

## Wood Warbler (*Phylloscopus sibilatrix*)

**Areas and status:** Upland areas in northern & western Britain; Now very localised in lowlands eg New Forest. Significant population decline in the UK (69% since 1995). BoCC red list. Issues during winter migration may also impact population.

**Woodland type:** Favours upland oakwoods, but mixed woodland also utilised.

### Preferred habitat niches:

- Sub-mature to mature, usually oak dominated, closed canopy woodland, often with a high stem count (trees per unit area) and open structure beneath canopy
- Nests on or close to the ground, amongst tussocks in relatively open ground vegetation with some cover (grass tussocks, ferns, heavy leaf litter, fallen branches)
- Appears to require low perches (side branches etc) close to the nest
- Associated with well wooded landscapes with mild, wet Atlantic climate

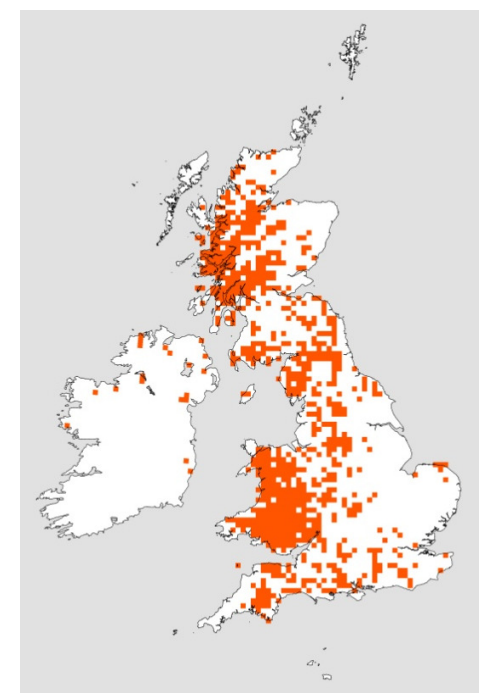
### Potential habitat management issues associated with decline:

- Insufficient grazing to maintain open shrub/understorey layer
- Invasive woody vegetation, eg holly, rhododendron or dense beech replacing open understory structure
- Excessive field layer grazing and browsing causing loss nesting structure; preventing regeneration; loss of sapling perches
- Maturation of stands without replacement or sub-canopy trees

Potential habitat management solutions:	
Prescription	Comment
Establish ability to manage grazing and/or deer browsing	Aim for varied or sparse understorey, including branches at around 1.5m height. Enough grazing (or browsing) pressure needed to maintain this without completely removing field or understorey layer.
Thinning and/or small coupe felling (0.5 – 1ha)	Regenerate even-aged woods. Selective thinning, leaving 70 to 80% canopy to allow crown development but retaining shade. Encourage development of mature canopy trees - especially oak, presence of sub-canopy trees, and a varied (but not dense) understorey. Small coupe felling at some sites to help regenerate even-aged woods. NB not to cover all woodland to avoid risk to species needing mature stands/old growth.
Retain scatter of shrub or replacement trees	Presence of low perches considered important in nest site selection. Aim for sparse understorey including braches at around 1.5m height – birds will use these as perches.
Retain deadwood	Standing and fallen deadwood in situ where safe, otherwise move minimum distance. Fallen deadwood and low branches can enhance nest site structure.
Remove invasive woody vegetation	Aim to remove all rhododendron and control other invasive woody species as appropriate.
Plant new native (oak) woodlands where suitable, to increase woodland cover in landscape	This species is associated with well wooded landscapes. Make sure that any planting is appropriate in the landscape and do <b>not</b> plant on top of other priority habitats.



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■ Breeding

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