

Koeleria vallesiana (Honck.) Gaudin x ***macrantha*** (Ledeb.) Schult.

Native

VC5 Absent; VC6 Scarce

An endemic hybrid grass, intermediate between its parents and found at some sites where they grow together on open rocky south-facing slopes of the western Mendips. Howarth (1933) regarded plants found by Druce at Uphill in 1905 to be *K. mixta* Domin, a hybrid between *K. vallesiana* and *K. britannica* (a segregate of *K. cristata*). Stace (1975) believed that the specimens were almost certainly variants of *K. cristata* (= *K. macrantha*). Roe (1981) stated that the hybrid was first detected in 1933 by W.O. Howarth at Uphill and on Crook Peak; Green *et al.* (1997) also included a record for the hybrid by Howarth in 1933 from Crook Peak. No trace of these records can be found in the literature: they may be a misinterpretation of statements in Stace (1975). In addition, R.S. Callow, in Stace (1975), stated that a chromosome count is essential to confirm hybridity, so Howarth's records, if they exist, are unconfirmed. For his own genetic study of the polyploid complex in *Koeleria*, R.S. Callow surveyed seven known sites where both species grow together and found the pentaploid F₁ interspecific hybrid in very small numbers at five sites: Brean Down, Uphill, Crook Peak, Worle Hill and Sand Point (Callow, 1977; see also Willis, 1975; Callow & Parker, 1979; Callow, 1980). There has only been one subsequent record for this hybrid, on Brean Down, where it was recorded by Adrian Grenfell in 1981. The lack of recent records is considered to be the result of difficulties in recognising the hybrid, rather than a known decline.