to meet EU 2020 biodiversity targets. Much of the work that the questionnaire sought to address related more particularly to governmental bodies such as Natural England and The Environment Agency. Despite the fact that CS is a relatively small and a wholly voluntary-based organisation, a nucleus of members do contribute to monitoring by sitting on, or reporting to the UK Terrestrial Molluscan Steering Group as well as directly to governmental conservation bodies such as Natural England. The Society’s ‘Conservation and Recording Committee’ have previously made significant contributions to the ‘Article 17’ reporting (required by the EU of UK statutory conservation bodies like NE) by considering survey data (gathered by work undertaken outside of the Society) relating to species listed on the EU’s Habitat and Species Directive.

Red Lists

On 21st November CS were told that Buglife were leading on proposals to consider how to advance red listing in the UK. To quote from Matt Shardlow’s message:

“Buglife and others have started to consider how best to take forward the red listing of all taxonomic groups in Britain. After a number of years in the doldrums, during which some lists became frustratingly out of date, there are now signs of an increasing acceptance that understanding and tracking the status of species is very important and is one of the basic tenets of determining conservation priorities. Indeed there is optimism that there will be new red lists created for several taxonomic groups in the next couple of years.

A number of people we have spoken to are enthusiastic about the idea of developing a clearer vision for red listing and refreshing what we currently do so that it could be done better in the future.

We are considering putting together a small joint project to review where we are and develop firm proposals for taking forward red listing (incorporating conservation concern and rarity approaches). This could look at:

Geographical issues – UK/GB/Countries

Format – books or an IUCN style online website and database

Process – what needs reviewing when – could we make rapid changes when appropriate

Structure – a new Red List committee and/or panel

As a first step we (Margaret Palmer to be specific!) have compiled a list to show what has been done to date and what is currently underway. This should help us to understand where we are in terms of progress towards universally up-to-date British and country red lists of species and to identify the gaps that need to be addressed.”

CS together with a substantial number of other invertebrate-focused organisations have expressed an interest in working to progress the red list process and this will proceed in 2012.

In her feedback Margaret Palmer included five tables summarising red lists in a variety of current contexts. Below I have extracted (and slightly adapted) molluscan entry details from the four tables including Mollusca.

Table 1. British & Irish Red Lists and status reviews:

Taxonomic group	Year	Author	Publication
Britain: Mollusca (non-marine)	2010	TBA (prepared by Killeen & Seddon)	Red list prepared (but as yet unpublished) with support and comment from CS
Ireland (including Northern Ireland) Mollusca (non-marine)	2009	Byrne <i>et al</i>	Irish Red List No. 2. Non-marine molluscs. NPWS

Table 2. European Red Lists:

Taxonomic group	Date	Author(s)	Publication	Notes
Mollusca	2011	Cuttelod <i>et al</i>	European Red List of Non-marine Molluscs. EC/IUCN	All freshwater & selection of terrestrial species (total 2089)

Table 3. UK invertebrate species on international Red Lists:

Species		IUCN Global Red Lists	IUCN European Red Lists	British Status
<i>Margaritifera auricularia</i>	Spengler's freshwater mussel	Critically endangered (2010)	Critically endangered (2011)	Extinct
<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>	Pearl mussel	Endangered (1996)	Critically endangered (2011)	Not threatened (1991)
<i>Pseudanodonta complanata</i>	Depressed river mussel	Vulnerable (2011)	Near threatened (2011)	Not threatened (1991)
<i>Sphaerium rivicola</i>	River orb mussel	Vulnerable (2011)	Least concern (2011)	Not threatened (1991)
<i>Vertigo angustior</i>	Narrow-mouthed whorl snail	Conservation dependent (1996)	Vulnerable (2011)	Endangered (E) (1991)
<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>	Desmoulin's whorl snail	Conservation dependent (1996)	Vulnerable (2011)	Rare (R) (1991)
<i>Omphiscola glabra</i>	Mud snail	Near threatened (2011)	Near threatened (2011)	Vulnerable (V) (1991)
<i>Phenacolimax major</i>	Greater pellucid glass snail	Near threatened (2011)	Near threatened (2011)	Not threatened (1991)
<i>Vertigo modesta</i> (<i>V. arctica</i>)	A whorl snail	Near threatened	Near threatened (2011)	Endangered (UK) (1991)

		(2011)		
<i>Vertigo lilljeborgi</i>	Lilljeborg's whorl snail	Near threatened (2011)	Near threatened (2011)	Rare (R) (1991)

Table 4. UK invertebrate species listed on European Habitats & Species Directive annexes:

