

# *New Forest Biodiversity Forum*

## **Endangered Species Conservation in the New Forest**

### **Dominic Price (Species Recovery Trust)**

The Species Recovery Trust is currently focussing on four species in the New Forest: Marsh Clubmoss, Field Gentian, Heath Lobelia and New Forest Cicada.

#### **Marsh Clubmoss**

- The New Forest remains a stronghold for this species, which is significant as the Dorset Heaths have been downgraded from this category, and in the SE of England it is really struggling.
- Volunteers now monitor virtually all the sites annually, and this effort has led to the discovery of several new populations.
- We are in the early stages of a project looking at how effectively plants can be translocated.

#### **Field Gentian**

- Has been suffering recently in the south of England due to climate change and associated heatwaves/droughts.
- The Forest has historically had a pattern of alternating boom and bust years, but even this appears to now be breaking down.
- Populations may be moving away from the open habit of the lawns to more scrubby habitats.

#### **Heath Lobelia**

- Early successes at restoring the population at the heath site remain hard to sustain with unreliable grazing, but the population is persisting.
- Plants have returned to the arable site after years of destruction, and we are working to try and sustain suitable habitat for them.
- In 2023 we hand-removed just under 200 Molinia tussocks to keep the site open.

#### **New Forest Cicada**

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- We believe this species to be functionally extinct in the Forest, and despite receiving many records each year, not one has led to a confirmed sighting/recording.
- This year saw the start of a project, initially funded by NE-SRP, to obtain insects from Slovenia and put them in a combination of *in situ* sites and a captive breeding population at Paulton's Park.