



Ymddiriedolaeth
Natur
Gwent
Wildlife Trust

Grayling

Hipparchia semele

Species Action Plan



The grayling butterfly is a highly cryptic species found in open habitats with bare ground, such as coastal areas, lowland heath and brownfield sites such as quarries. In flight they are less discreet, due to their medium-large size and looping-gliding flight habit. Their main foodplants are grasses such as sheep's fescue, red fescue, bristle bent and early hair-grass and they often use large rocks for shelter and warming in the sun. In the UK, they have declined in distribution by 62% since the 1970s and the reasons are not fully understood, but it is thought that land-use change may play a role.

In Gwent, graylings are mostly found in the north-west, with concentrations of records in the uplands, mostly associated with coal spoil sites. Greater Gwent is unlike most of the UK, where coastal populations are more typical.

Status

- ❖ Species of Principal Importance - Section 7 - Environment (Wales) Act 2016
- ❖ Endangered – Red List of British Butterflies
- ❖ Priority Species - UK Biodiversity Action Plan (2007)

Threats

- ❖ Habitat mis-management or under-management, resulting in natural succession, shading and loss of bare ground
- ❖ Habitat loss - post-industrial sites often seen as development opportunities
- ❖ Climate change

Current Action

- ❖ Colliery Spoil Invertebrates project (Buglife Cymru)
- ❖ B-Lines (Buglife)

	Objectives	Action
A	No net loss of occupied area for existing populations	1,2,3,5
B	Populations increasing in occupied area, abundance and viability	1,2,3,5
C	Habitats increased in size, quality, resilience and connectivity	1,2,3,5
D	Knowledge and understanding of the species increased, leading to appreciation, sense of responsibility and action	1-5

	Key Actions	Target
1	Establish training programme and annual surveys on GWT reserves and other key sites (LNRs); signpost volunteers to national surveys (UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme).	2025
2	Produce/distribute advice booklet and work with key stakeholders to ensure appropriate habitat management	2025 2026
3	Undertake survey and mapping to identify populations, key areas and opportunities to build connectivity	2027
4	Increase awareness through media and publishing platforms, talks, events, training	2030
5	Respond to potentially damaging developments through the planning process; campaign for better site protections - particularly Brownfield Sites	2030

Lead: Gwent Wildlife Trust

Key partners: TBC