

***Juncus acutus* L.**

**Sharp Rush**

Native

GB & England: Least Concern

GB Scarce

VC5 Absent; VC6 Lost

A densely tufted perennial herb of brackish dune-slacks, drier parts of saltmarshes and sandy shores. In VC5 there have been no confirmed records. Murray (1896) doubted a record by J.C. Collins at Shurton Bars, suspecting “some curious mistake” and stating “Certainly not there now”. Roe considered a record sent to him in 1978 for cliff tops near Yeanor (SS8448) to be dubious; it was not mentioned in his flora (Roe, 1981). In VC6 a record for Portishead by S. Rootsey was noted by Murray (1896) as unconfirmed. Miller (1933) included this species in his list of Extinctions, stating that it was “Certainly no longer a Somerset plant, if it ever was”. In 1986 *Juncus acutus* was found in remnant sand dunes at Uphill Golf Course (ST3159) by S.M. Hedley (Green *et al.*, 2000); there have been no subsequent records for that site. In 1988 M.J. Galliot found a single clump in saltmarsh at the edge of Berrow Dunes (ST288524). In 1998, Paul and Ian Green noted that it was spreading very well. In 2006 there were three records: John Poingdestre recorded it as locally frequent at the edge of the brackish marsh; Stephen Parker recorded it at ST29025240; Helena Crouch and Fred Rumsey also recorded it at ST290524 and found two further plants at ST29015224, south of the footpath. In 2009 Helena Crouch and Robert Cropper recorded two large clumps beside the footpath from the beach towards the church at ST29035249. In the winter of 2013-2014 this area of the dunes was badly flooded for several months: no plants of *Juncus acutus* have been seen since then, despite several searches. This species has a few scattered sites around the coast of England, in Norfolk, Kent, Hampshire and the South-west (with one extraordinary inland location in Cambridgeshire), but is mostly found at coastal sites in Wales and the south of Ireland.