

## *Succisa pratensis* Moench

## Devil's-bit Scabious

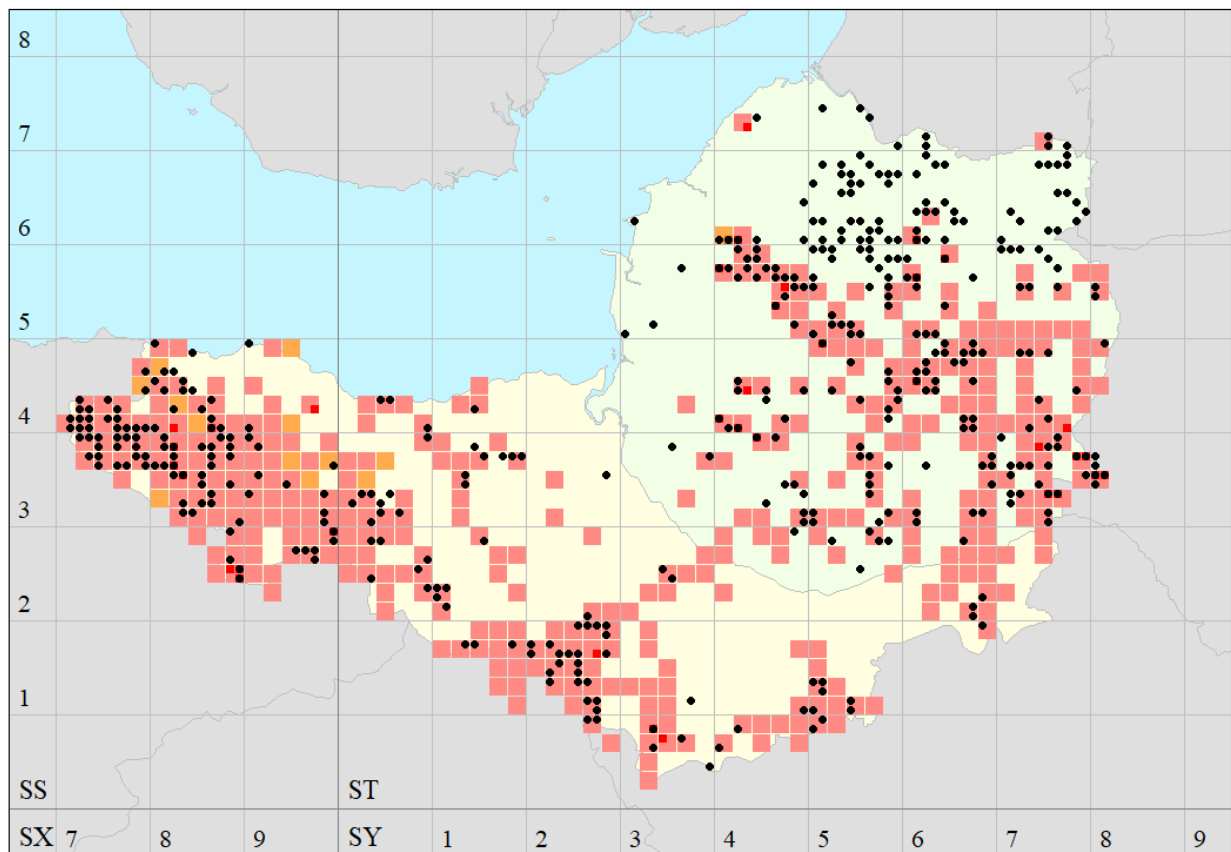
Native

GB: Least Concern

England: Near Threatened

VC5 Not Scarce; VC6 Not Scarce

An herbaceous perennial favouring acid soils in grassland, heathland, moors, mires, woodland rides, verges and churchyards. In Somerset described by Murray (1896) as "Very common, and generally distributed". Roe (1981) noted that it was "Widespread and common except on the Levels where it only occurs on the peat moors". Green *et al* (1997) noted that this species, although frequent, is only common on acid soils: their map showed that it is absent from large parts of central Somerset and not, or no longer, "generally distributed". Since 2000 (black dots on the map below) *Succisa pratensis* has not been recorded in many of the areas in which it was found by Green *et al.* (1997) and is thought to have declined in Somerset. The status of Near Threatened (Stroh *et al.*, 2014) reflects a widespread decline in S. and E. England, most losses having occurred since the 1950s, largely attributable to the improvement of grassland and heaths (Preston *et al.*, 2002); this decline has been observed in Somerset.



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