

Mentha arvensis L.

Corn Mint

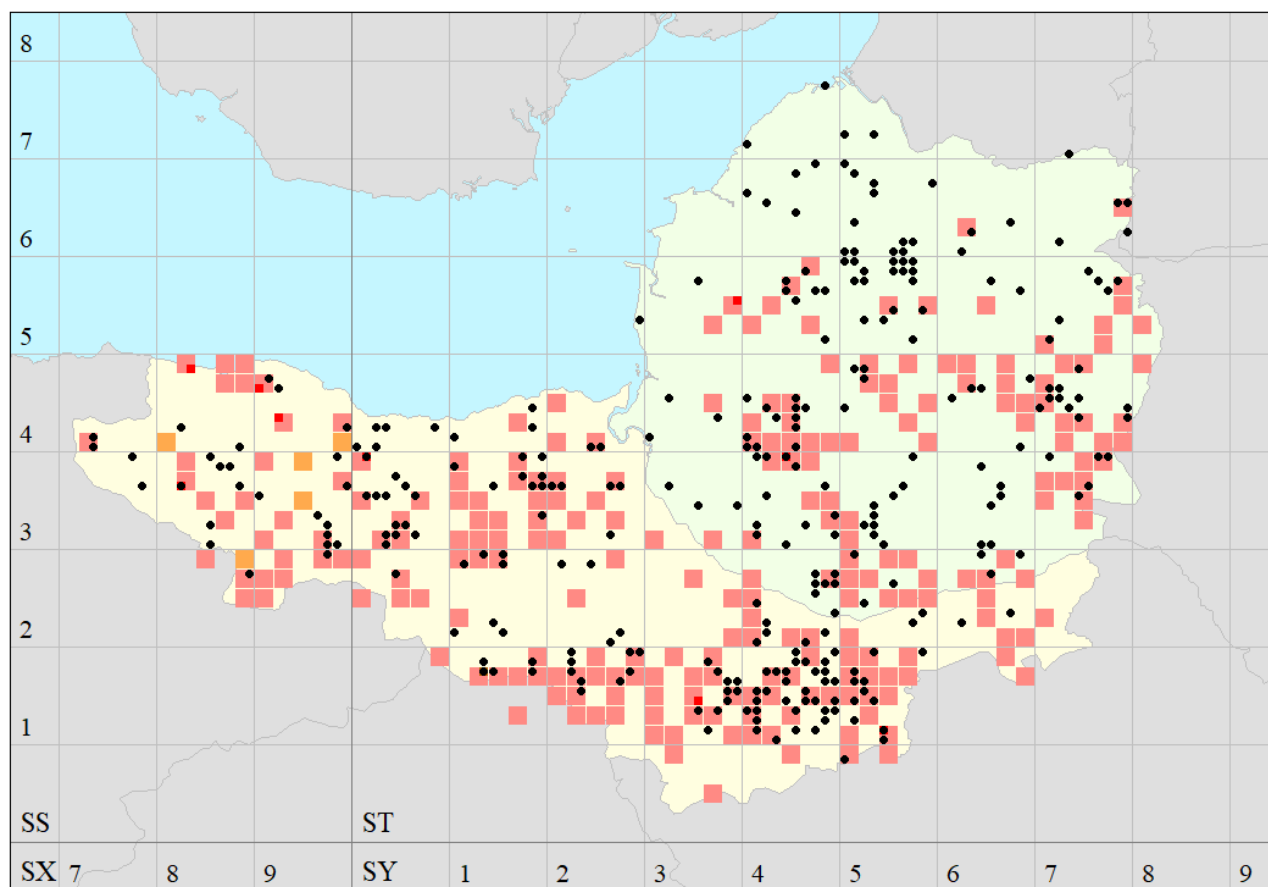
Native

GB: Least Concern

England: Near Threatened

VC5 Not Scarce; VC6 Not Scarce

A rhizomatous perennial herb, rarely annual, found in arable fields, trackways, waste land, the margins of ponds and reservoirs and in damp grassland where it may replace *Mentha aquatica*. Widespread in Somerset, this species was described as very common by Murray (1896) and as common by White (1912) and Roe (1981). Tetrad records from the Atlas Flora of Somerset (covering modern administrative Somerset only) indicated that it is not uniformly distributed, being largely absent from some areas, for example the Vale of Taunton in VC5 and the eastern part of the Brue Valley in VC6, and is clustered in others, for example around Shapwick Heath and Westhay Moor National Nature Reserves in VC6 (see map below, red squares). Since 2000, this species may have declined slightly in Somerset, but there are still areas where records are clustered, for example around Chew Valley Lake and Blagdon Lake, and in the south of the county. *Mentha arvensis* has declined in Britain and Ireland since 1950, particularly in the north of England and Scotland, and is regarded as Near Threatened on the England Red List (Stroh, 2014). In southern England, the decline has been less marked: Somerset records reflect this.



Distribution of *Mentha arvensis* in Somerset, mapped using MapMate. Black dots are post-2000 records; red squares are 1987-1999 records; sepia squares are pre-1987 records