

***Polygonum maritimum* L.**

Sea Knotgrass

Native

GB: Endangered

England: Vulnerable

Schedule 8

GB Rare

VC5 Absent; VC6 Lost

A procumbent perennial herb found above the high tide mark on sandy or shingle beaches. In Somerset, only ever found in VC6: the inclusion of VC5 in the list of vice-counties for this species in Lousley and Kent (1981) was an error. Recorded by St Brody (1856) as “rarely on the beach at Weston-super-Mare” but this was unconfirmed. In 1882, H.S. Thompson found a single plant on the shore between Burnham and Brean. His specimen is in **K**. There has been no record since. Although considered extinct in Britain for a while, this species turned up at several new sites along the south coast of England during the 1990s. Its past appearance and loss in Somerset might be considered part of its natural distribution pattern: it was similarly found new to Ireland in 1973, but has not been seen again since 1974 (Green, 2008). This is a strand-line species of rare sporadic occurrence rather than permanent establishment; reappearance in Somerset is unlikely but perhaps not impossible.