



## Habitat management for the White-letter Hairstreak

The overall aim is to maintain elm trees in suitable habitats.

### Retention of Elm Trees

Woodland and hedgerow management that retains elm trees will benefit the White-letter Hairstreak. Fell trees infected with Dutch Elm Disease. Weak and dying elm trees provide the under bark habitat for broods of elm bark beetle. Check for brood trees in spring, and fell and debarb to limit the spread of the disease. Field Maple *Acer campestre* and Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* are also thought to be important for White-letter Hairstreak so retention of these around elm within a hedgerow/ woodland would be beneficial. Lime trees in close proximity to elm should also be retained as these are used for nectaring.

### Suckering, Regrowth and Coppicing

Encourage suckering of elm from roots or regrowth from cut stumps. Elm regrowth usually becomes infected with Dutch Elm Disease at about 12 years, when it reaches 5-10m tall, so coppicing elm on a 10 year cycle will limit re-infection.

### Hedgerow Management

Avoid clipping elm hedgerows until after July, ensuring larvae have a plentiful supply of flowers and young leaves to feed upon. Wide field margins should be retained for nectar sources such as thistles and brambles.

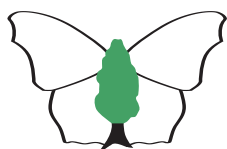
### Planting

Include elm of local provenance in new woodlands and hedgerows. Disease-resistant trees are now propagated for this purpose.

### Survey/Monitoring

Finding and identifying elm is a suitable beginning when surveying for the butterfly. Not all elm in a landscape is dead and often small elms are overlooked. Adults can be seen from mid June - early August high in the tree canopy. Adults are seen high in the tree canopy and also in sunny sheltered spots around elm trees. On some sites searching for eggs and larvae can be used to establish breeding presence. Eggs can be found on branches throughout the winter and are characterised by their 'flying saucer' shape. They are often situated on the underside of the girdle scar, (where the most recent growth meets the older wood); at the base of side shoots; on old leaf scars or at the base of buds. Larvae in the early stages of development can be found in eaten-out seeds within seed clusters. Oval patches of feeding damage on leaves, especially at the base can indicate the presence of mature larvae.

### below Suitable breeding habitats



# Butterfly Conservation

Saving butterflies, moths and their habitats

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