

Deptford Pink Action Plan

Introduction and Vision Statement

Deptford Pink (*Dianthus armeria*) is typically a plant of dry pastures, disturbed ground, roadsides, field borders and hedgerows. It occurs generally on light, sandy soil often of rather high pH, but has been known on peaty soil with pH as low as 4.8. Seed production is quite prolific, with a typical plant producing about 400 seeds. The exact conditions for germination and establishment are not known, but it is thought to require an open, somewhat disturbed situation for success. However, it is able to compete with taller vegetation once established.



The range of Deptford Pink in Britain lies between north Wales and the south coast of England, with most sites occurring in southern England. It has declined severely over the last 60 years, exhibiting one of the most rapid declines of any species in the British flora. Having once been widespread, it was reduced to 34 sites by 1970 and is now known from only 13 to 15 sites. This decline appears to be ongoing and most of the remaining populations are small (1–50 plants), although there are a few sites with hundreds of plants where conditions are suitable.

Deptford Pink is not threatened in Europe as a whole, where it occurs widely across western and central regions.

In Wales, Deptford Pink is regarded as ‘Vulnerable to extinction’ and there are only four extant (existing) sites for Deptford Pink, two of which are in Carmarthenshire – at Bryndias Farm, Pinged, near Pembrey, and adjacent to Old Castle Pond in Llanelli, although an individual plant was recorded at Laugharne in 1957.

The site at Bryndias is along a trackway leading to the farmstead and, when first discovered in 1994, plants were confined to the base of the hedgebanks in the vicinity of an open, sunny gateway on very thin soil over sandstone. In subsequent years additional plants were recorded away from the original centre of the population: at several locations along the trackside towards the farmstead and into the nearby field gateway. The second Carmarthenshire population was discovered only in 2007, alongside Old Castle Pond in Llanelli, adjacent to a footpath (a former mineral line), which provides the gritty, dry soil favoured by this plant. This site had been subjected to regular council mowing. It appeared the following year but was not seen in 2009.

Threats to this species include successional changes (such as scrub encroachment) leading to loss of the relatively open vegetation structure which Deptford Pink is known to require, conversion of pasture to arable and building land, cessation of grazing, destruction of hedgerows and stabilization of land regularly disturbed in the past.

Our vision for the Deptford Pink is to ensure the continued presence of the plant on the two known sites and to try and increase the range of the species in the county – by natural spread and through working with the National Botanic Garden of Wales.

Action Plan Objectives

- DEP1SP** To maintain and increase the population of Deptford Pink in Carmarthenshire
- DEP2DCM** To undertake annual monitoring of the two Carmarthenshire populations
- DEP3RA** To raise awareness of Deptford Pink in Carmarthenshire and provide advice on habitat management.
- DEP4SP** To undertake an *ex-situ* conservation programme within the county

Actions

CODE	TEXT	START/END DATE	Lead contact	Action goal	Key partners	Funding?	Priority L,M,H	Report Jan–Dec 2010	Report Jan–Dec 2010	
DEP1SP1	Devise scheme for re-introduction of the species in suitable but less vulnerable places in the vicinity of the Old Castle Pond population (SN499003)	2010–2012	CCC	Scheme produced	Llanelli Nats, BSBI			Not started – Old Castle Pond pop'n not seen in 2010.		
DEP1SP2	Produce and implement a management plan for the Bryndias population (SN435034)	2010–2011	BSBI	Management plan written	CCW Landowners			Action for 2011 – verbal guidance given to landowners contacted in 2010.		
DEP1SP3	Produce and implement a management plan for the Llanelli population (SN499003)	2010–2011	CCC BSBI	Management guidance written	BSBI, Llanelli Nats			Produced and implemented by CCC staff in 2010 but Old Castle Pond pop'n not seen in 2010.		
DEP3RA1	Write an article for the farming press and local newspaper on the Deptford Pink in Carmarthenshire to try and get new records	2010–2011	CCC	Article written and distributed	Llanelli Nats, BSBI			Action for 2011		
DEP3RA2	Arrange talk with relevant council staff to discuss management. Educate all site managers and operatives in the importance and requirements of the plant.	2010–2010	CCC	One meeting held	Llanelli Nats			Meeting with CCC staff held in 2010 and management guidance produced.		
DEP2DCM1	Undertake annual monitoring of the Bryndias population and discuss management of the site with owners (SN435034)	2010–ongoing	BSBI	Annual monitoring visit	CCW			Monitoring visit undertaken on 28-09-2010 Approximately 120 plants, mostly in seed but some still flowering over an area of c.7m x 2m between in compacted disturbed. Plant spikes found in other areas on site also. Details available.		
DEP2DCM2	Undertake annual monitoring of the Llanelli population (SN499003)	2010–ongoing	BSBI	Annual monitoring visit	CCW CCC			No plants seen in 2010, despite management undertaken.		
DEP4SP1	Collect seed from Bryndias/Llanelli plants for storage at the seed-bank at NBGW and keep <i>ex situ</i> plants at NBGW	2010–2015	NBGW	Seeds collected and stored and <i>ex-situ</i> plants established	CCC CCW BSBI	✓		Not started.		
DEP4SP3	Identify suitable sites and undertake a re-introduction programme within the county	2010–2015	BSBI	Map produced	CCW			Not started.		