DORSET LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY HABITAT ASSEMBLAGES

Habitat assemblage:	Species of species-rich scrub and scrub edge
Broad Habitat type:	Grassland
S41 and Priority Habitat type:	
Composite species assemblages:	Breeding birds of hedgerows and scrub habitats Invertebrates of species-rich scrub and scrub edges Plants of species-rich scrub and scrub edges

Habitat assemblage description:	Scrub is an important but often temporary feature of many habitats including grassland, heathland and coastal slopes. It is often seen as a problem and much time and money is spent in removing it or preventing it from encroaching on more open habitats. Scattered small patches of scrub found as mosaics of other habitats such as flower-rich grassland are preferable in some habitats to large homogenous stands. In certain situations and in small quantity scrub is a very important ecological feature providing a nesting habitat for birds and shelter and food-source for many invertebrates. Wind-pruned coastal scrub supports important assemblages of epiphytic lichens. Scrub is not a Priority Habitat in Dorset and it is difficult to assess the current extent of the habitat. The most species-rich scrub is found on chalk downland and limestone undercliffs on Portland and Purbeck.

Other related assemblages:	Species of species-rich hedges and hedgebanks Species of longer calcareous grassland, and scrub margins

Pressures and Threats	
PA04	**Removal of small landscape features for agricultural land parcel consolidation (hedges, stone walls, rushes, open ditches, springs, solitary trees, etc.)**
	The intensification of agriculture has led to larger fields by the removal of ‘soft edges’ such as scattered and dense scrub from much of the modern landscape and now scrub is mainly confined to chalk downland, common land and coastal slopes.
PA07	**Intensive grazing or overgrazing by livestock**
	Intensive grazing prevents growth of saplings and the development of scrub and is useful in slowing or preventing scrub for invading more open habitats such as unimproved grassland. Around existing scrub intensive grazing can create gaps reducing the density of scrub and its suitability for breeding birds. Grazing animals use scrub for shade and shelter, high numbers of animals can lead to

	poaching and localised enrichment indicated by stands of stinging nettle and coarse grasses such as cock's-foot.
PA13	**Application of natural or synthetic fertilisers on agricultural land**
	Regular application of artificial fertilizers and slurry to land adjacent to scrub can lead to enrichment of the vegetation favouring robust species such as false oat-grass, cow parsley, hogweed and nettles at the expense of the more varied and herb-rich scrub-edge flora which requires more nutrient-poor conditions. This has resulted in a more homogeneous flora over much of our intensively farmed landscape to the detriment of invertebrates.
PI02	**Other invasive alien species**
	There are fewer non-native species in scrub than in grassland. Cotoneaster is present locally both on calcareous and acid soils. Sycamore seeds freely and if left will over-top and shade out native shrubs and reduce the diversity of the ground flora.
PI03	**Problematic native species**
	Invasive native species such as bracken, bramble and ivy have increased generally through lack of traditional management and hedgerows being fenced on both sides restricted grazing. Both bramble and ivy are important for invertebrates, but if they become too dominant they out-compete smaller and less competitive species. stinging nettle and cleavers are generally only a problem where there is excessive enrichment (See PA07 and PA13).
PM07	**Natural processes without direct or indirect influence from human activities or climate change**
	Natural succession will mean that the shrubs age and the scrub changes in density becoming less of a 'thicket' and more open. In this senescent stage it is less suitable for some breeding birds such as nightingale. Eventually the scrub will succeed to woodland. Interventions are needed periodically such as coppicing to rejuvenate the scrub to produce a varied structure especially those 'thicket' stages.

Micro-habitat assemblage: Breeding birds of hedgerows and scrub habitats

Group	Species	Common Name	IUCN GB	IUCN Eng	IUCN other	Criteria	Threats / Pressures							
Birds	*Curruca communis*	Whitethroat	AMBER	n/a	n/a	**2**	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Birds	*Locustella naevia*	Common Grasshopper Warbler	RED	n/a	n/a	**1**	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Birds	*Luscinia megarhynchos*	Common Nightingale	RED	n/a	n/a	**1**	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Birds	*Prunella modularis*	Dunnock	AMBER	n/a	n/a	**2**	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Birds	*Pyrrhula pyrrhula*	Common Bullfinch	AMBER	n/a	n/a	**2**	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

Micro-habitat assemblage: Invertebrates of species-rich scrub and scrub edges

Group	Species	Common Name	IUCN GB	IUCN Eng	IUCN other	Criteria	Threats / Pressures							
Hoverflies	*Chrysotoxum elegans*	Zipperback	LC	n/a	n/a	**3**	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Hoverflies	*Doros profuges*	Phantom Hoverfly	NT	n/a	n/a	**2, 4**	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Bees	*Andrena synadelpha*	Broad-margined Mining Bee	.	n/a	LC	**2**	PA04	PA07	.	.	.	.	.	.
Butterflies	*Thecla betulae*	Brown Hairstreak	VU	n/a	n/a	**1**	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Moths	*Eriogaster lanestris*	Small Eggar		n/a	n/a	**5**	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Moths	*Gastropacha quercifolia*	Lappet	EN	n/a	n/a	**1**	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Moths	*Pareulype berberata*	Barberry Carpet	EN	n/a	n/a	**1**	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Moths	*Dasystoma salicella*	Spring Reveller; Spring Tubic		n/a	n/a	**4**	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Moths	*Epiblema tetragonana*	Dark Rose Shoot Moth; Square-spot Bell		n/a	n/a	**4**	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

Micro-habitat assemblage: Plants of species-rich scrub and scrub edges

Group	Species	Common Name	IUCN GB	IUCN Eng	IUCN other	Criteria	Threats / Pressures							
Plants	*Rosa agrestis*	Small-leaved Sweet-briar	NT	NT	n/a	**2**	PA07	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Plants	*Rubus corbieri*	Corbiere's Bramble	NE	NE	n/a	**3**	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
Plants	*Rubus durotrigum*	Lane Bramble	NE	NE	n/a	**3**	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.