



Farming for farm wildlife

Make the most of Environmental Stewardship and
the Campaign for the Farmed Environment

www.naturalengland.org.uk/es



Farmers, land managers and farm advisers all have a part to play in ensuring a healthy natural environment which is essential for sustainable farming.

Your farm has environmental value

Your farm has wildlife, natural resources, farmland birds and historic features that need your protection.

You make a difference

Your land management practices are the biggest influence on farm wildlife and your choices determine the type and quality of wildlife on your land.

Right options, right location, right management

This leaflet helps you choose the right options and put them in the right places to make the biggest difference. If you need additional help locating or managing these options, please contact Natural England for further information.

Marbled white butterfly benefitting from the provision of farmland flowers



Why is your farm important for wildlife?

Farm wildlife needs farmland and farmers. Wildlife is an indicator of a healthy natural environment and can be seen on farms every day. Sights such as brown hare running across winter-stubbles, frog spawn on mill ponds in the spring and bumblebees buzzing over flower-rich summer fields are still familiar across much of the country.

However, studies of farm wildlife over the last 30 years have shown that wildlife has declined. Factors such as loss of farmland flowers (leading to a 75% decline in butterflies and bumblebees), loss of ponds (causing declines in all our frog, newt and toad species) and improvement of grasslands (resulting in the loss of 97% of our unimproved grasslands since 1930) have caused once common species to become scarcer and some species to be lost from parts of England.

Farmers and the farming community play a vital role in reversing the fortunes of farm wildlife across England. The land management skills and knowledge that farmers use to run their farm businesses are crucial to this. Farm wildlife needs your continued help and expertise.

Through the use of Environmental Stewardship, or voluntary options of the Campaign for the Farmed Environment (CFE), a number of simple management measures can be put in place that will make a huge difference to farm wildlife.

Common toad benefitting from buffering of farm ponds



What can you do for wildlife?

Wildlife requires a balanced and varied approach to farmland management that will provide a variety of habitats. For example:

- 1 You can benefit bees, butterflies and a wealth of other pollinators by establishing a network of flower-rich habitats across the farm.** Scientific evidence shows that farmers who plant ELS nectar mixes instead of grass margins can attract up to 14 times as many bumblebees.
- 2 If you have light free-draining soils then you can benefit arable plants by creating cultivated margins or leaving conservation headlands.** If you choose ELS uncropped cultivated margins evidence shows you can produce habitat for up to 5 times as many arable plants than a conventional cereal crop.
- 3 By buffering and protecting any water on your farm, you will help protect and provide the habitat for bats, newts, water voles and other small mammals to flourish.** Trials have shown that buffering ditches and restoring farm ponds can treble water vole populations in 3 years.
- 4 Unimproved or flower-rich grassland are typically of high value, retaining and managing these areas can benefit a range of farm wildlife.** Choosing ELS very low input options will maintain these areas and (if managed correctly) can even enhance their wildlife interest.

Dormouse benefitting from fruit provided by hedgerow management



What are the benefits for you?

Regular farm income:

Financial incentives are available through Entry Level Stewardship (ELS) to provide a six-monthly income for environmentally friendly land management that supports farm wildlife.

Realise the wildlife potential of less productive areas:

Make awkward corners, small fields and wet areas of your farm work better for you by entering them into ELS options. The least productive areas of your farm are often (with the correct management) the best for wildlife.

Contribute to Climate Change mitigation:

Those options which involve creating grass buffers and field corners in arable fields will lead to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. This is due to reduced nutrient inputs and increased temporary carbon storage within the created grassland.

Work with the Industry's Campaign for the Farmed Environment:

Farming for wildlife using the options labelled  overleaf will help contribute to the Campaign for the Farmed Environment (CFE).

Use the farm illustration overleaf to help you choose the best locations and ELS/CFE options to benefit wildlife on your farm.

Need further help and information?

For details of farm events in your region or further information please contact:

Natural England

Tel: 0300 060 1695

Email: farmevents@naturalengland.org.uk

Website: www.naturalengland.org.uk/farめvents

Campaign for the Farmed Environment

Tel: 024 7685 8892

Email: cfeonline@nfu.org.uk

Website: www.cfeonline.org.uk

Front cover: Brown hare © CFE.
Page 2: Marbled white butterfly © Natural England / Richard Belding;
Common toad © John Wilkinson ARC.
Page 3: Dormouse © P Morris.
Fold out page: Water vole habitat © Natural England / Mandy Heathcoate;
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Common poppy © Natural England / Jonathan Cartwright;
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Campaign for the Farmed Environment partners – NFU, CLA, FWAG, LEAF, AIC, GWCT, AICC and CAAV – working in partnership with Defra and its agencies, Natural England and the Environment Agency, as well as the RSPB and other wildlife representatives.



