



## Spiked Rampion (*Phyteuma spicatum*)

Project Update - 2016

The Species Recovery Trust

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Registered in England and Wales Charity 1146387

**the**  
**species**  
**recovery**  
**trust**



## Summary

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10km	Site name	1995/6	2010	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
TQ50	Abbots Wood	23	11	8	16 (+3)	21	17	28
	Abbots Wood Intro					75	17	1
TQ51	Newplace Farm	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
	Maynards Green; Bottle Shaw	14	4	8	8	8	9 (4 flwg)	7 (6)
	Dower House Farm; Butlett's Wood	2	6	10	14	9	17 (24 spikes)	NR
	Mill Wood, New Sapperton Farm	unknown	2 (2011)	1	1	1	2	2
TQ52	Riverside road verge (Tinkers Lane)	285 (220 flwg)	148 (105 flwg)	*c. 189 (140 flwg)	c.137	135	257 (359 flwng)	188 (273)
	Little England Farm; Homegrove Wood	5	1	2	4 (+26)	3 (+12)	3 (+10)	19 (47.5)
TQ61	St Dunstans Farm	4	5	5	4	3	5 (5 flwg)	4 (4)
	Rushlake Green; Millpond Wood & private garden	4	22	32	36	40	49 (37 flwg)	42 (65 spikes)
	TOTALS	339	200	256	220	230	376	308

Overall population sizes remain good, although with a slight decline. The almost total loss of plants at the Abbots Wood intro site, including plants in the enclosure, is surprising and does not bode well for future re-introductions. Dower House was not monitored in 2016.

## Outcomes

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	AIM	PROGRESS
<b>Key outcomes (short-term)</b>	1. Set up monitoring programme for all sites	9/10 sites monitored in 2016
	2. Carry out habitat restoration work to create optimum conditions, including Bracken eradication at Riverside.	Start made on experimental Bracken control at riverside. Scrub clearance carried out at St Dunstons
	3. Establish two new experimental populations in the wild	It looks like we have lost the Abbots Wood new site
	4. Breed up captive plants at Kew	Plants in production
	5. Bulk up populations at New Place Farm and New Sapperton Wood (where only one plant is growing at the moment)	Caged populations at Newplace has survived. Sapperton now has 2 plants due to discovery of new individual
	6. Set up publicity at Kew and Wilderness Woods (leaflet, talks, captive bred plants in display beds)	Plants in production
<b>Key outcomes (long-term)</b>	1. Get all populations up to double numbers and Riverside greater than 200 plants for four consecutive years.	50% achieved
	2. Get all sites into favourable condition and set up long-term management programmes with landowners	Some have achieved this, still a lot of work to do
	3. Network of volunteers trained and monitoring sites	Currently covered by steering group members

## General progress and actions

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2016

### 20<sup>th</sup> May 2016 - Actions

Plashett Wood – **Bob** to contact Mike Cameron (07766415129) to arrange visit with Tim and others. Notes: Spiked Rampion present according to Natural England 2010 report, but this is a suspected aberration.

Abbots Woods – **Dom** to confirm visit with Stuart/Tim on 9th June 2016. If he can't make it Tim to liaise with Stuart. In winter Stuart to Strim more heavily at Lakeside and block desire line, scarify in cage and other plots. Dom to send maps. Notes: Plants at 'Lake Clearing' site are part of historic population. **Maps sent**

Newplace Farm – **Steph** to arrange visit; Tim to accompany.

New Sapperton Farm – **Steph** to arrange visit; Tim to accompany. Tim to then take on site from Steph. Beware of bees!

Little England Farm – **Steph** to arrange visit; Tim to accompany. Carry out light clearance and scarification inside cage. Notes: Some plants are part of original population, others are introduced from Riverside.

Bottle Shaw – **Dom** to visit (with Tim hopefully) on late afternoon 8th June 2016. **Dom didn't make it but owner sent record in**

Dower House Farm – **Dom** to contact Alison Wright, ask about new planted trees and their removal and put her in touch with Tim. Dawn may also visit. **Emailed and unsure from answer, best sorted out on a filed visit**

Rushlake Green – **Kate** to arrange visit; Bob and Tim to accompany.

St Dunstan's Farm – **Ralph** to arrange visit; Tim to accompany. Notes: There is leaf material from this site at Wakehurst Place, RBG Kew.

Tinkers Farm – Potentially a new site on a farm owned by Chris Mitchell, surveyed by Kate Reilly September 2015 for Natural England. **Kate** to arrange visit; Tim to accompany.

