

***Juncus maritimus* Lam.**

Sea Rush

Native

GB & England: Least Concern

VC5 Rare, possibly Extinct; VC6 Scarce

A rhizomatous perennial herb of saltmarshes and dune slacks. In VC5 this species was included in Coleman's list of plants seen within five and ten miles of Minehead and Dunster in 1849 (Watson, 1874); in 1918 it was recorded by W. Watson at Lilstock. It has not been seen subsequently on that part of the coast. The earliest record for Somerset was made by Collins, who found it in ditches near the mouth of the Parret [*sic.*], not unfrequent near the channel (Watson, 1837). There were no further records from that area and White (1912) remarked that the rush must have quickly disappeared from these localities; however in 2000 this species was found by Stephen Parker on saltmarsh by the River Parrett in VC5 and in 2015 it was discovered beside a ditch at Steart Marshes. In VC6 this rush has increased in recent decades and is now known at five sites. In 1862 it was observed by T.B. Flower and H.C. Watson on a muddy bank of the Avon near Ham Green (White, 1912); there have been no further records for the Avon estuary. Recorded at Portishead in 1841 by S. Freeman (White, 1912), this species was found sporadically in that area until 1920 (specimen in **TTN** collected by I.M. Roper), but Roe (1981) reported that it had not been seen there again. In 1987 it was found by Dawn Lawrence in the saltmarsh at Royal Portbury Dock, whilst in 1993 Mark and Clare Kitchen found small quantities at Woodhill Bay, Portishead and also further south at Sand Bay. It thrives at these three sites and was also found in 2011 by members of Somerset Rare Plants Group just south of Clevedon. In 1897, *Juncus maritimus* was discovered on saltmarsh sand near Berrow by White (1912). Green *et al.* (1997) recorded it at two sites at the edge of Berrow Dunes: in a reed bed (ST25V) and in a saltmarsh (ST25W). It can no longer be found in the southern reed bed site, but persists in the northern site which itself is now the edge of a reed bed. This species is scattered around the coasts of Britain and Ireland.



Juncus maritimus at Sand Bay (2011). Photo: HJC

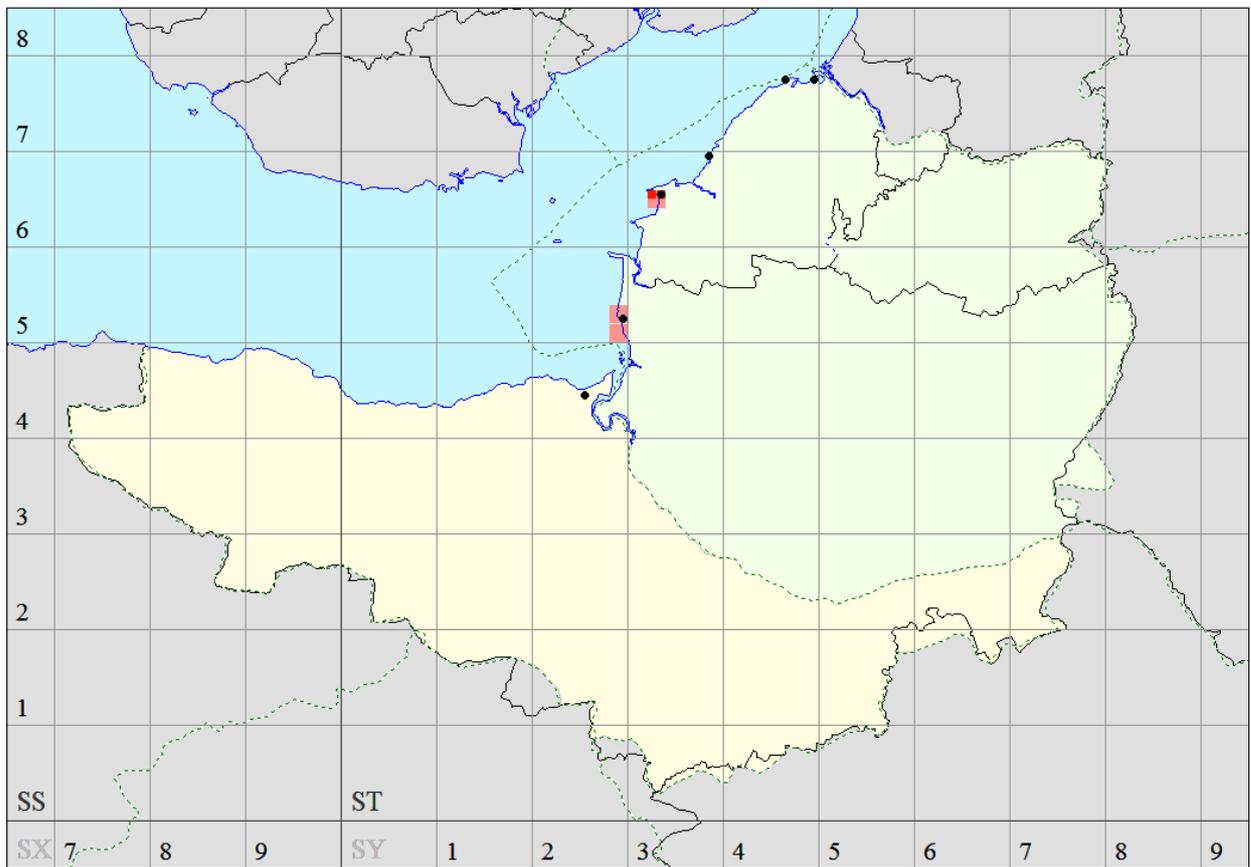
VC5

Parrett Estuary	SSSI	ST24	2000	SJP	Saltmarsh by the River Parrett
Stear Marshes		ST25414409	2015	SRPG, SANHS	One plant at edge of wide ditch

VC6

Berrow Dunes	SSSI	ST2951	1989	AFSP	In reed bed
Berrow Dunes	SSSI	ST29035249	2014	HJC, FJR	Few clumps by small flooded path to sea
Sand Point	SSSI	ST3265	1998	SJP	
Sand Bay	SSSI	ST330653	2012	HJC, FJR	12 large clumps at back of saltmarsh
Sand Bay	SSSI	ST330654	2013	HJC, BNS	Several large clumps at back of saltmarsh
Woodspring Bay (N)	SSSI	ST38706988	2011	SRPG	1 small clump in grassland by track
Woodhill Bay	SSSI	ST46477752	2014	SRPG, BNS	Large patch 3m across & 3 small patches
Royal Portbury Docks	SSSI	ST49247755	2014	HJC	Many clumps, back of saltmarsh
Royal Portbury Docks	SSSI	ST49467776	2014	HJC	Large patch, upper saltmarsh
Royal Portbury Docks	SSSI	ST49507762	2014	HJC	1 clump, upper saltmarsh

NB There is No Public Access to the saltmarsh at Royal Portbury Docks.



Distribution of *Juncus maritimus* in North Somerset (VC6), mapped using MapMate.
 Black dots are post-2000 records; red squares are 1987-1999 records.
 The hectad record for ST24 in VC5 in 2000 is not shown on this map.