

**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:  
S1334 - *Lepus timidus* - Mountain hare**

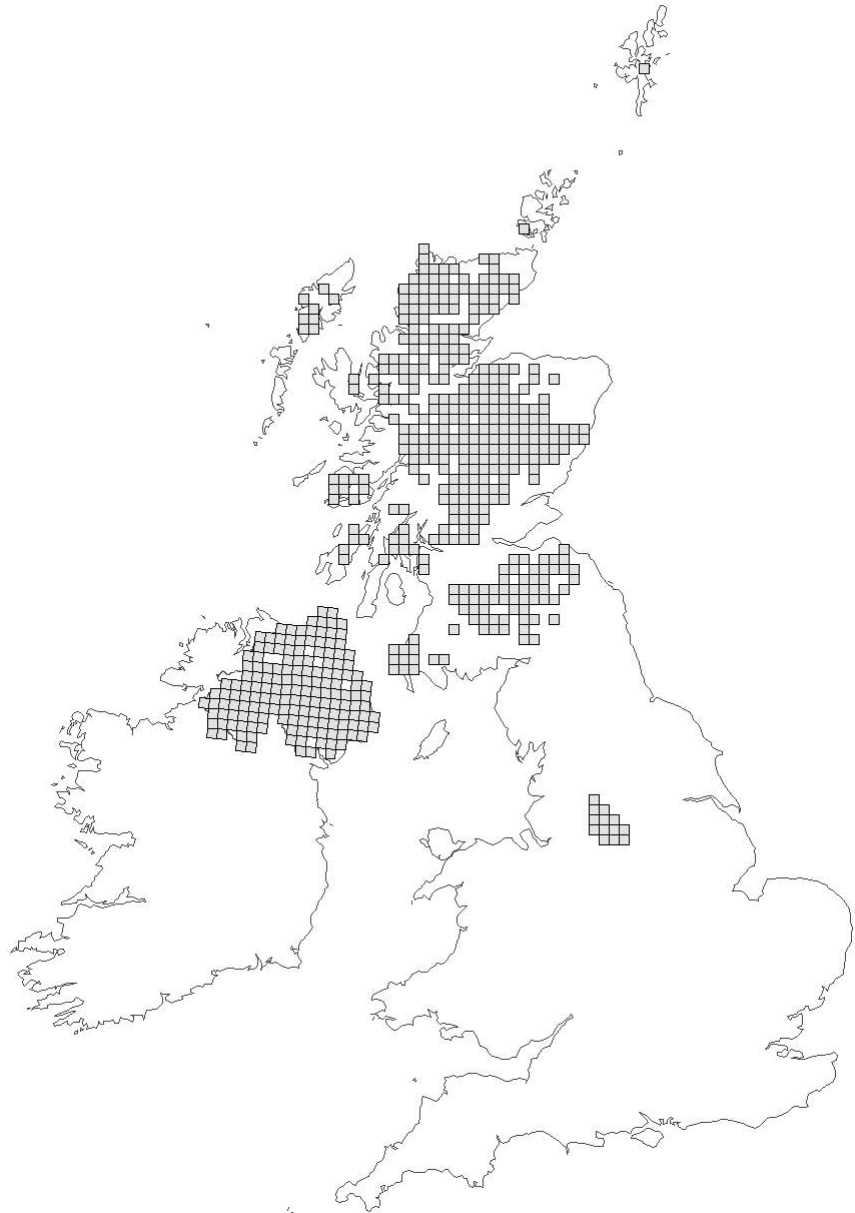
The information in this assessment corresponds to the "species fact sheet" submitted by the UK to the European Union in February 2008 (second and final submission). Please note that this is a section of the UK's report. For the complete report visit <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/article17>

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**Species Name: *Lepus timidus***

<b>1. National level</b>	
Species Code	S1334
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>Lepus timidus</i> . The distribution is indicated by grey shaded areas. These areas cover the entire island of Ireland, the Shetland Islands, the Orkney Islands, the Hebrides, and a small area in the Scottish Highlands. There is also a small shaded area in the English Midlands. The rest of the United Kingdom, including Wales, the south of England, and the Channel Islands, is not shaded.

## 1.2 Distribution map



## 2. Biogeographic level

### 2.1 Biogeographic region

ATL

### 2.2 Published sources and/or websites

ARNOLD, H. R. (1993) Atlas of Mammals in Britain. HMSO, London.

BATTERSBY, J. (ED) & TRACKING MAMMALS PARTNERSHIP. 2005. UK Mammals: Species Status and Population Trends. Joint Nature Conservation Committee/Tracking Mammals Partnership.

HARRIS, S., MORRIS, P., WRAY, S. & YALDEN, D. (1995) A Review of British Mammals. Joint Nature Conservation Committee.

HEWSON, R. 1991. Mountain hare/Irish hare *Lepus timidus*. In: The handbook of British mammals, ED. by G.B. CORBET & S. HARRIS, 161-167. Blackwell Scientific Publications, Oxford.

MALLON, D.P. 2001. The Mountain Hare in the Peak District. Derbyshire Wildlife Trust, Belper.

