

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT  
BY DEPUTY G.C.L. BAUDAINS OF ST. CLEMENT  
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 24th SEPTEMBER 2013**

**Question**

Further to his response to my written question of 10th September 2013, in which the Minister declared that “Ragwort remains an important species that is of benefit to the broader environmental” (sic), would the Minister outline those benefits?

**Answer**

Ragwort *Senecio jacobaea* is an extremely important plant. Worldwide at least 30 insect species and 14 species of fungi are entirely reliant on Ragwort.

In Britain, at least 77 species of insect have been recorded eating ragwort leaves, or living in the stems and flowers and it is an important nectar source for hundreds of species of butterflies, moths, flies, bees and other invertebrates. Over 100 species of invertebrates have been recorded visiting ragwort flowers for their nectar.

In Jersey, the black and red 7 spot burnet day flying moth is entirely dependent on ragwort and would disappear from our countryside if ragwort was eliminated.

It is apparent that ragwort needs to be controlled where it poses a risk to livestock, but the response should be proportionate.

Natural England, the UK Government’s advisory Department on the Natural Environment state;

“In many situations ragwort poses no threat to horses and other livestock. In the right place, ragwort contributes to biodiversity and is important for wildlife in the UK. It supports a wide variety of invertebrates and is a major nectar source for many insects. It is a natural component of many types of unimproved grassland and is used by some invertebrate species that have conservation needs”.