

Herniaria glabra L.

Smooth Rupturewort

Native?

GB & England: Least Concern

GB: Rare

VC5 Absent; VC6 Rare

An annual or short-lived mat-forming perennial of compacted sandy or gravelly soils. In Somerset, known only from one site in VC6, where first recorded by Sole "On the coast at Weston super Mare" (Collinson, 1791). This record was considered by Murray (1896) to be "Doubtless a mistake", but in 1946 this species was found by G. Nicholls near the sea front on a site occupied by American troops (Green *et al.*, 2000) and recorded there the following year by Noel Sandwith. Roe (1981) considered it to be casual at that site; however in 1983 it was refound by A.J. Byfield and C. and M.A.R. Kitchen in sandy maritime grassland near the sea front. The site, Ellenborough Park West, was designated as an SSSI in 1989. In some years over 1000 plants have been counted and in 1998 a single plant was found by Stephen Parker outside the park. The continued existence of *Herniaria glabra* at Ellenborough Park is dependant on disturbance of the site: in the past it has been used by a local school as a playing field, resulting in scuffed areas of grassland perfect for colonisation by this species. Recently, however, this use has ceased and there has been reduced access to the site; without periodic disturbance, this species may be lost. *Herniaria glabra* is considered to be native in East Anglia and Cambridgeshire, but a casual alien elsewhere. The early first record, and associated species of sandy areas, make its status in Somerset less certain, but this species undeniably has a precarious future at its one site in Somerset.

VC6					
Ellenborough Park	SSSI	ST31876080	2008	HJC, MJ, BJL	Scattered plants in damp sandy hollows
Ellenborough Park	SSSI	ST31896079	2008	HJC, MJ, BJL	About 30 plants in damp sandy hollow
Ellenborough Park	SSSI	ST31896081	2008	HJC, MJ, BJL	Scattered plants in damp sandy hollows
Ellenborough Park	SSSI	ST31906078	2016	PB	On the playing fields
Ellenborough Park	SSSI	ST31906079	2011	JPM	1000+ plants
Ellenborough Park	SSSI	ST31906079	2017	DCL	A few plants
Ellenborough Park	SSSI	ST319608	2013	SRPG	Few plants in sandy hollows



Herniaria glabra in Ellenborough Park West (2013). Photo: FJR