	<p>PRESTON, J., PRODÖHL, P., PORTIG, A. &amp; MONTGOMERY, I. 2003. The Northern Ireland Irish Hare Survey 2002. Queen's University, Belfast</p> <p>TAPPER, S. 1987. Cycles in game-bag records of hares and rabbits in Britain. <i>Symposia of the Zoological Society of London</i> 58:79–98.</p> <p>TAPPER, S. 1996. Distribution and level of take of native mountain hares <i>Lepus timidus</i>. JNCC unpublished report, Peterborough.</p> <p>TOSH, D., MARQUES, A.T., BROWN, S., PRESTON, J., REID, N., MONTGOMERY, I., BORCHERS, D. L., BUCKLAND, S. T., &amp; MCDONALD, R. 2005. Northern Ireland Irish Hare Survey 2005. Environment &amp; Heritage Service, Northern Ireland/Queen's University, Belfast.</p> <p>ENVIRONMENTAL HERITAGE SERVICE. 2005. Wildlife: Irish Hare. EHS, Northern Ireland <a href="http://www.ehsni.gov.uk/wild005.pdf">http://www.ehsni.gov.uk/wild005.pdf</a></p> <p>WATSON, A. &amp; HEWSON, R. 1963. Mountain hares. <i>Sunday Times</i>, London.</p> <p>YALDEN, D.W. (1984) The status of the mountain hare, <i>Lepus timidus</i>, in the Peak District. <i>Naturalist</i>, 109: 55-59.</p> <p>Map Data Sources</p> <p>Biological Records Centre - Mammals &amp; Irish Otter Databases; Highland Biological Recording Group - Mammals dataset; Scottish Borders BRC - Borders Backyard Biodiversity (via National Biodiversity network (NBN) Gateway).</p> <p>Game Conservancy Trust National Gamebag Census (1961-2005). BTO/JNCC/RSPB Breeding Bird Survey mammal data (1995-2005). D. P. Mallon data (2001).</p>			
<b>2.3 Range of species in the biogeographic region or marine region</b>				
2.3.1 Surface range of the species (sq km)	76721			
2.3.2 Date of range determination	1995-2006			
2.3.3 Quality of data concerning range	Moderate			
2.3.4 Range trend	Stable (=)			
2.3.5 Range trend magnitude (%)	Not applicable			
2.3.6 Range trend period	1995-2006			
2.3.7 Reasons for reported trend	Not applicable			
<b>2.4 Population</b>				
2.4.1 Population size estimation	Minimum	403700	Maximum	403700
	Units	Individuals		

2.4.2 Date of population estimation	2002-2005
2.4.3 Method used for population estimation	1 - Based on expert opinion
2.4.4 Quality of population data	Moderate
2.4.5 Population trend	Unknown (X)
2.4.6 Population trend magnitude (%)	Not applicable
2.4.7 Population trend period	1995-2005
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	101 - Modification of cultivation practices; 102 - Mowing / Cutting; 140 - Grazing; 151 - Removal of hedges and copses; 180 - Burning; 190 - Agriculture and forestry activities not referred to above; 401 - continuous urbanisation;
2.4.11 Threats	101 - Modification of cultivation practices; 102 - Mowing / Cutting; 140 - Grazing; 151 - Removal of hedges and copses; 180 - Burning; 190 - Agriculture and forestry activities not referred to above; 401 - continuous urbanisation;
<b>2.5 Habitat for the species in the biogeographic region or marine region</b>	
2.5 Habitats for the species	<p><i>L. timidus</i> favours upland moors. A dense understorey is thought to be important for food and shelter. <i>L. timidus</i> populations are localised; they reach the highest densities in north-east Scotland, and are particularly scarce in north and west Scotland (Watson &amp; Hewson 1963). Population densities range from 3-46 per km<sup>2</sup>, depending upon habitat type. The highest densities occur on heather moors overlying base-rich rocks, with the lowest densities where there are acidic rocks; locally densities may reach 300 per km<sup>2</sup> (Hewson 1991).</p> <p><i>L. timidus hibernicus</i> is found from seashore to hill-top, mainly in open country, in many habitats including unimproved and semi-improved pasture, expanding into areas of intensive farmland; upland habitats including heather dominated heaths and bogs; and coastal habitats including dunes, coastal stripes and seashore.</p> <p>Recent research suggests that it may be the variety of grasses within <i>L. timidus hibernicus</i>' diet that limit its distribution. It seems to avoid areas of improved grassland dominated by rye grass species though there are certainly other factors contributing to this absence, such as distribution and lack of cover.</p>
2.5.2 Area estimation (sq km)	Unknown
2.5.3 Date of estimation	2006
2.5.4 Quality of data	Poor
2.5.5 Trend of the habitat	Decreasing (-)
2.5.6 Trend period	1990-1998
2.5.7 Reasons for reported trend	3 - Direct human influence; 4 - Indirect anthropo or zoogenic influence; 5 - Natural processes;

<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)	76721
2.7.2 Favourable reference population	393700
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	(U1) - Inadequate
(2.6) Future prospects	(FV) - Favourable
Overall assessment	(U1) - Inadequate