

Noccaea caerulescens (J. & C. Presl) F.K. Mey **Alpine Penny-cress**

Native

GB & England: Least Concern

GB Scarce

VC5 Absent; VC6 Scarce

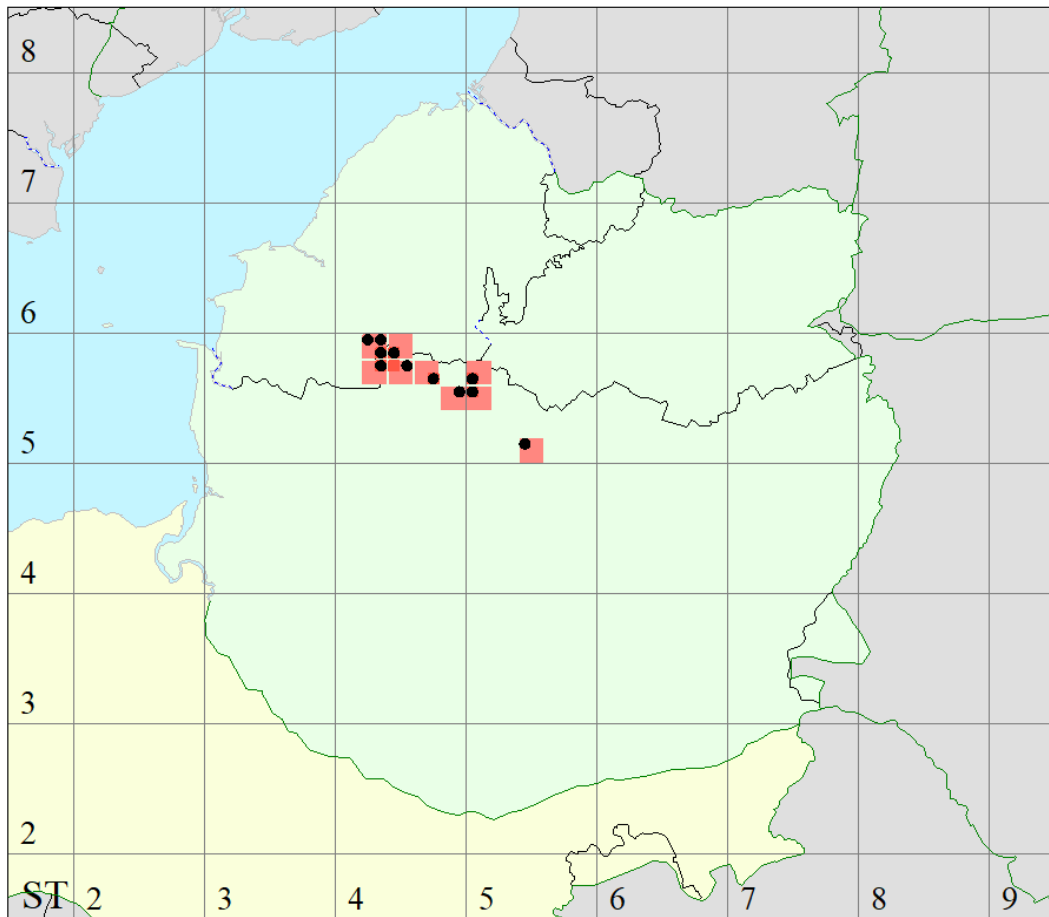
A glabrous rosette-forming perennial found in bare stony places or grassland, mostly on the metalliferous soils and spoil of former lead- or zinc-mining areas, although occasionally on non-metalliferous limestone outcrops and scree. In Somerset, always associated with former lead or calamine (zinc) workings and restricted to a discreet area of the Mendips. First recorded on Mendip in 1875 by C.E. Broome, it is still to be found at most of the locations mentioned by Murray (1896) and White (1912), although there are no recent records immediately around Sidcot. There are large populations easily visible at Priddy Mineries and at Blackmoor Nature Reserve near Charterhouse: at both sites many plants can be seen on piles of glassy black slag which resulted from Victorian re-smelting of lead mining waste. Murray (1896) observed that "It is fond of growing on the top of anthills, probably because of their greater dryness. It also affects the sides of the shallow calamine pits; where, being sheltered, it grows much more luxuriantly." Away from piles of slag, these are still the habitats where it is most likely to occur. Interestingly, neither Murray nor White (1912) mentioned piles of slag as a habitat, perhaps because at that time the deposits of slag were still unsuitable for colonisation. Indeed, Priddy Mineries was still an active site of industry until 1908; the first record of *Noccaea caerulescens* from that site is a specimen in **BM** collected by N. Wycherley in 1957. This species has a disjunct distribution, with sites also in west and north Wales, the Peak District, northern England and a few in Scotland. In Somerset it is at its most southerly location in Britain, 200km south of the next nearest population in England.



