

***Bupleurum rotundifolium* L.**

Thorow-wax

Archaeophyte

GB & England: Critically Endangered

UKBAP/Section 41

GB Rare

VC5 Extinct; VC6 Rare

An annual, formerly a weed of arable fields on calcareous soils. First recorded in Somerset by Turner (1568), who wrote "I have sene this herbe growing ... in Sommersetshere between Summerton and Marlock". In VC5, found only three times: in a cornfield on Haines Hill, Taunton in 1913 by W.S. Denton, on an allotment in West Porlock in 1941 by N.G. Hadden and at the docks in Bridgewater in 1955 by E.J. Hamlin. There have been more records for VC6. Babington (1834) included a record made by Dr Heneage Gibbes "By the side of the road on the hill going into Hinton" and H.F. Parsons found it growing at Wolverton on cornbrash (Murray, 1896). Murray (1896) found it abundant in some years in cornfields about Charlton Mackrell and gave a record by J.G Baker for a roadside near Somerton Court House. It was last seen near Charlton Mackrell in 1948 (Roe, 1981). T. Clark found this species in a cornfield between Peck Mill and Walton (Murray, 1896). Miss Gregory found it as a garden weed at Ashcombe, near Weston-super-Mare in 1903 and plants were found in Portishead station-yard from 1903 to 1907 (White, 1912). In 1926 it was seen on a patch of sandy soil at Burnham. Before 1880, T.B. Flower knew this species between Leigh Woods and Ham Green (White, 1912), and it was found in allotment fields at Blagdon in 1917 by Mr Westbrook. In 2005, more than fifty years after it was last seen in Somerset, *Bupleurum rotundifolium* appeared as a garden weed in Cocklake, but persisted for only one year. Murray (1896) noted that this species was "rare and uncertain in its appearance" and it has continued thus. It must now be considered extinct in VC5 and perhaps also in VC6. This species has declined in Britain due to improved seed cleaning and is extinct in arable habitats; it is now only found as a rare casual, usually arising from birdseed.

VC6

Cocklake

ST439494

2005 EJMCD

Appeared in flower bed, one season only



Bupleurum rotundifolium at Cocklake (2005). Photo: EJMCD