Riverside - **Steph** to fix date for survey, hopefully including ESCC road verge surveyor. . Additional Bracken pulled during site visit and newly dug ditch viewed with concern. **Kate** to investigate and liaise with **Dom**. **Bob** to produce map.

Wilderness Wood - potential site inspection with Dan. **Dom** to liaise and create interpretation. Hopefully bring plants at next years meeting.

Browns Lane – all agree good site for re-intro once more plants are ready

Ex-situ work. **Steph** to have a think about creating slug-proof bed and attempt to establish plants from seeds outdoors.

**Steph** to isolate one plant and look at seed production.

## General

**Dom** to circulate monitoring forms

**Dom** to fundraise over winter

**Tim** to provide more information to group on project, and check licensing arrangements

2017

# SITE ACCOUNTS

## Abbots Wood

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<p>Description of species population (e.g. 10 plants on single ants' nest c.5m north of gate)</p>	<p>Forest walk central -0          Forest walk north – 6          Lake (new site 2013) – 21          Glade site (plots) - 1</p>
<p>Site condition and management (e.g. site grazed by sheep, site overgrown and scrubby)</p>	<p>Forest walk central: still similar to last year          Forest walk north: as last year          Lake: overgrown          Glade sites: overgrowing, deer browsing</p>
<p>Increase or decrease in population since last site visit?</p>	<p>Forest walk central: decrease of 1          Forest walk north: increase of 3          Lake: increase of 8          Glade sites: decrease of 15</p>
<p>Potential threats to population (e.g. over-grazing by rabbits, disturbance from motorbikes, scrub encroachment)</p>	<p>Forest walk central – overshading and trampling          Forest walk north – rabbit browsing          Lake (new site 2013) – competition          Glade site (plots) – competition and deer browsing</p>
<p>Actions required (e.g. scrub removal, installation of protective fencing)</p>	<p>Forest walk central – thin out a few trees overhead winter'16          Forest walk north – protect area with brash to stop rabbits          Lake (new site 2013) – strim vegetation hard, then lay brash over area to stop herbivores          Glade site (plots) – strim and scarify</p>
<p>Notes (e.g. likely to be more plants evident later in year)</p>	<p>Forest walk north – rabbits may be encouraging seedlings by localised soil disturbance, but this is outweighed by their browsing of spikes          Lake – I cut back some of the bramble in March, but due to the wet, warm conditions before flowering, the clearing has become overgrown. So I trimmed some bramble to see whether any later flowering occurs from the vegetated plants.          Glade sites- it would be worth disturbing the ground inside all 3 plots to see if there is any recruitment, considering the large number of seed produced in 2014. There is no bare ground in 2016.          I think 2016's wet Spring has had an impact on the plants, both in the way of competition and increased slug damage. Several spikes looked like they'd been eaten by slugs not rabbits. Leaves were nibbled too.</p>



## Newplace Farm

Changes from Initial Site Visit (e.g. site now grazed by sheep, site has been recently mown)	No significant change from 2015
Description of species population (e.g. 10 plants on single ants' nest c.5m north of gate)	No plants found. No seedlings found from 2011 sowing.

## New Sapperton Farm, Mill Wood

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Changes from Initial Site Visit (e.g. site now grazed by sheep, site has been recently mown)	No change from 2015, possibly less rabbit disturbance.
Description of species population (e.g. 10 plants on single ants' nest c.5m north of gate)	Caged plant thriving ~0.8m tall with ten flowering spikes. No plant found next to coppiced single-poled hornbeam. Plant on other side of gully bank about halfway down present. One flowering spike.
Increase or decrease in population since last site visit?	No change: 2 plants
Potential threats to population (e.g. over-grazing by rabbits, disturbance from motorbikes, scrub encroachment)	Three slugs found on the flowering spikes.
Actions required (e.g. scrub removal, installation of protective fencing)	2m x 2m Cage installed early July 2013.
Notes (e.g. likely to be more plants evident later in year)	Some vegetation cleared in the cage. New plant is not on Pat Broad's land, but on land belonging to Charles? Twizzledown Mill? Tim may know someone who knows him and will investigate.

