

***Dryopteris cristata* (L.) A. Gray**

Crested Buckler-fern

Error?

GB & England: Endangered

Section 41

GB Rare

VC5 Absent; VC6 Error?

A deciduous fern of wet heaths, marshes, fens and dune slacks. The only record for Somerset was an entry in the list of “more rare plants” produced by Sole and published in Collinson (1791). Sole recorded this species in Emborough Wood, Old Down, but it has never been found since and the record has been dismissed by many as an error, probably a nomenclatural one (F.J. Rumsey, 2016, pers. comm.). Nationally, this fern was lost from most sites during the nineteenth century through drainage and scrub encroachment and losses have continued. Now only found at one site straddling the Surrey/Berkshire border, where it has been known since 1939; in Norfolk, where it is almost restricted to the valleys of the Ant and Thurne in the Broads; and at a reintroduction site in Cheshire.