



THE NATIONAL TRUST

INFORMATION SHEET

MANAGING RISK - European Protected Species Floating-leaved water plantain *Luronium natans*

Status and distribution

UK	Restricted to Wales and north-west England and as an introduction in the Norfolk Broads and Scotland. Global range has declined and is now restricted to north and west Europe. Priority species in the UKBAP. Protected Species under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and CroW Act 2000.
EU	Annexes II and IV Habitats Directive, Appendix I Bern Convention.

Floating-leaved water plantain was initially contained in the water bodies of north Wales. It spread to England via the canal system in the late nineteenth century. There it became well established but an increase in boat traffic, particularly in the canals, has caused a severe decline in the UK population.

Floating-leaved water plantain occurs in a range of freshwater habitats. It thrives in areas of open water which have a moderate amount of disturbance. It has been found in deep lakes, rivers, canals, bog pools and dried ditches. It seems to favour nutrient-poor sites such as oligotrophic and acidic lakes.

Presence within NT Properties

In the last decade floating-leaved water plantain has been recorded from a NT property in Pembrokeshire (Cirencester Recorder Database, 2002).

Threats and Risks

Habitat loss and eutrophication are the main reasons for the decline. As it is a poor competitor it relies on influences that prevent vegetation succession such as moderate disturbance of the water body. However, excessive disturbance can cause the species to decline.

There is chance of encountering known and unknown populations of floating-leaved water plantain whilst undertaking work on NT land. Any works that may remove or damage species must only proceed under licence or with advice from CCW and EN. Not only must the Trust abide by the law, but as a partner to the UKBAP, the Trust should also ensure that it maintains all floating-leaved water plantain populations occurring on Trust land. Maintenance of populations in all counties where this plant still occurs is a target within the UK action plan for the floating-leaved water plantain.

Examples of works likely to affect floating-leaved water plantain and its habitat and which may require safeguards such as licensing:

- Increased activities in water bodies containing floating-leaved water plantain.
- Increased boating activities in rivers or canals containing floating-leaved water plantain.
- Any activity that could increase succession in any water body containing floating-leaved water plantain.
- Picking or uprooting.

References and further reading

Action Plan for Floating-leaved Water Plantain (*Luronium natans*):
www.ukbap.org.uk

Annex II species – 1831 Floating Water Plantain *Luronium natans*:
www.jncc.gov.uk/publications

Oldham Biodiversity Action Plan for Floating Water Plantain:
www.oldhamagenda21.org.uk/biodiversity

DEFRA (2002). *European Protected Species Guidance Note. (WLF 11 (5/02))*.
DEFRA, Bristol. www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/regulat/forms/cons_man/wlf11.htm

Floating-leaved water plantain



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