



## Woodruff (*Galium odoratum*)



### Biodiversity Action Plan | Cummey Yanno Beiy-Feie

#### Background

Perhaps incorrectly listed as a non-native plant, Woodruff lacks protection as it is only found at two sites.

This Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) has been reformatted from a Rare Species Action Plan, produced by Wildflowers of Mann in 2004, and approved by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry in the same year.

#### Description



The species is attractive with bright white, star like flowers, over dark neat leaves. Once picked, a sweet odour is released (hence its scientific name). The species has been widely planted in gardens as an ornamental.

#### British Isles Distribution

A European and Asian species, recorded throughout the British Isles except on Orkney, Shetland and the Outer Hebrides.

#### Isle of Man Distribution

Listed as non-native by Allen, partly on the understanding that it is a lime lover (its preference is in fact for any base rich soils). Its recorded sites - Dhoon and Groudle Glens - coincide so accurately with the richest concentrations of ancient woodland flora on the Island, that these locations are most probably native records. Those at Glen Helen and possibly Silverdale, can also be included, as these are ancient woodland sites as well.

There are no recent records for Woodruff at Dhoon or Silverdale, so the only known probable native populations are at Glen Helen and Groudle. Most other recorded sites on the Island, however, are almost certainly introductions.

#### Habitat and Ecology

Woodruff is a shade tolerant species, of woodlands and other shady conditions. It is a low growing (<20cm), uncompetitive plant. Although its extreme shade tolerance, is matched by few other species.

The species can grow on a mixture of substrates and often on the thinnest of soil i.e. over rock or even in swamp conditions. It spreads mostly vegetatively through underground runners, spreading, at most, a few centimetres a year. These characteristics make it a reliable ancient woodland indicator. Indeed, Kirby (2002/3) lists it as the only ancient woodland indicator species, selected on every geographic list, in Great Britain.



<b>Legal protection</b>		
Not listed on Schedule 7 of the Wildlife Act 1990 and amber-listed under <i>Plants of Conservation Concern in the Isle of Man 2022</i> .		
Given the number of sites where this species is grown as an ornamental, and the horticultural trade in this species, it would be a difficult species to protect under the Wildlife Act 1990.		
<b>Threats</b>		
Widespread planting, and no distinct differences between native and planted types, make identification/conservation of native types difficult.		
<b>Reason for BAP</b>		
It is rare in the wild.		
<b>Aims</b>		
The species should be recognised as a native species to the Island. The two remaining sites should be recognised as ancient woodland sites and, if possible, managed sympathetically and restored to semi-natural vegetation.		
<b>Linked BAPS</b>		
Woodlands for Wildflowers; Action for Wildlife.		
<b>Delivery Options</b>	<b>Active</b>	<b>Challenges</b>
<b>Delivery Plan</b>		
<b>Strategy</b>		<b>Lead</b>
Clonal material from the two sites, should be collected and maintained in habitat beds at MWT Mullen e Cloie Nature Reserve. The species can be introduced to Ohio plantation restoration site.		Manx Wildlife Trust
<b>Action</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Establish in habitat beds.	2009	Wildflowers of Mann
Work on Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland restoration.	2009 onwards	Wildflowers of Mann, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Introduce to Ohio Plantation.	2010 onwards	Wildflowers of Mann
Give native status.	2013	Flora Group
Review.	Summer 2011	Wildflowers of Mann, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry



## Annual Updates

Year	
2009-10	Plants collected from Groudle and Glen Helen and established in pots.
2010	Introduced to Ohio Plantation.
2011	Ohio Plantation project stalled, and later abandoned, due to windblow.
2016	Single plant introduced to Hairpin Woodland Park. Plants grown at University College Isle of Man in shrubberies as stock plants.
2018	Multiple plants introduced to Hairpin Woodland Park.
2019	Additional planting at Hairpin Woodland Park (quarry).
2023	Most plantings established and spreading via stolons.

