



# Rock Sea-lavender

## Local Biodiversity Action Plan

### Species English Name (Scientific name)

ROCK SEA-LAVENDER (LIMONIUM BRITANNICUM SSP. CELTICUM)



### Current status

The species of *Limonium* which are endemic to Britain all belong to the *Limonium binervosum* aggregate (rock sea-lavenders). The taxonomy of this group was revised in 1986 and nine species and numerous infra-specific taxa are now recognised. Of the nine species, eight are believed to be endemic to Britain, these are *Limonium britannicum*, *L. dodartiforme*, *L. loganicum*, *L. paradoxum*, *L. parvum*, *L. procerum*, *L. recurvum* and *L. transwallianum*. These species grow almost exclusively on rocks and sea-cliffs of a wide range of geological types although a few have also been recorded from other habitats.

All known colonies of the endemic rock sea-lavenders are confined to the west coasts of England and Wales between Dorset and Cumbria, with different species predominating on different stretches of coast. There is little evidence that these *Limonium* taxa have declined significantly. However, conservation action is proposed because of their endemic status and small population sizes.

*Limonium britannicum* ssp. *celticum* is listed in the RDB as NEAR THREATENED. It is confined to North Wales, Cheshire, Lancashire and Cumbria and is recorded in three 10 km squares in North West Britain. In Wirral, the plant occurs on Hilbre Island, off the west coast of the Wirral peninsula at the mouth of the Dee estuary. There are two colonies approximately 220m apart, containing 1000+



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and 100+ plants respectively.

Of the endemic taxa, nine are classified as VULNERABLE and the other six as NEAR THREATENED. They receive general protection under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, although none are specially protected under Schedule 8.

## Threats

- \* Erosion of sea cliffs
- \* Erosion of soil on sea cliffs
- \* Rise in sea level
- \* Inappropriate sea defence works
- \* Loss of suitable habitat through competition with other species
- \* Trampling of plants by recreation users

## How are we helping to conserve Rock Sea-lavender in the Cheshire region?

- \* Nationally, all known colonies of *L. britannicum* lie within SSSIs.
- \* Hilbre Island has the following designations: SSSI, LNR, Ramsar, SPA and candidate SAC. It is managed for recreation and nature conservation by Wirral Borough Council's Ranger Service.
- \* Rock walls have been built to retain soil on cliff-tops vulnerable to wave action. Walls also guide visitors away from some areas, reducing trampling.
- \* Interpretation of the environment is carried out by the Ranger Service, raising awareness of the plant's importance.

## Objectives, targets and actions

Objectives, targets and actions to help conserve rock sea-lavender in the Cheshire region can be found on the [Biodiversity Action Reporting System \(BARS\)](#) along with full details of our progress so far.

## How to find out more about Rock Sea-lavender

National Trust website - [http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-chl/w-countryside\\_environment/w-nature/w-nature-wildlife/w-wildlife-bap/w-nature-wildlife-bap-lavender.htm](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-chl/w-countryside_environment/w-nature/w-nature-wildlife/w-wildlife-bap/w-nature-wildlife-bap-lavender.htm)

Botanical Society of the British Isles - <http://www.bsbi.org.uk/>

UK Grouped BAP for Rock Sea-Lavenders - [www.ukbap.org.uk/UKPlans.aspx?ID=412](http://www.ukbap.org.uk/UKPlans.aspx?ID=412)



## Contact details

LBAP Chair D. Cavanagh, Hilbre Island LNR

Barbara Greenwood, Wirral Wildlife

National Lead Partners National Trust

Botanical Society of the British Isles National Lead Contacts Alex Lockton, Botanical Society of the British Isles

## References and Glossary

HMSO (1995): Biodiversity: The UK Steering Group Report, Volume 2: Action Plans, London.

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Ingrouille, M.J. and Stace, C.A. (1986), 'The *L. binervosum* Aggregate (Plumbaginaceae) in the British Isles' in The Botanical Journal of the Linnean Society, Vol 92, pp. 177-217.

Wigginton, M.J. (1999). British Red Data Books: Volume 1 - Vascular Plants (3rd Edition), Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Peterborough.

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