

**Name:****Brown hare***Lepus europaeus***UK status:**[UK BAP Priority](#). Widespread but declining.**London status:**

Rare and vulnerable (3 sites); historic and continuing decline.

**Protected status:**

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

**Relevant London HAPs:**

Farmland, Meadows &amp; Pastures, Floodplain grassland

**Citation:**

Formerly considered abundant, the brown hare appears to have undergone a substantial decline in numbers since the early 1960s. This effect has been patchy however, and the apparent health of the population in regions such as East Anglia has tended to blur the national picture. Similar patterns of population change have occurred throughout much of Europe. In Greater London the brown hare is a rare animal indeed, with small and vulnerable relict populations on Green Belt farmland in the northeast (for example the Fairlop/Hainault area in LB Redbridge and Fairplay Farm in LB Havering). There may be an even more threatened population in LB Hillingdon. Although the hare does well in agricultural landscapes (where it feeds opportunistically on crops), ironically it is yield intensification that is primarily causing population declines. In Greater London and other urban fringe areas, illegal hunting ('lamping') is a further significant problem. The Brown Hare Project is an initiative of the national BAP, which provides a targeted monitoring scheme and a conservation advisory service to farmers and other landowners. Managing agencies; Redbridge Borough Council, Private, BAA?

**Conservation priorities:**

- Monitor and maintain all known populations through farmland biodiversity conservation practices (in association with the Brown Hare Project) [addresses UK SAP targets **T1**, **T2**]
- Protect and maintain any new populations emerging from further surveys

**References:**

['Conserving the brown hare'](#), e-report by the Game Conservancy Trust