

Managing Native and Broadleaved Woodlands for Biodiversity

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Why look after your native woodland

- Provides shelter
- Can add to farm income dependent on management
- Increases Biodiversity
- Part of a healthy environment which supports farming.



Native woodland can be a major benefit to the farm business providing shelter, carbon capture and biodiversity



In order to maintain that shelter for the future the woodland must be managed in a sustainable way.



Sustainable Woodland and Livestock Management

Is there such a thing?

“Grazing and browsing by large herbivores are natural features of woodland ecosystems and grazing management should be considered from the outset, in management of semi-natural and native woods” (Rodwell & Patterson, 1994).

The balance is difficult!

Grazing Benefits of Trampling



- ☐ Controls Bracken
- ☐ Cattle create open areas which can be important for other species such as Butterflies
- ☐ Maintains an open woodland structure
- ☐ Opens ground vegetation and creates opportunities for tree seed



Grazing disadvantages



Browsing can prevent regeneration with the ultimate loss of the woodland

Browsing can damage mature trees

Cattle can poach ground causing soil damage and run off

The correct grazing balance will depend on



How many other grazing animals are in the wood Eg Deer

The grazing density of livestock in the wood

The length of time the livestock are in the wood

The time of year of the grazing

How well the animals know the wood

The type, breed and age of the livestock

What is right for your wood also depends on

- The condition of the wood
- The age of the wood
- The amount of open ground associated with the wood
- The type of wood you wish to maintain

The balance



The correct grazing management of a wood is different in every case and depends on what the aims of the wood are.

Woods are long term habitats but if the balance is not correct the mature trees may survive for years but in the long term the wood will not.

Looking after an existing wood is easier than establishing a new wood.



Many species can be supported
by a healthy native Woodland

Chequered Skipper

Identified by the Scottish Forestry Strategy as a key woodland species.

Is a species dependent on woodland clearings.

It is only found within a 30 mile radius of Fort William.
Extinct in England.



Golden Ringed Dragonfly

Open water and wetlands are often an important part of the biodiversity of a woodland.

They provide sheltered clearings for insects

Important for Dragonflies and damselflies



Black Grouse

Identified by the Scottish Forestry Strategy as a key woodland species.

One of the fastest declining bird Species in the UK

Is predominantly a forest edge Species requiring small areas of Open ground and woodland



Red Squirrel

Identified by the Scottish Forestry Strategy as a key woodland species.
Can live in a mix of broadleaf and coniferous trees.
Requires good quality woodland



FARM
ADVISORY
SERVICE



Pearl Bordered Fritillary

Identified by the
Scottish Forestry
Strategy as a key
woodland species.

A Butterfly of Sheltered
sunny woodland glades,
one of the fastest
declining Butterflies in
the UK.



Recommended Grazing Levels of Cattle in Woodland



0.01 to 0.1 LU/ha throughout the year

(But these figures are dependant on a large number of variables.)





Thank you