Noccaea caerulescens at Blackmoor Nature Reserve (2019). Photo: HJC

VC6

Sandford Hill		ST42825917	2017	SRPG	9 patches on hummocks by mine
Sandford Hill		ST42855916	2017	SRPG	30 patches on tump on N side of path
Sandford Hill		ST42875902	2017	SRPG	17 plants on banks both sides of track
Sandford Hill		ST42895903	2017	SRPG	13 plants on gruffy ground around hollow
Sandford Hill		ST42915903	2017	SRPG	12 patches in large hollow in gruffy ground
Sandford Hill		ST42925904	2017	SRPG	5 patches on S-facing bank on gruffy ground
Sandford Hill		ST42965904	2017	SRPG	1 plant on path across gruffy ground
Sandford Hill		ST42985905	2017	SRPG	10 patches on hummocks in gruffy ground
Sandford Hill		ST42995905	2017	SRPG	7 patches on hummocks in gruffy ground
Sandford Hill		ST43005905	2017	SRPG	4 patches on hummocks in of gruffy ground
Winterhead		ST43895764	2016	HJC, JCh	5 plants on rim of hollow in gruffy ground
Winterhead		ST43905763	2016	HJC, JCh	2 plants on rim of hollow in gruffy ground
Star		ST43985822	2013	HJC, FJR	5 plants on S-facing rocky slope, end of ridge
Star		ST44005827	2006	IPG	2 plants on rocky grassy slope
Star		ST44015820	2016	HJC, JL	4 plants on N-facing side of hollow
Star		ST44045819	2016	HJC, JL	Several plants in hollow on top of ridge
Star		ST44045820	2016	HJC, JL	5 plants in hollow at top of ridge
Star		ST44065818	2016	HJC, JL	20 plants in hollow on top of ridge
Star		ST44145824	2016	HJC, JL	2 plants in hollow on N side of ridge
Shipham		ST441573	1992	PRG	Several plants below wire fence
Rowberrow Bottom		ST45695754	2019	EJMcD, CML	12 pl on bare grassy bank, E side of stream
Rowberrow Bottom		ST457573	2006	JP	Frequent, stony ground and grassy hummocks
Rowberrow Bottom		ST45825719	2007	EJMcD	On stony bank in grassy clearing W of stream
Rowberrow Bottom		ST45895707	2009	HJC, FJR	On stony hummock in grassy area E of stream
Rowberrow Bottom		ST45905706	2020	HJC, FJR	10 small pl on bare patch of gruffy ground
Tynings Farm		ST475563	1991	JR	In rough pasture
GB Gruffy	SSSI	ST47555616	2017	HJC, RDR	Many plants on gruffy ground in SW of reserve
GB Gruffy	SSSI	ST47625620	2016	HJC	Several plants on rough ground SW of swallet
GB Gruffy	SSSI	ST47645616	2014	HJC	7 plants on gruffy ground S of swallet
Velvet Bottom	SSSI	ST49205502	2015	HJC, JCh, AR	1 plant on remains of old wall beside path
Charterhouse	SSSI	ST503555	1992	IPG, PRG, GAC	Lots in grassy area going N from car park
Blackmoor Reserve	SSSI	ST50545569	2007	SRPG	Steep bank just N of carpark
Blackmoor Reserve	SSSI	ST50465596	2016	HJC, PTFW	6 plants N side of path, NW end of causeway
