

**Name:****Olive earthtongue***Microglossum olivaceum***UK status:**[UK BAP Priority.](#)

Vulnerable (Red Data List, ed.1); Annex (Red Data List, ed.2).  
18 post-1960 hectad records in FRDBI

**London status:**

Very rare (1 site); probably extinct

**Protected status:**

Legal, none

'Species of principal importance for the conservation of biological diversity in England' (CRoW Act, 2000)

**Relevant London HAPs:**

Woodland; Chalk grassland; Acid grassland; Churchyards & cemeteries

**Citation:**

Nationally the olive earthtongue is now virtually confined to short rabbit-grazed chalk grassland in a few remaining sites in coastal nature reserves. It has declined and is endangered throughout its European range due to widespread habitat loss. Its highly distinctive club-shaped, greenish-olive or reddish-brown tongues grow up to 5 cm tall. In Greater London it was last recorded in LB Waltham Forest, but not since 1860. It is easily overlooked however, and may yet be re-discovered in chalk grassland within the North Downs.



© Alan Silverside

**Conservation priorities:**

- Targeted search in close-grazed turf with moss or under yew trees on chalk
- Ensure favourable management in suitable sites (for example where assemblages of waxcap/earthtongue fungi are already present)
- Protect any new sites emerging from targeted surveys

**References:**

Evans S. 2004. *Waxcap-grasslands - an assessment of English Sites*. English Nature Research Report No. 555

Evans S, Henrici, A & Ing, B. 2006. *Preliminary Assessment the Red Data List of Threatened British Fungi*. BMS(JNCC)

[Fungal Records Database of Britain & Ireland website](#)

Ing, B. 1992. A provisional Red Data List of British fungi. *The Mycologist* 6(3): 124-128.

Legon NW & Henrici A, 2005. *Checklist of the British and Irish Basidiomycota*. RBG, Kew.

Overall, A. 2007. Some Notable Fungi from Central London. *Field Mycology* 8(1): 24-27.

Spooner B & Roberts P, 2005. *Fungi*. Collins