

## Conservation Officer's Report 2025, Mags Cousins

### Red list review

Last year Natural England (NE) contacted the Conchological Society to see if we wished to do a review of the non-marine mollusc red list of Great Britain, the most recent being Seddon et al. (2014). The list is indeed due for review as the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) recommend that threat assessments, or red lists, are reviewed every ten years.

Red lists are required by Defra to report to Government on the targets laid out in the Environment Act 2021. More specifically, the "[D5: Conservation status of our native species](#)" indicator, otherwise known as the Extinction Risk Indicator (D5), will track changes in the extinction risk of our native wildlife. This and other targets for biodiversity have become legally binding measures: [The Environmental Targets \(Biodiversity\) \(England\) Regulations 2023](#), with a corresponding reporting cycle to track progress.

Following a meeting with Natural England, funding was agreed to cover training for a small number of Conch Soc members to become qualified "Assessors" and to support preparation of the dataset prior to detailed analysis. The training is a well constructed modular online course devised and delivered by the IUCN and the four assessors are progressing well, finding it an interesting exercise in evaluating risk to populations. Likewise Dr Ben Rowson (Non-marine Recorder) has nearly completed preparation of the non-marine mollusc database. The next step will be a preliminary analysis of the dataset to select suitable statistical modelling methods, fortunately with the help of professional biological statisticians, commissioned by Natural England. The outputs from the mathematical models will assist assessors in determining current distribution and identify trends in populations in order assess extinction risk according to the [IUCN red list criteria](#). If anyone is interested in becoming an IUCN qualified assessor, please contact Ben Rowson. Red list reviews often take two years to complete so we will keep you updated on progress.

### QQR7 (the 7<sup>th</sup> Quinquennial Review of the species for inclusion on Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 Schedules)

Schedules 5 and 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 are reviewed every 5 years. The seventh review QQR7 commenced in 2021 which included a prolonged period of consultation by the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) with specialists. The advice provided from the Conchological Society was described in detail in Mollusc World November 2022, Issue 60 (Willing, 2022).

The long awaited "Decision" by Government on the recommendations for QQR7 submitted by the JNCC, was finally published on the [Government website](#) on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2025:

*"The government thanks the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), Great Britain's Statutory Nature Conservation Bodies and all those who contributed to the seventh quinquennial review of those species afforded protection under Schedules 5 and 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. While we will not be implementing the proposed amendments to the Act as set out in JNCC's advice, the data and evidence provided within the advice is invaluable to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, and will help shape wider government activity which will benefit species conservation and recovery."*

The report [submitted by JNCC](#) and "laid" before Government, following the consultation period, detailed their recommendations for adding, retaining, regrading or removing species from the Schedules. Not all of the recommendations made by Conch Soc were approved by JNCC and Dr Martin Willing will be describing for each species what the JNCC recommendations were in a future

edition of Mollusc World. However, this is rather immaterial as the Government declined to act in any case.

Soon we will get another opportunity to promulgate the changes we believe will benefit certain species, as the next review QQR8, is due to start this year. Maybe the response to the next review will be different and some of the recommendations for species will make it into statute.

### **Threatened Species Recovery Actions - now published**

Another development since my last report is that the Threatened Species Recovery Actions (TSRA) has been published on the Natural England Access To Evidence website: [TSRA](#). The intention is that the TSRA would encapsulate the most urgent and effective recovery actions for threatened species, including molluscs. It is currently being utilised to set conservation priorities and spend through Natural England's Species Recovery Programme.

### **References**

JNCC (on behalf of Natural England, Natural Resources Wales and NatureScot) 2025. Seventh Quinquennial Review of Schedules 5 and 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981: Report and Recommendations from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee to the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, Scottish Government and Welsh Government on behalf of Natural England, Natural Resources Wales and NatureScot. JNCC, Peterborough, ISBN 978-1-5286-5994-9.

Seddon, M.B., Killeen, I.J. & Fowles, A.P. 2014. A Review of the Non-marine Mollusca of Great Britain: Species Status No. 17. NRW Evidence Report No. 14. Natural Resources Wales.

Willing, M.J. 2022 The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981: a historical review and outline of the current 7th Quinquennial Review, Mollusc World, November 2022, Issue 60, pages 12-17.

3<sup>rd</sup> February 2026.