

Habitat management for the Netted Carpet

If the Netted Carpet is to survive then Touch-me-not Balsam colonies must be maintained. Numbers of foodplant can fluctuate greatly from year to year and regular ground disturbance is needed for it to persist in any one location. Management should aim to maintain and expand the Balsam colonies wherever possible, particularly in the vicinity of known moth colonies.

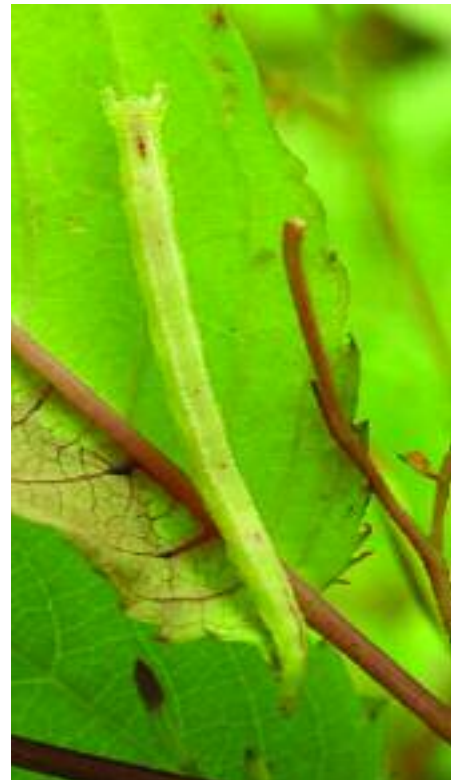
- ◆ The optimal conditions for Touch-me-not Balsam are dappled shade, high soil moisture content (but not waterlogged for long periods), a high nitrogen and organic content of the soil and severe ground disturbance carried out on an annual basis. If the combination of these factors is not maintained each year then plant colonies will decline, often being replaced by perennial species such as grasses, Common Nettle *Urtica dioica*, Creeping Buttercup *Ranunculus repens* and Bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg.
- ◆ The regulated presence of grazing cattle or other forms of ground disturbance over the winter is an important factor in providing suitable conditions for the plant.
- ◆ Light-levels at sites can be manipulated to create dappled sunlight where necessary through small-scale coppicing or selective removal of branches, although moisture content of the soil must be maintained.

How to survey/monitor

- ◆ From late July-early September the pale yellow/green larvae can be found. They can readily be found at rest during the day usually on the undersides of leaves, on the stems, or forming a triangle between a leaf and the stem. Care should be taken with the identification of the larvae, particularly when they are small, due to the possible confusion with those of the Small Phoenix *Ecliptopera silaceata*.
- ◆ Training can be provided to anyone volunteering to assist with surveys for Netted Carpet larvae, for further information please contact Butterfly Conservation.
- ◆ The adult moth can also be surveyed for by light-trapping from just after dusk from early July-mid August.
- ◆ Colonies of Touch-me-not Balsam should be reported to Butterfly Conservation, as it is likely that stands remain unknown.



above Ideal woodland habitat
top left Touch-me-not Balsam,
the larval foodplant
left Gardens can contain ideal habitat
below left Small Phoenix larva
below Netted Carpet larva



**Butterfly
Conservation**

Saving butterflies, moths and their habitats

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