

## ***Cochlearia officinalis* L.**

## **Common Scurvygrass**

Native

GB & England: Least Concern

VC5 Scarce; VC6 Not Scarce

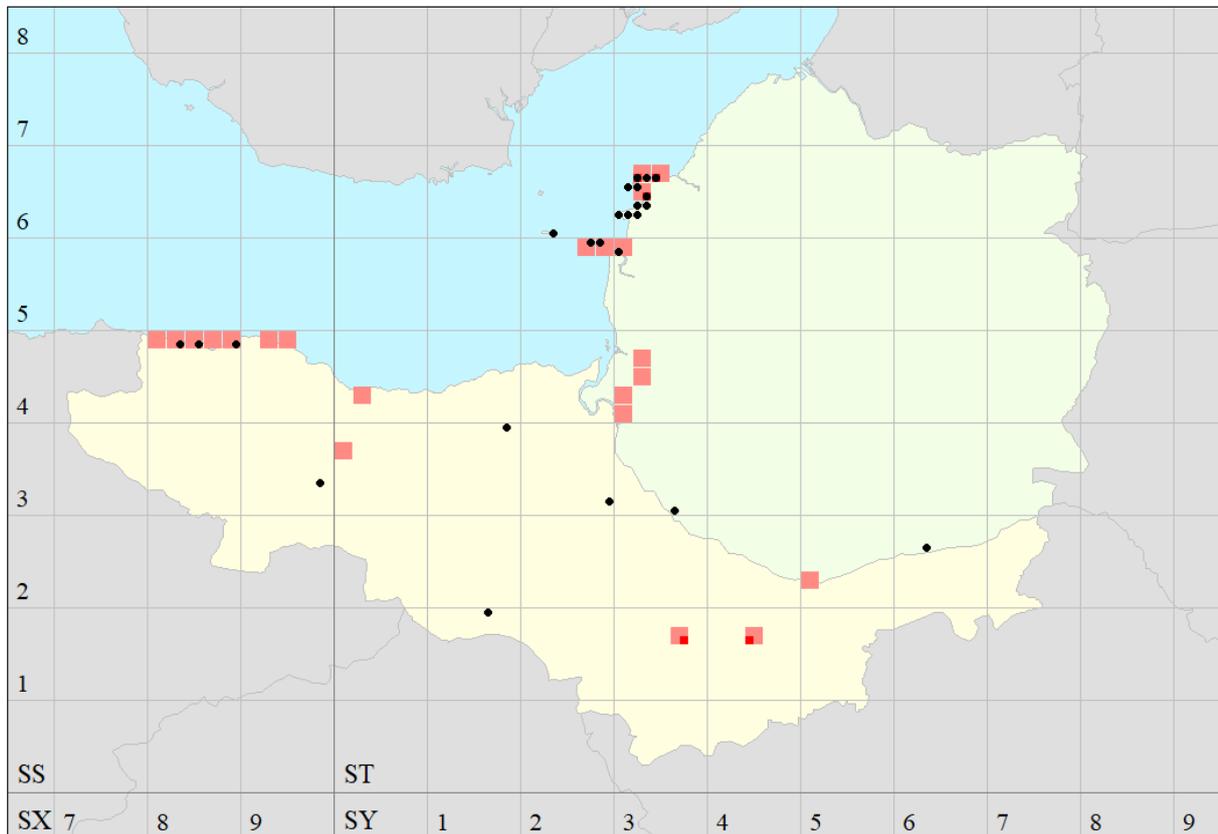
A perennial herb of rocky ledges on coastal cliffs and the upper drier parts of saltmarshes, also found on hedge banks in southwest England and occasionally on salted road verges. In VC5, no records for this species were mentioned by Murray (1896) or Roe (1981). Some doubt surrounded the first records made for VC5, at Bossington Beach (SS881483) by Caroline Giddens in 1975, and at the east end of Dunster Beach, by C.A. Howe in 1978. Giddens (1984) denoted these records with question marks. Green *et al.* (1997) noted that this species was increasing along the coast in rocky places, mapping it in six coastal tetrads west of Watchet. It was also recorded along the verge of the A303 by Paul Green in 1993 and by Tim Rich in 1995. Since 2000, this species has been found at Ivy Stone, Gore Point and Bossington along the coast, and inland at Withiel Florey, at two sites beside the M5, and at Nether Stowey beside the A39. In VC6, *C. officinalis* was known to White (1881) only at Weston-super-Mare, in and about the wood and at Birnbeck, and on Brean Down. By 1912 it had been found on the beach at Kewstoke Bay, on rocks of Sand Point, and on a low cliff near St Thomas' Head (White (1912)). Roe (1981) described this species as locally common on limestone rocks along the coast from Brean Down to Portishead and on cliffs on Steep Holm. This species was recorded at Clevedon Pill (ST3970), Portishead (ST4676, 4677) and Portbury Wharf (ST4877) for the Flora of the Bristol Region (Green *et al.*, 2000), however there have been no records north of St Thomas' Head since 2000. Inland there have been a few casual records, but this species is only very rarely seen on roadsides in Somerset. *Cochlearia officinalis* is distributed around much of the coastline of Britain and Ireland, yet absent from southeast England and surprisingly scarce along the Somerset coast. Southwest of Somerset it is common inland along road verges and hedge banks.



*Cochlearia officinalis* at Brean Down (2014). Photo: HJC

## VC5

Ivy Stone		SS8348	2014	GEL	
Gore Point	SSSI	SS8548	2014	GEL	
Bossington	SSSI	SS8948	2016	SJP	
Withiel Florey		SS9833	2012	CJG	Castle Hill Farm
West Buckland		ST16701999	2013	SJP	M5 Motorway verge, Junction 26
Nether Stowey		ST18303990	2016	RFitzG	By A39 near sluice, S side of road
Motorway		ST2931	2018	SJP	1 plant at side of motorway
Whitelackington		ST378161	1995	TCGR	A303 verge, under overbridge
South Petherton		ST449166	1993	PRG	1 plant on N bank of A303



Distribution of *Cochlearia officinalis* in Somerset, mapped using MapMate.  
Black dots are post-2000 records; red squares are 1987-1999 records



*Cochlearia officinalis* at Sand Bay (2019). Photo: HJC