

**European Community Directive  
on the Conservation of Natural Habitats  
and of Wild Fauna and Flora  
(92/43/EEC)**


**Second Report by the United Kingdom under  
Article 17  
on the implementation of the Directive  
from January 2001 to December 2006**

**Conservation status assessment for  
Species:  
S1034 - *Hirudo medicinalis* - Medicinal leech**

The information in this assessment corresponds to the "species fact sheet" submitted by the UK to the European Union in February 2008 (second and final submission). Please note that this is a section of the UK's report. For the complete report visit <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/article17>

Please cite as: Joint Nature Conservation Committee. 2007. *Second Report by the UK under Article 17 on the implementation of the Habitats Directive from January 2001 to December 2006*. Peterborough: JNCC. Available from: [www.jncc.gov.uk/article17](http://www.jncc.gov.uk/article17)

**Species Name: *Hirudo medicinalis***

<b>1. National level</b>	
Species Code	S1034
Member State	United Kingdom
Biogeographic regions concerned within the Member state	ATL
1.1 Range map	 A map of the United Kingdom showing the distribution of <i>Hirudo medicinalis</i> . The map includes the main islands of Great Britain and Ireland, as well as the Channel Islands and the Shetland Islands. Shaded areas indicate the range of the species, which is primarily concentrated in the south and east of England, with smaller shaded regions in the Midlands and the Scottish Highlands. There are also several small shaded squares scattered across the southern coast of England and the Channel Islands.

## 1.2 Distribution map



## 2. Biogeographic level

### 2.1 Biogeographic region

ATL

### 2.2 Published sources and/or websites

AUSDEN, M., BANKS, B., HOWE, M., NIXON, A., PHILLIPS, D., WICKS, D. & WYNNE, C. 2002. The status, conservation and use of the medicinal leech. *British Wildlife*, 13, 229-238.

JONES, A.C.L. & KETTLE, B.S. 1999. Medicinal leech survey of Anglesey (Ynys Mon) 1999. North Wales Wildlife Trust unpublished report.

LLOYD, D. 1998. The Medicinal Leech *Hirudo medicinalis* in Wales. North Wales Wildlife Trust unpublished report.

MAITLAND, P.S. 1996. Recovery of the medicinal leech *Hirudo medicinalis* in Scotland. Phase 1. Unpublished report to SNH. Contract No. RASD/072/96 IBB SRP.

MAITLAND, P.S. 1997. Recovery of the medicinal leech *Hirudo*

	<p><i>medicinalis</i> in Scotland. Phase 2. Unpublished report to SNH.</p> <p>MARSHALL, H. 1999. Medicinal leech (<i>Hirudo medicinalis</i>) survey of Cumbria 1998-99. RSPB/EN unpublished report.</p> <p>MCCONNELL, H. 2000. A study of medicinal leech populations in the Romney Marsh Natural Area, 2000. Romney Marsh Countryside Project unpublished report.</p> <p>NIXON, A. 1999. A survey of the Medicinal Leech (<i>Hirudo medicinalis</i>) in the Romney Marsh Natural Area, 1998/99. Romney Marsh Countryside Project unpublished report.</p> <p>REEVES, R. 1999. Survey of medicinal leech (<i>Hirudo medicinalis</i>) in the New Forest, 1998 &amp; 1999. Hampshire Wildlife Trust unpublished report.</p> <p>YOUNG, M. 2000. Medicinal leech (<i>Hirudo medicinalis</i>) survey of Cumbria 2000. RSPB/EN unpublished report.</p> <p>Map Data Sources</p> <p>RSPB Medicinal leech records, 1997-2000; Ausden et al .2002; CCW Medicinal leech records (M. Howe, pers comm) 1900-2003.</p> <p>Invertebrate Site Register - Scotland (1852-1990), Scottish Natural Heritage; Invertebrate Site Register - England (1738-2005), Natural England (via the NBN Gateway).</p>
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### 2.3 Range of species in the biogeographic region or marine region

2.3.1 Surface range of the species (sq km)	2151
2.3.2 Date of range determination	1990-2003
2.3.3 Quality of data concerning range	Good
2.3.4 Range trend	Stable (=)
2.3.5 Range trend magnitude (%)	Not applicable
2.3.6 Range trend period	1990-2003
2.3.7 Reasons for reported trend	Not applicable

### 2.4 Population

2.4.1 Population size estimation	Minimum	87	Maximum	87
	Units	Other Populations		
2.4.2 Date of population estimation	2000			
2.4.3 Method used for population estimation	2 - Extrapolation from surveys of part of the population			
2.4.4 Quality of population data	Good			
2.4.5 Population trend	Stable (=)			

2.4.6 Population trend magnitude (%)	Not applicable
2.4.7 Population trend period	1900-2000
2.4.8 Reasons for reported trend	Not applicable
2.4.9 Justification of % thresholds for trends (optional)	Not applicable
2.4.10 Main pressures	800 - Landfill, land reclamation and drying out, general; 803 - infilling of ditches, dykes, ponds, pools, marshes or pits; 810 - Drainage; 811 - management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes; 853 - management of water levels;
2.4.11 Threats	200 - Fish and Shellfish Aquaculture; 750 - ; 800 - Landfill, land reclamation and drying out, general; 803 - infilling of ditches, dykes, ponds, pools, marshes or pits; 810 - Drainage; 811 - management of aquatic and bank vegetation for drainage purposes; 853 - management of water levels;
<b>2.5 Habitat for the species in the biogeographic region or marine region</b>	
2.5 Habitats for the species	Medicinal leech is usually found in small water bodies with a muddy substrate and fringing vegetation. This species requires relatively warm water (19-23°C) in which to feed and breed. Egg cocoons are laid on marginal plants. Medicinal leeches feed on the blood of vertebrates and it is thought that mammalian or possibly avian blood is required to enable successfully breeding.
2.5.2 Area estimation (sq km)	Unknown
2.5.3 Date of estimation	05/2007
2.5.4 Quality of data	Poor
2.5.5 Trend of the habitat	Unknown (X)
2.5.6 Trend period	1994-2006
2.5.7 Reasons for reported trend	Not applicable
<b>2.6 Future prospects</b>	
2.6 Future prospects for the species	Good prospects_Species expected to survive and prosper
<b>2.7 Complementary information</b>	
2.7.1 Favourable reference range (sq km)	2151
2.7.2 Favourable reference population	87
2.7.3 Suitable Habitat for the species	Unknown
2.7.4 Other relevant information	
<b>2.8 Conclusions</b> <i>(assessment of conservation status at end of reporting period)</i>	
(2.3) Range	(FV) - Favourable
(2.4) Population	(FV) - Favourable
(2.5) Habitat for the species	(XX) - Unknown
(2.6) Future prospects	(FV) - Favourable
Overall assessment	(FV) - Favourable