Natural England is here to conserve and enhance the natural environment, for its intrinsic value, the wellbeing and enjoyment of people and the economic prosperity that it brings.

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Make the most of Environmental Stewardship and the Campaign for the Farmed Environment


Water voles, dragonflies, newts & toads 1



Where to locate options:

- ponds, ditches, rivers & streams – particularly next to tall vegetation/scrub
- unshaded ponds
- ponds without fish

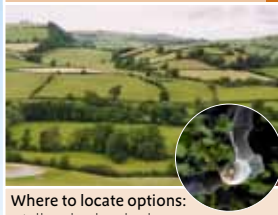
Arable plants** 2



Where to locate options:

- cultivated/ fallow areas on light free-draining soil

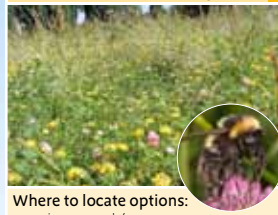
Bats and dormice 3



Where to locate options:

- tall, unbroken hedges
- hedgerows with trees
- old hedgerows
- areas of woodland edge/scrub


Butterflies, bees and vulnerable grassland 4



Where to locate options:

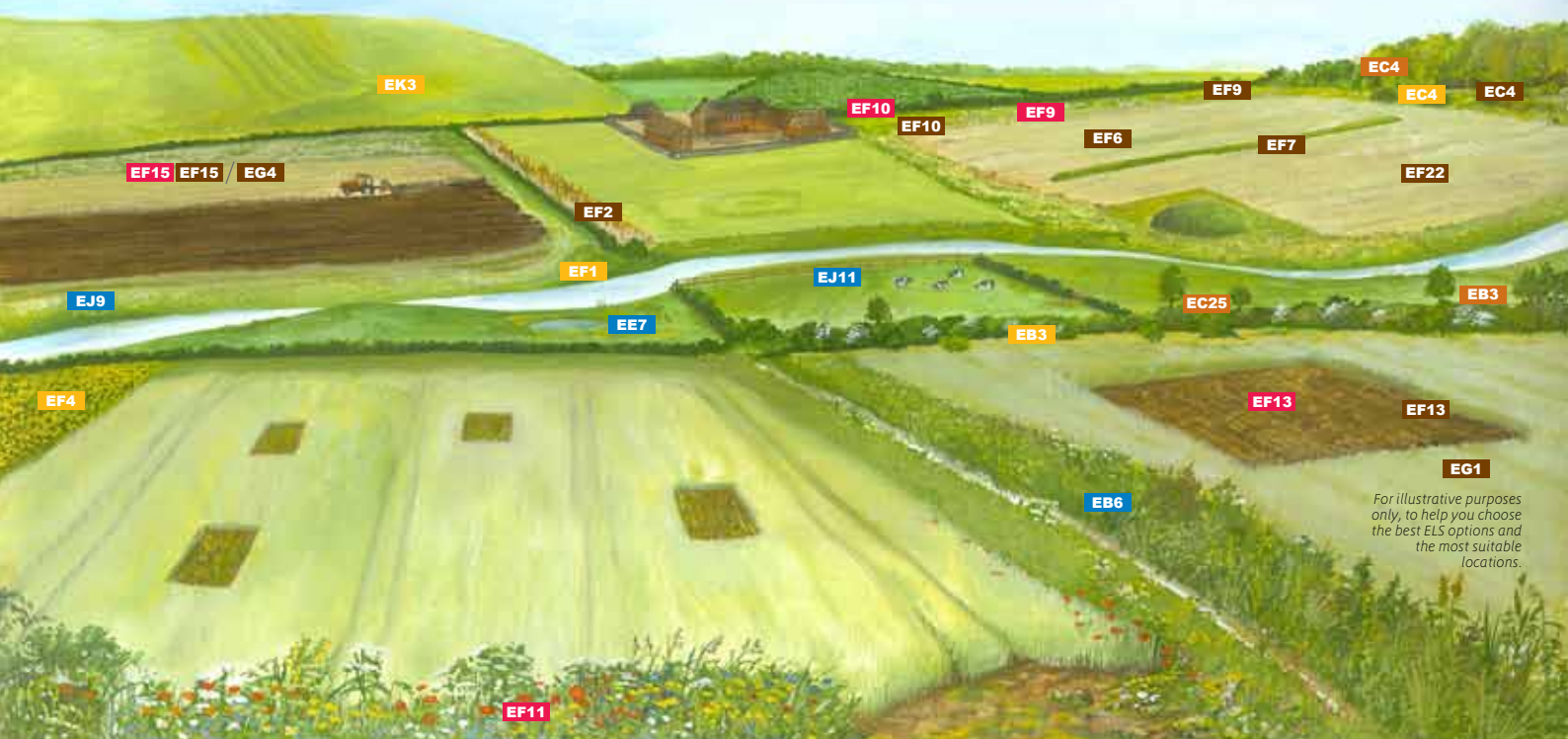
- unimproved / semi-improved grasslands
- flower-rich fields or field corners
- south facing banks
- flower-rich hedgerows/ woodland edge