Blackmoor Reserve	SSSI	ST50475595	2016	HJC, PTFW	1 plant on S-facing bank of causeway
Blackmoor Reserve	SSSI	ST50475596	2016	HJC, PTFW	60 plants on causeway at W end of lake
Blackmoor Reserve	SSSI	ST50485594	2016	SLP	50-100 plants on side of bund
Blackmoor Reserve	SSSI	ST50485595	2016	HJC, PTFW	81 plants on S-facing bank of causeway
Blackmoor Reserve	SSSI	ST50495594	2016	HJC, PTFW	16 plants on S-facing bank of causeway
Blackmoor Reserve	SSSI	ST50505593	2013	HJC, FJR	1 plant on spoil by S corner of lake
Blackmoor Reserve	SSSI	ST50515594	2013	HJC, FJR	5 plants on turf island on spoil S of lake
Blackmoor Reserve	SSSI	ST50555599	2015	HJC, JCh, AR	2 plants on turf on slag heap E of lake area
Blackmoor Reserve	SSSI	ST50585598	2007	HJC, LIC	By path just S of derelict house
Blackmoor Reserve	SSSI	ST50595602	2016	HJC, PTFW	4 plants at W edge of slag by former lake
Blackmoor Reserve	SSSI	ST50595603	2012	HJC	8 plants on stable slag to E of lake
Blackmoor Reserve	SSSI	ST50605604	2016	HJC, PTFW	1 plant on slag pile, E side of former lake
Blackmoor Reserve	SSSI	ST50605605	2016	HJC, PTFW	57 plants on slag pile, E side of former lake
Blackmoor Reserve	SSSI	ST50615605	2016	HJC, PTFW	2 plants on slag pile, E side of former lake
Blackmoor Reserve	SSSI	ST50625605	2016	HJC, PTFW	1 plant on slag pile, E side of former lake
Blackmoor Reserve	SSSI	ST50625607	2016	HJC, PTFW	8 plants on slag pile, E side of former lake
Blackmoor NR, N of	SSSI	ST50545609	2012	HJC, JMC	1 plant on S-facing side of anthill N of fence
Blackmoor NR, N of	SSSI	ST50545610	2012	HJC, JMC	2 plants on S-facing side of anthill N of fence
Priddy Mineries	SSSI	ST54645142	2009	RSC	1 plant in rough grass S of Waldegrave Pool
Priddy Mineries	SSSI	ST54665108	2015	HJC, JCh, AR	Many plants on linear pile of slag
Priddy Mineries	SSSI	ST54675108	2016	ARGM	A few plants
Priddy Mineries	SSSI	ST54715133	2015	HJC, JCh, AR	Many plants on raised area amongst Molinia
Priddy Mineries	SSSI	ST54715143	2015	HJC, JCh, AR	Many plants around hollow amongst Calluna
Priddy Mineries	SSSI	ST54735142	2015	HJC, JCh, AR	1 plant in grassland by Carex paniculata
Priddy Mineries	SSSI	ST54735143	2015	HJC, JCh, AR	Few plants on grass tump by C. paniculata
Priddy Mineries	SSSI	ST54765136	2015	HJC, JCh, AR	Several plants in grassland on gruffy ground



Distribution of *Noccaea caerulescens* in North Somerset (VC6), mapped using MapMate. Black dots are post-2000 records; red squares are 1987-1999, monad or tetrad



Noccaea caerulescens at Sandford Hill (2017). Photo: HJC