POSITIVE INDICATORS

1 Bell Heather

2 Bilberry

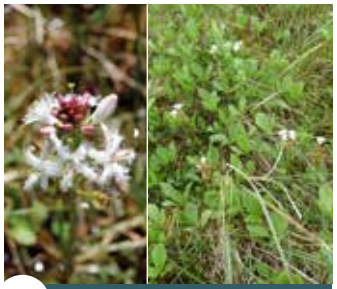
3 Bog Myrtle

4 Cross-leaved Heather

5 Ling Heather

6 Western Gorse

7 Bog Asphodel

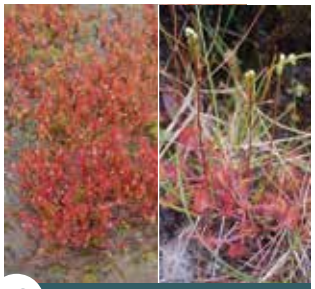


8 Bog Bean

9 Bog Cotton

10 Deer Grass

11 Lousewort



12 Sundews

13 White-beaked Sedge

14 Branched Mosses

15 Non-crustose (bushy) Lichens

16 Sphagnum Mosses

NEGATIVE INDICATORS

A Bramble

B Conifers *(Sitka spruce or Lodgepole Pine)*

C European Gorse

D Nettle

E Rhododendron

How to assess a peatland plot

- Walk a predetermined 'W' through the plot, examine aerial photo when deciding route, look for variations and include these on your route. The route should cover a significant portion of the plot to be representative of the area.

- Do not just follow access tracks or regular stock paths, or attempt to score a plot from an easily accessible access point, as this will give you a biased view of the plot's condition.

- If discrete areas within a plot look likely to differ by one or more score, mark these areas on the map.

- The overall score should be calculated for the entire management unit, if necessary considering the proportion of higher/lower scoring areas within the plot.

- Ensure that you cover a selection of the vegetation types present such as bog, heath, and acid grassland (different coloured areas on an aerial photograph) and different terrains (steep slopes, hummocks, hollows etc).

- Target any obvious potential problem spots e.g. access points, roads/ tracks, areas adjoining coniferous forest plantations, watercourse crossings etc.

- It is essential to look around as you walk so you get a feel for the wider area e.g. to estimate the overall grazing level or the proportion and type of scrub.

- It is also necessary to stop regularly to pick up the detail needed for certain assessments e.g. parting the grass at regular intervals during your walk to estimate ground cover or checking the vegetation for weed species or the presence of scrub seedlings.

Combined cover of mosses and lichens - A2

The cover of mosses and lichens can vary significantly within a plot and it is important to note this variation when assessing the area as a whole.

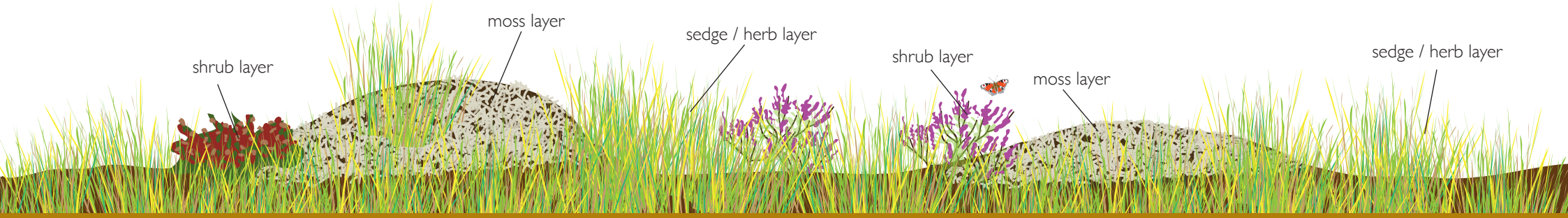
***Dominant* score:** mosses and lichens would be present at least once for every 5 steps you would take through the plot.

***Abundant* score:** mosses and lichens present at least once for every 10 steps through the plot.

***Frequent* score:** mosses and lichens present as scattered throughout the plot, while the ground layer may be absent in places.

***Rare* score:** mosses and lichens present in very small numbers in the plot and you would need to actively search beneath the vegetation to see them.

N.B. *it might be helpful to pick a small representative area to estimate combined cover of mosses and lichens and apply this proportionately to the entire plot if appropriate.*



Good peatland / heathland structure with all three vegetation layers well represented.