

Photography: fragments of purple moor-grass and rush pastures found in Gordano Valley, Avon – Peter Wakely



[5.3] Purple moor-grass and rush pastures



Habitat action plans



CHAPTER 5

[5.3] Purple moor-grass and rush pastures

Purple moor-grass and rush pastures occur on poorly drained, usually acidic soils in lowland areas of high rainfall in South West England, South West Scotland and Northern Ireland. Their vegetation consists of various species-rich types of fen, meadow and rush pasture. Purple moor-grass and rushes, especially sharp-flowered rush, are usually abundant. Key species associated with purple moor-grass and rush pastures include meadow thistle, curlew and snipe. There is estimated to be 56,000 ha of purple moor-grass and rush pasture in the UK.

Purple moor-grass and rush pasture is uncommon in Avon. The sites where it is favourably managed are Clapton, Weston and Walton moors in the Gordano Valley and Max and Yanal Bog SSSIs. Sites with unknown management in Avon are Caswell, Tickenham, Nailsea and Kenn Moors. Only small areas of the listed sites support this specific habitat type. Despite its scarcity it was felt that an action statement, although not a full action plan, was required for this habitat in Avon, due to its national importance. Related plans: Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh, Watercourse and Floodplain.

Objective 1: Ensure no loss and maintain and enhance the quality of purple moor-grass and rush pasture in Avon

Target: *Aim for 80% purple moor-grass and rush pasture to be positively managed by 2010

Objective 2: Expand the area of purple moor-grass and rush pasture in Avon

Action	Date	Implementors
Continue to manage purple moor-grass and rush pasture in Clapton, Weston and Walton moors and Max and Yanal Bogs	ongoing	AWT, EN
Survey Tickenham, Nailsea and Kenn Moors to measure the extent of the habitat	2010	NSLMP, EN, FWAG, NSC
Encourage further uptake of agri-environment schemes on Tickenham, Nailsea and Kenn Moors	ongoing	NSLMP, FWAG, NSC, DEFRA, AWT, EN
Investigate potential to create this habitat in the Max Bog area. A possible site is fields adjacent to the AWT reserve, at least some of which are NSC owned. This would require a detailed feasibility study	2006/ 7	NSC, NSLMP, AWT