

***Lathyrus hirsutus* L.**

Hairy Vetchling

Alien

GB & England: Waiting List

GB: Rare

VC5 Absent; VC6 Lost

A scrambling annual of grassy and rough ground; also on waste places as a garden escape or bird-seed contaminant. In Somerset only ever a casual alien. There is a record for VC5 on the BSBI Distribution Database in ST21 for which no basis can be found and this species is not listed in the Vice-county Census Catalogue for VC5. In VC6, the first record, which appeared in Withering (1796) and many subsequent floras, was a case of mistaken identity by Rev. G. Swayne, who recorded this species in error for *Vicia bithynica* on hills between Pensford and Bristol (Jenyns, 1867; White, 1905). A specimen collected by St Brody was labelled "Reported from Bristol, 1854" (White, 1912); however this may not have referred to Somerset. White (1912) recorded that in 1902 and 1903 Miss Martin of Bath collected specimens of this species from a field (old quarry ground) near Englishcombe, but that a small colony which existed for several years between Bath and Limpley Stoke had been destroyed. White himself collected a specimen (**BM**) of this species on a rubbish tip near Brislington in 1910 and another specimen (**TTN**) from made ground by the Avon at Arnos Vale, Brislington in 1912. White (1922) listed a record for this species as a casual in a garden at Webbington, recorded by A.E. Stephens and there is a specimen (**BM**) collected by Miss Ida M. Roper on waste ground at Webbington in 1920. There were no further records until 1971, when J.G. Keylock found it on a rubbish tip at Street (Roe, 1981): that was the last record for Somerset. This species was first recorded at Hadleigh Castle in Essex in 1666 and may be native in the Thames Estuary; elsewhere it is only ever a casual alien.