

WHAT IS THE HOLLY FERN ?

The holly fern is a small to medium sized fern of rock crevices and scree slopes, mainly above 600m.

CURRENT STATUS:

Holly fern has a northern and western distribution in the UK. Its restrictive habitat requirements, crevices in bare rock and scree, constrain its distribution to mountainous and fell areas in northern England and Scotland.

In Durham the species is very rare and extremely sparsely distributed in mountain scree. It is confined to the Moorhouse and Upper Teesdale N.N.R.

It was more extensively distributed in the past although all known records refer to this area.

WHY IS THE HOLLY FERN OF CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE?

Holly fern is of limited distribution nationally and its presence in upper Teesdale represents one of its few locations in northern England.

The holly fern was previously collected from its well-known locality and this led to an artificial reduction in its already limited local distribution.

THE HOLLY FERN IS AT RISK FROM:

The collection of specimens.

Reduced genetic diversity as a result of population decline.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS:

Protection and management of all remaining sites in the N.N.R.

The re-introduction of young plants to sites within the N.N.R. from where it has been lost due to collection/ other factors.