

**Name:****Grasshopper warbler***Locustella naevia***UK status:**

UK SCC. Rapid recent decline. BoCC Red List.

**London status:**

Scarce passage migrant and increasingly rare breeding summer visitor.

**Protected status:**

- W&CA S.1(1-3); general protection from intentional killing, injury and catching, possession, and nest destruction.
- Bern Convention, Appendix II

**Relevant London HAPs:**

Woodland; Rivers &amp; Streams

**Citation:**

The grasshopper warbler has declined substantially across the UK, although the reasons for this are unclear. Habitat change (maturation of post-war conifer plantations) may have been an earlier factor, but the sustained continuity of the decline is vexing. As a migrant, extraneous causes effective on the bird's wintering grounds may also be involved. Greater London has never supported significant breeding numbers, but a few pairs at least were recorded annually up until the late 1990s, usually from dense scrub in river valleys like the Lea and Ingrebourne. Although breeding is notoriously difficult to establish, it is now an extremely rare event when proven here. Given the largely unspecialised habitat preferences of the species and its comparative infidelity to breeding sites, it is difficult to make special provision for its conservation. Best practice in scrub management in favoured zones can only be hoped to assist.



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**Conservation priorities:**

- Monitor all suspected breeding pairs
- Maintain adequate undisturbed scrub habitat in successional management units

**References:**

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