Brown hare 5



Where to locate options:

- large open fields / blocks of cereal crops
- small woods



ELS Code	Options	ELS/OELS Points	CFE code
1 Water voles, dragonflies, newts & toads			
EB6/OB6	Ditch management	24 per 100 m	
EB7/OB7	Half ditch management	8 per 100 m	
EE7/OE7	Buffering in-field ponds in improved permanent grassland	400/500 per ha	
EE8/OE8	Buffering in-field ponds in arable land	400/500 per ha	
EJ9/OJ9	12 m buffer strips for watercourses on cultivated land	400/500 per ha	C1
EJ11/OJ11	Maintenance of watercourse fencing	4 per 100 m	
2 Arable plants**			
EF9	Unfertilised cereal headlands within arable fields	100 per ha	C1
EF10	Unharvested cereal headlands within arable fields	330 per ha	C1
EF11/OF11	Uncropped cultivated margins for rare plants on arable land	400/460 per ha	C8
EF13/OF13*	Uncropped cultivated areas for ground nesting birds on arable land	360 per ha	C5
EF15*	Reduced herbicide cereal crops followed by overwintered stubbles	195 per ha	C14
	Selective use of spring herbicides	-	C14
3 Bats and dormice			
EB3/OB3	Enhanced hedgerow management	42 per 100 m	
EC3/OC3	Maintenance of woodland fences	4 per 100 m	
EC4/OC4	Management of woodland edges	380 per ha	
EC23/OC23*	Establishment of hedgerow trees by tagging	1 per tree	
EC24/OC24*	Hedgerow tree buffer strips on cultivated land	400/500 per ha	
EC25/OC25*	Hedgerow tree buffer strips on grassland	400/500 per ha	
	Reverted arable areas/optional scrub management	-	C3a/b

ELS Code	Options	ELS/OELS Points	CFE code
4 Butterflies, bees and vulnerable grassland			
EB3/OB3	Enhanced hedgerow management	42 per 100 m	
EC4/OC4	Management of woodland edges	380 per ha	
EF1/OF1	Management of field corners	400/500 per ha	
EF4/OF4	Nectar flower mixture	450/550 per ha	C12a
EK3/OK3	Permanent grassland with very low inputs	150/180 per ha	
	Pollen and nectar mixtures for horticultural crops	-	C12b
	Sown wildflower headlands	-	C13
	Enhanced management of Short Rotation Coppice (willow and poplar only)	-	C15
5 Brown hare			
EC4/OC4	Management of woodland edge	380 per ha	
EF2/OF2	Wild bird seed mixture	450/550 per ha	
EF6/OF6	Overwintered stubbles	120/150 per ha	
EF7/OF7	Beetle bank	580/750 per ha	
EF9	Unfertilised cereal headlands within arable fields	100 per ha	
EF10	Unharvested cereal headlands within arable fields	330 per ha	C11
EF13/OF13*	Uncropped, cultivated areas for ground nesting birds on arable land	360 per ha	C5
EF15*	Reduced herbicide, cereal crops followed by overwintered stubbles	195 per ha	
EF22*	Extended overwintered stubbles	410 per ha	
EG1/OG1	Undersown spring cereals	200/150 per ha	
EG4/OG4	Cereals for whole crop silage followed by overwintered stubbles	230/250 per ha	
EJ13/OJ13*	Winter cover crops	65 per ha	C7b
	Overwintered stubble followed by spring/summer fallow	-	C6
	Overwintered stubbles	-	C7a

* New options from 2010. At time of printing, these options had not received final approval and therefore may be subject to change.

** Target arable plants exclude problem weed species such as blackgrass and sterile brome. Options for arable plants are only likely to be suitable on land without these weed burdens (particularly on light free-draining soils).

For ease of use only a subset of ELS options are shown above. These reflect what are most commonly the best choices and link, where possible, to the Campaign for the Farmed Environment. Other ELS options also make a valued contribution to farm wildlife – see handbook or speak to an adviser for more information.



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