## Riverside road verge

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Changes from Initial Site Visit (e.g. site now grazed by sheep, site has been recently mown)	Bracken and bindweed abundant and very dense in places. Damage from vehicle tyres of in places and soil dumped on bank, see Survey Sheet Notes. Bracken significantly reduced in cleared area.
Description of species population (e.g. 10 plants on single ants' nest c.5m north of gate)	See attached monitoring sheet.
Increase or decrease in population since last site visit?	<b>DECREASE</b> in plants (188 compared with 257 in 2015) and flowering spikes (273 compared with 359 in 2015). Plants not apparent (disappeared?) where the bracken is very dense. Continuing to increase at the west end where bracken is cleared.
Potential threats to population (e.g. over-grazing by rabbits, disturbance from motorbikes, scrub encroachment)	Some grazing, shading from bracken appears to be affecting areas now. There is some shading from trees; from north, a line of oaks on opposite side of lane & hornbeam on bank which coincides with area of low density plants along bank.
Actions required (e.g. scrub removal, installation of protective fencing)	Continue bracken control trials. Combine 2017 Annual Meeting (20/05/16) with monitoring visit and further bracken pull?  Continue to flail in Sept and remove arisings.

## Little England Farm

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Changes from Initial Site Visit (e.g. site now grazed by sheep, site has been recently mown)	26 plants introduced in autumn 2013 – see previous reports. Browsing by deer/rabbits evident.
Description of species population (e.g. 10 plants on single ants' nest c.5m north of gate)	See attached Monitoring Sheet 2016
Increase or decrease in population since last site visit?	<b>Increase:</b> See table below New wild plant found growing through clump of <i>Deschampsia caespitosa</i> (with difficulty)
Potential threats to population (e.g. over-grazing by rabbits, disturbance from motorbikes, scrub encroachment)	Deer browsing damaging unprotected plants. In 2015 a pile of sawn logs/brush appeared very close to where plants 4, 5 and 6 were planted in Area 1. This was still there. Plants 4, 5 and 6 could not be found.  Deer were seen when walking to the site and when leaving.  Hawthorn, hazel, bramble, goose grass regrowth strong in cage. Cut back/cleared by hand.  Wild plant in Area 1 on bank growing weakly due to competition from grasses, brambles, ivy. Cleared around it.
Actions required (e.g. scrub removal, installation of protective fencing)	Monitor natural regeneration of protected plants. Continue to clear competing vegetation where necessary.
Notes (e.g. likely to be more plants evident later in year)	Clear effects of browsing on unprotected plants.  Gate at field entrance and fencing on both sides removed. Measurements from mature trees were taken to assist with locating wild plants.

Plant description/no.	Jun-16		Note
	+/-	Flowering Spikes	
Area 1 (east) wild plant behind gate	0	0	
Area 1 (east) wild plant on bank - location 9.6m from Oak A; 3.33m from Oak B; 0.3m from gully bottom	1	1	Weak with fl.spike bent - cleared competing vegetation
1	1	1	Remaining fl.spikes browsed
2	1	4	
3	1	1.5	Remaining fl.spikes browsed
4	0	0	
5	0	0	
6	0	0	
7	0	0	
8	0	0	
9	0	0	
10	1	0	Browsed off
11	1	0	Browsed off
12	0	0	
Area 2 (west) wild plants - location 8.25m from Oak A; 11.2m from nearest edge of concrete at field entrance; 13.3m from Oak B	2	0	Browsed off. 1 plant struggling to grow through clump of Deschampsia
Area 2 (west) wild plant in enclosure	1	2	
1	1	4	
2	0	0	
3	0	0	
4	1	5	
5	0	0	
6	1	5	
7	1	2	
8	1	1	
9	1	5	
10	0	0	
11	1	2	
12	1	3	
13	1	1	
14	1	10	
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>47.5</b>	

## Bottle Shaw

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7 plants, slight decrease  
From Peter Tolhurst

I counted 7 flower/bud heads last week, at least 6 discreet plants.  
A couple have seem to have got bent stalks since----deer or dog trampling?  
Stalks about 8-12" high (6), 18" (1) but looking a bit on the 'weedy' side. (probably a bad description in the context !)

## Dower House Farm

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No data

# Rushlake Green

## Spiked Rampion Survey, Rushlake Green 06/06/16 (Bob Foreman & Kate Cole)

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### **Track TQ 62223 17898**

1 plant + 3 spikes  
1 leaves only  
1 + 1 spike  
1 + 6 spikes  
2 x empty cage  
TOTAL 4 plants, 10 flowering spikes

### **Opposite side of Track**

1 + 2 spikes  
1 + 3 spikes (2 nibbled)  
Bricks? 1 (BF photo for ID)  
2 + 2 (or 1 + 4 BF photo)  
1 + 2  
TOTAL 4 plants, 11 flowering spikes

### **Off track to streamside TQ 62173 17981**

1 + 1 spike  
1 + 1 spike  
1 + 2 spikes  
TOTAL 3 plants, 4 flowering spikes

### **Main river bank colony (BF photo of habitat)**

1 + 1 spike (? new)  
1 + 1 spike  
2 possible/probable plants (BF photo for ID + photo of definite plant for ID)  
1 + 1 spike  
1 + 2  
1 + 0  
TOTAL 5 plants, 5 flowering spikes (+ 2 plants)

### **Big Pen/Cage on River Bank TQ 62180 17995**

Full shade (beech cover), steep bank, low vegetation/moss with bare ground and some fern. Stream runs SW/NE. River will come up and submerge sometimes. Bank is NW facing.

