

***Isatis tinctoria* L.**

Woad

Alien

GB & England: Least Concern

GB Scarce

VC5 Absent; VC6 Lost

A biennial or perennial herb of waste places, quarries and cliffs, found as a relic of cultivation, usually only casually. As a dye plant, Woad was cultivated widely from the Iron Age onwards. Glastonbury, in Somerset, is thought to mean “place where woad grows”; it was also grown at Mells, Keynsham and Saltford, occasionally occurring as a casual near Keynsham over a century ago (White, 1912). Found once as a casual in Weston-super-Mare in 1906 by Rev. S. Laing (White, 1912). In 1989 Mrs J. Appleyard found this species on a roadside in Henton (ST496453), as an escape from an adjoining garden, where it was cultivated as a dye plant. In 2009 six plants were recorded in gravel outside the Peat Moors Centre (ST42554142), between Shapwick and Westhay. Although originally planted as an exhibit, self-sown plants had been seen there for more than ten years; however none have been found since closure of the centre. This species has been recorded at scattered sites in Britain and Ireland, usually only as a casual, although it has persisted in Guildford and Tewkesbury for around 200 years (Marren, 1999). The Somerset sites were the most south-westerly.