

Name: **Chalkhill blue butterfly**

Lysandra coridon

UK status: Local (Shirt, 1987). Species of Conservation Concern (formerly long-listed). Historic range decline now apparently stabilising.

London status: Very rare and declining (3 sites).

Protected status: W&CA S5 (sale only)

Relevant London HAPs: Chalk grassland

Citation:

The chalkhill blue is confined to calcareous grassland in the south of the UK where its foodplant, horseshoe vetch *Hippocrepis comosa* is found. Although its range and abundance declined substantially with the historic decimation of its habitat, in the national context the butterfly now appears to have stabilised. Its dependence on a single foodplant and complex life-cycle involving larval tending by ants, leaves it highly vulnerable to habitat mismanagement. On London's restricted chalk downland, the chalkhill blue clings on in three sites only; at Farthing Downs and Riddlesdown in LB Croydon, and Saltbox Hill in LB Bromley (all SSSI and Metropolitan SINCS). None of these may be described as a stronghold for the species, however.



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- Conservation priorities:**
- Seek to stabilise and increase colonies in existing sites through balanced sympathetic habitat management
 - Re-introductions as appropriate to widen regional distribution
 - Protect any new colonies emerging from further survey

References:

[Butterfly Conservation, species data account](#)

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Plant C W (1987). *The butterflies of the London Area*. (London Natural History Society)

Shirt, D B (ed.). (1987). *British Red Data Books: 2. Insects*. JNCC

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