

***Dianthus deltoides* L.**

Maiden Pink

Alien? formerly Native
GB: Near Threatened
England: Vulnerable
GB Scarce
VC5 Rare; VC6 Lost

A perennial, loosely tufted herb of dry grassland, on calcareous or occasionally sandy soils. Found new for VC5 in 2008 by Paul Green and Helena Crouch, growing in short turf on sandy soil in the grounds of a derelict hospital in Yeovil, where it may have been introduced. In VC6, this species was formerly native at one site, where it was first recorded in 1835 in a rough sandstone pasture near Keynsham. White (1912) reported that “of late years the plant has become scarce”; it was last seen in 1928 (Miller, 1933). A record by J.C. Collins on lias near Street was never confirmed and a patch found by Miss Roper in Croscombe churchyard (White, 1912) did not persist. As an introduction, this species was found on a rubbish tip at Ashton Gate, by C.I. and N.Y. Sandwith in 1939, and on Bedminster Down tip by A.L. Grenfell in 1979, but must now be considered to be lost from VC6. With a widely scattered distribution, this species is found more in central and eastern areas; as a native, it reached its southwest limit in Somerset. *Dianthus deltoides* has declined throughout its range due to loss of habitat through under-grazing and scrub encroachment.

VC5

Balidon House, Yeovil

ST538145

2009 JP

Abundant in sandy turf of garden of ruin



Dianthus deltoides from Yeovil, in cultivation (2008). Photo: HJC