

## *Knautia arvensis* (L.) Coult.

## Field Scabious

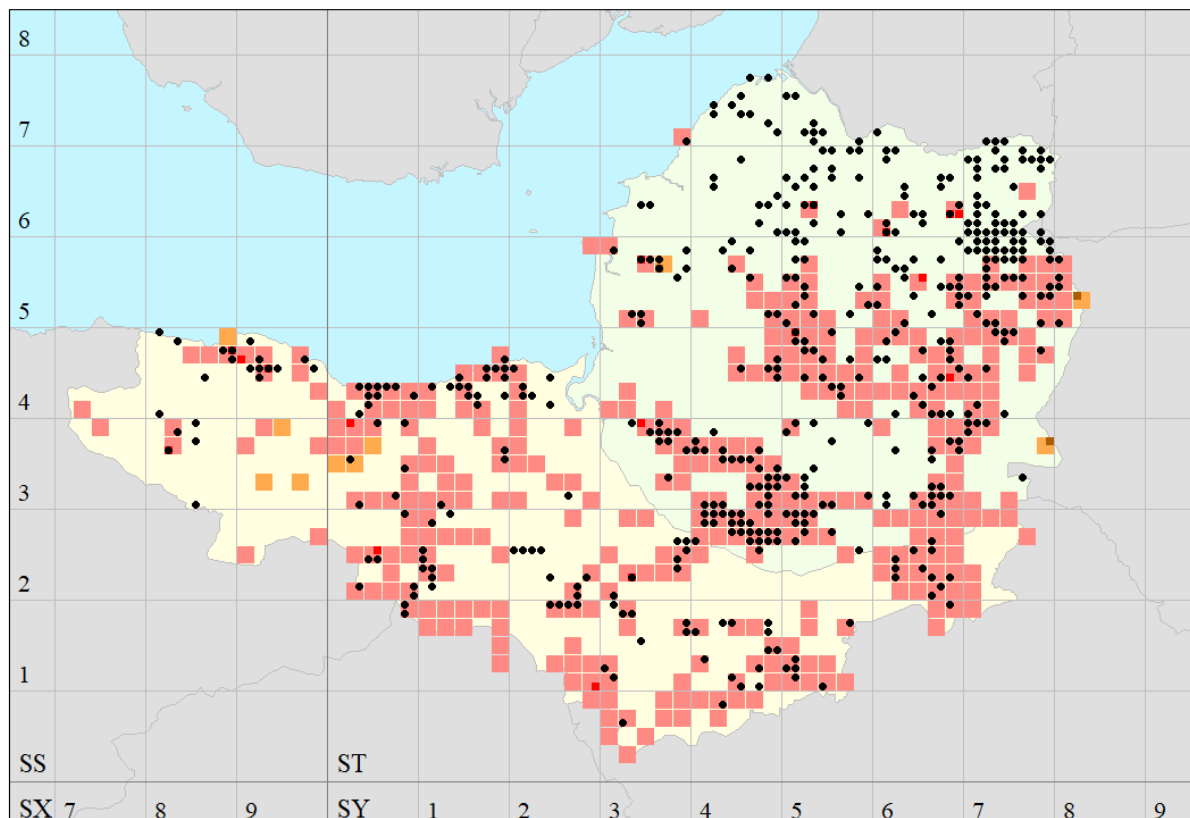
Native

GB: Least Concern

England: Near Threatened

VC5 Not Scarce; VC6 Not Scarce

An herbaceous perennial of well-drained calcareous or neutral soils, found in rough grassland, hedgerows, woodland edges and rides, road banks, field edges and waste ground. In Somerset described by Murray (1896) as “Very common throughout the whole county”. Roe (1981) refined this to “Common except in the extreme west on Exmoor”. Distribution maps in Green *et al* (1997) and Green *et al.* (2000) show that in fact this species, although frequent, is absent from areas of central and west Somerset, including much of Exmoor. Since 2000 (black dots on the map below) *Knautia arvensis* has not been recorded in some areas in which it was found by Green *et al.* (1997). Although in some cases this may reflect incomplete coverage of recording, this species does appear to have declined, particularly in South Somerset (VC5). The status of Near Threatened (Stroh *et al.*, 2014) reflects a decline in England, most losses having occurred since the 1950s (Preston *et al.*, 2002); this decline has been observed in Somerset, although *Knautia arvensis* is often included in wildflower seed mixes, which may obscure and compensate for the loss of truly native populations.



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