

***Helosciadium inundatum* (L.) W.D.J. Koch Lesser Marshwort**

Native

GB: Least Concern

England: Vulnerable

VC5 Rare; VC6 Scarce

A creeping perennial herb growing at the shallow margins of base-poor pools and ditches. In VC5, this species was recorded at West Sedge Moor in 1955 by Miss D.E. De Vesian, but there are no further records from that site. In 1991 it was found by Paul Green in two ponds on the Blackdowns, where it persists. In VC6, *Helosciadium inundatum* has been lost from all but one of the sites known before 1960, but has been found in three others. It was formerly known from two sites in the east of VC6: at Rudge on the eastern boundary, listed by H.F. Parsons, and in a roadside pond at Beacon Hill, found by Miss I.M. Roper in 1926 (Roe, 1981); there have been no subsequent records in the east of Somerset. Sole, in his manuscript flora of 1782, listed three sites on the Levels: near Wedmore and in turf-pits on Glastonbury and Burtle Moors (White, 1912). White himself found it at three sites on the Levels: in ditches between Wedmore and Edington in 1882; between Edington Drove and Shapwick in 1902 with Mr Bucknall; and in a ditch SE of Shapwick Station in 1910. In 1957 this species was found by H.J.M. Bowen at two sites at Shapwick. It was also once known further south, in a ditch near Westonzoyland (Marshall, 1914) and was recorded by E.J. Hamlin at Catcott Heath in 1953. *Helosciadium inundatum* was not found again on the Levels until 2015, when Stephen Parker and Colin Leppard discovered a small population in a ditch separating two fields beside Station Road, Shapwick. Since 1965 this species has been found at three new sites in VC6, all of them ponds on the Mendips. It was found in 1965 by C.A. Howe and C.R. Lancaster in a pool near Priddy, in 1968 by R.G.B. and I.G. Roe at Brimble Pit Pool and in 1977 by D.A. Pearman in a pond on Black Down; it can still be found at all three sites. This species is scattered throughout Britain and Ireland but has disappeared from many sites across its range as a result of loss of habitat following drainage and eutrophication of small pools.



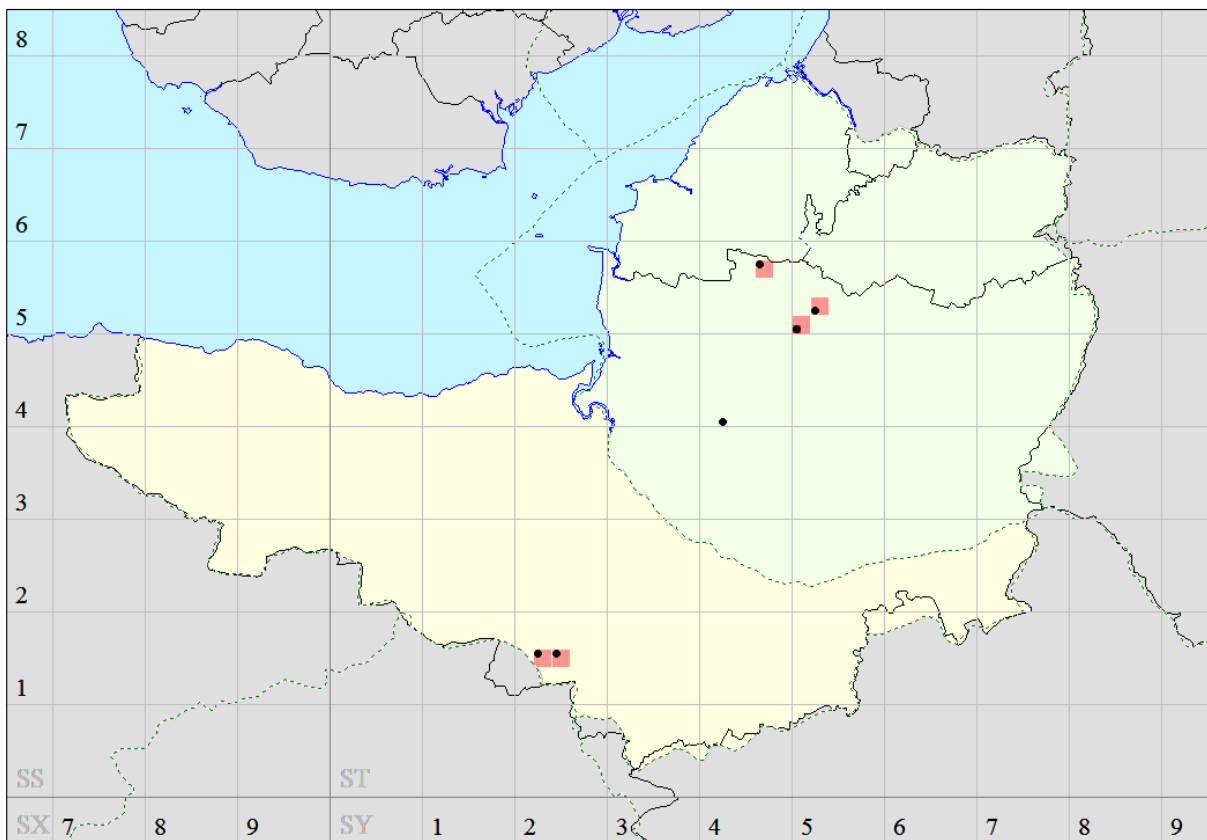
Apium inundatum at Shapwick Heath (2015). Photo: HJC

VC5

North Down		ST228159	2000	CJG, IPG, AS	In small muddy pond
Blackdowns		ST245159	2009	JP	Dominant over pond

VC6

Shapwick Heath	SSSI	ST42344082	2015	HJC, FJR	In ditch between fields E of Station Road
Black Down		ST46775712	2018	HJC, SRPG	1 tiny plant on mud at margin of pond
Black Down		ST46785712	2018	HJC, SRPG	4 small plants on mud at margin of pond
Brimble Pit Pool	SSSI	ST50805081	2016	HJC	At edge of pool, S of willows
Brimble Pit Pool	SSSI	ST50815081	2016	HJC	A small patch
Brimble Pit Pool	SSSI	ST50815082	2016	HJC	
Brimble Pit Pool	SSSI	ST50835080	2016	HJC	Lovely patch
Brimble Pit Pool	SSSI	ST50835081	2016	HJC	3 small patches
Priddy, N of B3155		ST52135226	2018	HJC, FJR	Few on margin of Typha-filled pond



Distribution of *Helosciadium inundatum* in Somerset mapped using MapMate.
Black dots are post-2000 monad records; pink squares are 1987-1999 tetrad records