22 plants + 30 spikes  
+ 5 to 10 seedlings  
TOTAL 22 plants, 30 flowering spikes (+ seedlings)

### **Other River Bank TQ 62155 17992**

empty cage with mouse holes  
1 + 0 spikes  
1 + 2 spikes  
TOTAL 2 plants, 2 flowering plants + poss. some juvenile plants.

### **Woodland Enclosure**

1 + 3 (flowers less fa along than other areas. Plant looks very vigorous though)  
+ 1 juvenile  
+ 2 possible juveniles (BF photo IDs)  
TOTAL 2 plants, 3 flowering spikes

GRAND TOTAL 42 plants, 65 flowering spikes (+ juveniles/seedlings)



## St Dunstans Farm

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<p>Description of species population (e.g. 10 plants on single ants' nest c.5m north of gate)</p> <hr/>	<p>4 flowering plants close together in usual place by their marker sticks, just inside and to right of exclosure gate, bearing 1,1,2,3 = 7 spikes on 8/6/2016. No non-flowering plants found despite careful but limited search. [Same 4 mature plants (rosettes) as seen 22/4/2016 when 1 newly established seedling also found - see photo below].</p> <hr/>
<p>Site condition and management (e.g. site grazed by sheep, site overgrown and scrubby)</p> <hr/>	<p>Bramble regrowth up to level of SR flower spikes. No bramble clearance undertaken in winter 2015-16 following bramble and canopy reduction previous winter (on 20/12/2014).</p> <hr/>
<p>Increase or decrease in population since last site visit?</p> <hr/>	<p>Down by 1 from 5 flowering plants in 2015 (2,2,2,2,5 = 13 spikes) though only 3 flowering plants in 2014 (one with 7 spikes). Also flower spikes down from last year (13 down to 7). No sign of new single young plant found and photographed on 22/4/2016 by RH, close to the 4 extant mature plants.</p> <hr/>
<p>Potential threats to population (e.g. over-grazing by rabbits, disturbance from motorbikes, scrub encroachment)</p> <hr/>	<p>Increasing bramble growth. Fencing and gate all sound.</p> <hr/>
<p>Actions required (e.g. scrub removal, installation of protective fencing)</p> <hr/>	<p>Bramble reduction already planned with David Hobden for w/e of 18/19 Feb 2017.</p> <hr/>
<p>Notes (e.g. likely to be more plants evident later in year)</p> <hr/>	<p>Ferric phosphate slug pellets applied sparingly around the plants.</p> <hr/>

## General actions and progress

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Steph to get costing on genetic analysis, just for reference

Continue to collect leaf material, as it's easy to do when we're on site (Steph are there specific envelopes and protocols we should follow?)

Dom to re-read Belinda's work and look at self-pollination and genetics issues

Plashett Wood, Steph to survey historical sites. Dom to chat to Blenks.

Tim circulate photos of Brown Lane – to be considered for next re-intro. Done, see separate report

Peter Marren to hopefully visit a site – he visited Riverside and Abbots Wood

Riverside Survey to be held on June 19<sup>th</sup>. Other sites as per report.

## Steering Group

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The steering group are:

Dominic Price, The Species Recovery Trust

Stephanie Miles, Millennium Seedbank

Stuart Sutton, Forestry Commission

Jon Wood, Independent Consultant and conservation volunteer

Ralph Hobbs, Independent Consultant and conservation volunteer

Kate Cole, East Sussex County Council,

Dawn Brickwood, Weald Meadows Partnership & Services

Bob Foreman, Sussex Wildlife Trust

Tim Rayner, Conservation Volunteer

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## About Us

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The Species Recovery Trust is a charity set up to tackle the loss of some of the rarest species in the UK.

There are over nine hundred native species in the UK that are classed as under threat, with several hundreds more currently widespread but known to be in significant decline. The countryside is now bereft of many species that were a familiar sight a mere generation ago.

A small number of these species are on the absolute brink of existence, poised to become extinct in our lifetimes; our goal is to stop them vanishing.

Our aim is to remove 50 species from the edge of extinction in the UK by the year 2050. In addition we are reconnecting people with wildlife and the natural world through training programmes and awareness raising.



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