

Mentha arvensis L.

Corn Mint

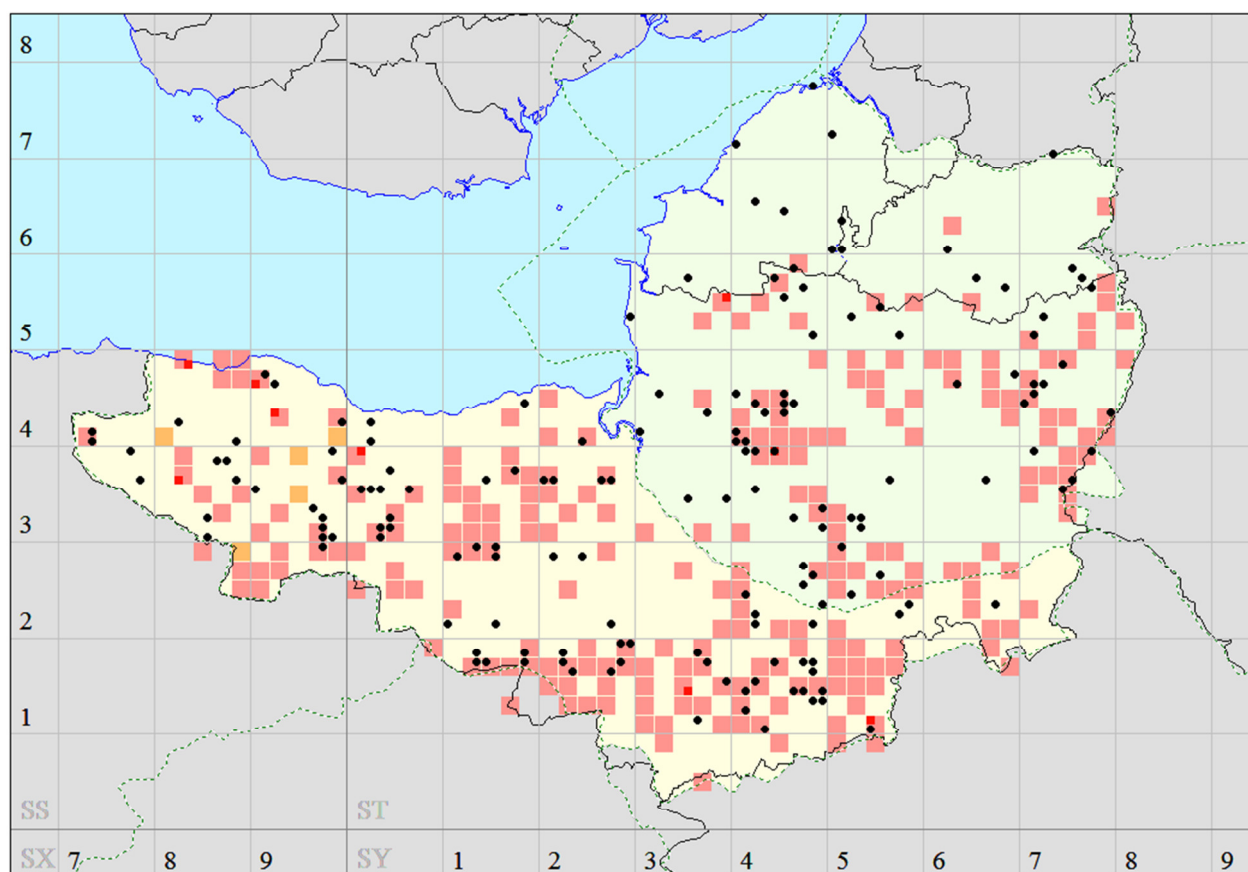
Native

GB: Least Concern

England: Near Threatened

VC5 Not Scarce; VC6 Not Scarce

A rhizomatous perennial herb, rarely annual, found in arable fields, trackways, waste land, the margins of ponds and reservoirs and in damp grassland where it may replace *Mentha aquatica*. Widespread in Somerset, this species was described as very common by Murray (1896) and as common by White (1912) and Roe (1981). Tetrad records from the Atlas Flora of Somerset (covering modern administrative Somerset only) indicated that it is not uniformly distributed, being largely absent from some areas, for example the Vale of Taunton in VC5 and the eastern part of the Brue Valley in VC6, and is clustered in others, for example around Shapwick Heath and Westhay Moor National Nature Reserves in VC6 (see map below, red squares). Since 2000, this species has declined slightly in Somerset, although the relative paucity of recent records partly reflects less extensive recording effort since the flora. *Mentha arvensis* has declined substantially in Britain and Ireland since 1950, particularly north of the English Midlands, hence its recognition as Near Threatened on the England Red List (Stroh, 2014). In southern England, the decline has been less marked: Somerset records reflect this.



Distribution of *Mentha arvensis* in Somerset, mapped using MapMate. Black dots are post-2000 records; red squares are 1987-1999 records; sepia squares are pre-1987 records