

APPENDIX 5

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL BAP PRIORITY SPECIES AND HABITATS

Table 5 - South Cambridgeshire District Council Bap Priority Species

Priority Species	Reason
Otter	Otters are widespread along the Upper Cam and its tributaries. Work must be undertaken to ensure that the local environment continues to have the capacity to support otters.
Water vole	Water voles are widespread in some parishes. The species has the ability to live in close proximity to people if suitable habitat is maintained.
Skylark	The skylark was chosen as a national indicator of sustainability and skylarks are still widespread in South Cambridgeshire.
Great crested newt	The great crested newt receives full protection in law. It may often be encountered at smaller development sites within villages.
House sparrow	Rapid decline since the 1970's. For example, in Coton the species was considered too numerous to record until 1978, but none have been recorded from the parish's farmland in recent survey work. The species' recovery can be assisted by nest box erection and sensitive planting and the phasing of activities that might cause disturbance. DEFRA leaflet produced in 2004 to explain reasons for the decline.
Barn owl	The RSPB currently lists the barn owl upon its Amber List believing the decline to range between 25-49% over the last 25 years. The loss in South Cambridgeshire may have been higher due to the drive for intensive farming and the high number of barn conversions. However, barn owl numbers are now increasing but the species needs to be the focus of further conservation effort as a flagship species for positive land management.
White-clawed crayfish	The white-clawed crayfish is the UK's only native crayfish. Populations were formally widespread in the River Rhee and its tributaries. Disease passed on from the American signal crayfish has wiped out all but one population of the white-clawed crayfish for the whole of Cambridgeshire. However, undiscovered populations may still remain.
Native black poplar tree	A nationally scarce tree formerly of floodplains. Only 57 adult trees occur within the district following survey in 2007. The national black poplar BAP should also be used as a guide document.

Table 6 - South Cambridgeshire District Council Bap Priority Habitats

Priority Habitat	Reason
Rivers and streams (inc chalk rivers)	Rivers and river valleys have been the focus of policies in Local Plans for many years. It is widely recognised that rivers and streams represent a major habitat resource within the landscape of the district. The high water quality and dependant species of the chalk rivers, such as the Shep and Mel, make their habitats particularly worthy of conservation.
Woodland	Woodland provides a diverse habitat for many different species. The protection and creation of woodlands has previously been the focus of Local Plan policies. South Cambridgeshire is relatively poorly wooded.
Scrub	Changes in farming practice over the last forty years has resulted in some small fields becoming over-grown with scrub. Scrub can provide an important habitat for many different species, especially birds, and should not be looked upon as over-grown wasteland.
Old orchards	Changes in farming practice over the last forty years has resulted in the loss of many orchards, particularly in the Fen edge villages.
Hedgerows	Changes in farming practice, and land use generally, has resulted in the loss of extensive lengths of hedgerows. Many of the remaining and newly planted hedges are not particularly species rich, however as landscape features and as a biodiversity resource they are important.
Farmland (arable)	South Cambridgeshire is dominated by an arable landscape. Within this habitat important and declining species remain.
Ponds	Many farm and village ponds have been lost. This has negatively impacted upon biodiversity. However, ponds can be relatively straightforward to recreate and can bring back wildlife with suitable management.
Churchyards and cemeteries	The tranquil environment of these sites offer important greenspaces. If sensitively managed they can be a place for people to quietly enjoy wildlife.
Lowland calcareous grassland	Grasslands were once extensive within the district. Maintaining the diversity of wild flowers contained within chalk grasslands is of particular conservation interest.
Meadows and pastures	Small meadows were once common within villages. Grazing upon nutrient rich soils created diversity within grass swards rather than dominance by weed species.



Chalk grassland can contain a high diversity of plants. At Litlington Chalk Pit wild thyme, milkwort and squinancywort are of special interest.