

***Helianthemum nummularium* (L.) Mill.**

Common Rock-rose

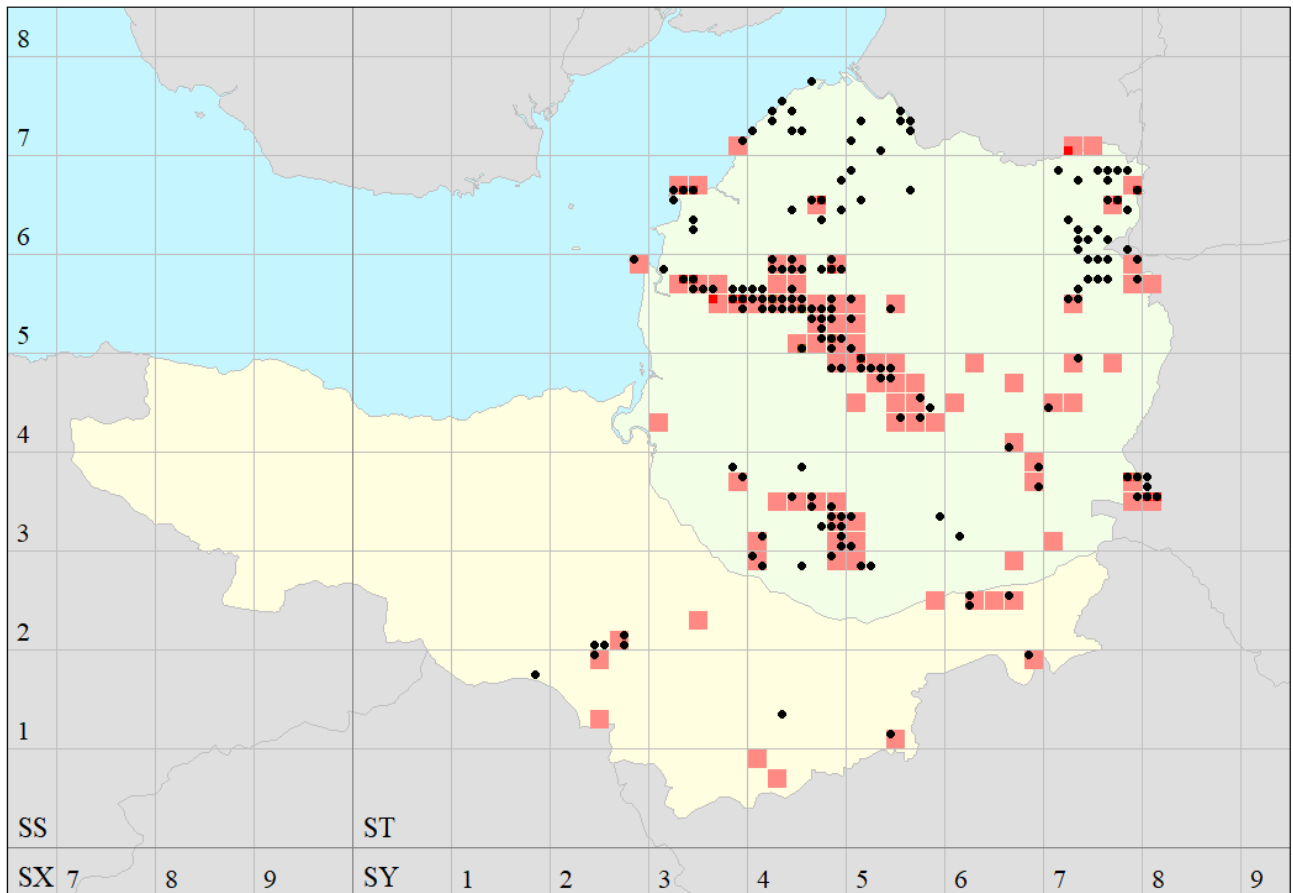
Native

GB: Least Concern

England: Near Threatened

VC5 Not Scarce; VC6 Not Scarce

A perennial prostrate sub-shrub of dry calcareous grassland. Murray (1896) noted that it was very common in the limestone districts of Somerset. Roe (1981) also stated that it is very common on the Carboniferous and Oolitic limestones of north Somerset and on the Lias of the Poldens and the chalk of the eastern border. These areas remain the stronghold for this species, although it may have declined in the eastern Mendips. Roe (1981) listed a record near Watchet; a record for ST04 in 1980 appears on the BSBI Distribution Database with no details. Elsewhere in VC5 there are only recent records for this species from Orchard Wood (ST2419, ST2420, ST2520) and Thurlbear Quarlands (ST2720, 2721); Merriott (ST4313), Sutton Bingham (ST5411), Cadbury Castle (ST6224, ST6225), Maperton (ST6625) and Milborne Port (ST6819). It has been introduced at Quants Butterfly Conservation reserve (ST1817) as a butterfly food plant. *Helianthemum nummularium* has declined due to conversion of calcareous grassland to arable, or cessation of grazing and scrub encroachment. This decline has been seen in Somerset, where this species is close to its southwest limit of distribution in Britain.



Distribution of *Helianthemum nummularium* in Somerset, mapped using MapMate. Black dots are post-2000 records; red squares are 1987-1999 records