Species		IUCN international status	Status in Britain	Annexes
<i>Anisus vorticulus</i>	Little whirlpool ram's-horn snail	Near threatened in Europe	Resident: vulnerable (V) (1991)	II IV
<i>Helix pomatia</i>	Roman snail	Least concern	Introduced. Not threatened (1991) (although in 1998 on Schedule 5 of Wildlife & Countryside Act)	V
<i>Margaritifera auricularia</i>	Spengler's freshwater mussel	Critically endangered (CR) globally & in Europe	Extinct	IV
<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>	Pearl mussel	Critically endangered (EN). Critically endangered (en) in Europe	Resident. Not red listed (1991). Status needs to be reassessed	II V
<i>Vertigo angustior</i>	Narrow-mouthed whorl snail	Vulnerable (V) in Europe	Resident. Endangered (E) (1991)	II
<i>Vertigo genesii</i>	Round-mouthed whorl snail	Least concern globally & Europe	Resident. Endangered (E) (1991)	II
<i>Vertigo geyeri</i>	Geyer's whorl snail	Least concern globally & Europe	Resident. Endangered (E) (1991)	II
<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>	Desmoulin's whorl snail	Vulnerable (V) in Europe	Resident. Rare (R) (1991)	II

Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority species conservation delivered by 'species types'

In early December 2011 Buglife sent the Society draft consultation documents and a spread sheet produced by Natural England (NE). These detailed how NE saw BAP species conservation being delivered. In particular they had categorised species depending on whether they can be delivered by habitat conservation alone or whether they need more 'individualised' work. Comments will be fed into the NE EBS (England Biodiversity Strategy) plan to be released in 2012. In the table below I show how NE have suggested that English BAP species conservation needs can largely be dealt with.

The Society had very little time to fully consider these proposals, which may seem rather simplistic. In a response to this consultation, Evelyn Moorkens questioned if the 'higher' species types categories also include the lower categories as well. For example, are the

'additional measures' in type 4 to be combined with the bespoke habitat management of type 3? It is important that this can occur in cases such as for the pearl mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera*, where captive breeding may be required BUT this is insufficient in itself if there are not also long term improvements in river catchment habitat quality. There are clearly many questions that need to be asked in relation to this policy. CS will need to give these proposals considerably more detailed scrutiny in 2012 if it is be confident that they might work to ensure favourable outcomes for BAP priority Mollusca; watch this space!

Priority Species allocated by Natural England ‘Species Types’ – Summary Table (✓ = NE suggested category; details in blue (queries) suggestions made by CS of possible changes)

BAP Species (only UK BAP species in relation to presence in England):	NE ‘Species types’ in relation to habitat (see Natural England document for explanation)					
	Type 1: Species expected to improve by generic habitat management alone	Type 2: Species expected to improve by generic habitat BUT focussed management	Type 3: Species requiring bespoke habitat management	Type 4: Species requiring factors other than habitat management	Type 5: Extinct species	Type 6: Species with largely unknown ecology
<i>Anisus vorticulus</i>		✓				
<i>Gyraulus acronicus</i>		✓				
<i>Heleobia stagnorum</i>		✓	?			
<i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>				✓		
<i>Mercuria similis</i>		✓				
<i>Myxas glutinosa</i>					✓	
<i>Omphiscola glabra</i>	✓	?				
<i>Pisidium tenuilineatum</i>	✓	?				
<i>Pseudanodonta complanata</i>	✓					
<i>Quickella arenaria</i>		✓				
<i>Segmentina nitida</i>		✓				
<i>Sphaerium solidum</i>		✓		?	(control of invasive competitor)	
<i>Truncatellina cylindrica</i>		✓	?			
<i>Valvata macrostoma</i>	✓	?				
<i>Vertigo angustior</i>	✓					
<i>Vertigo genesii</i>		✓				
<i>Vertigo geyeri</i>		✓				
<i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i>	✓					

Associations with other organisations:

The Conservation Officer continues to attend Conservation Committee meetings of The Sussex Wildlife Trust. In the **Adastra** publication for 2011, I reported on new notable finds of *Truncatella subcylindrica*, *Leucophytia bidentata*, *Vertigo moulinsiana*, *Helicigona lapicida*, *Anodonta anatina* and *Unio pictorum* in the county. Links with a wide variety of other governmental and NGO organisations are maintained through membership of Invertebrate Link. In 2011 I became a trustee of the newly created Arun and Rother Rivers Trust. Throughout 2011 the Society worked closely with and received news and other updates from The Invertebrate Conservation Trust (Buglife); links with Buglife have been of considerable mutual benefit to both organisations and Buglife's support on a number of issues is much appreciated. (**Adastra** 2011: An annual review of wildlife recording in Sussex. Sussex Biodiversity Records Centre, Henfield. www.sxbrc.org.co.uk)

References:

To be added

Martin Willing 2/2012

Conservation Officer Report 2011.doc