

Ruppia spiralis L. ex Dumort.

Spiral Tasselweed

Native

GB: Near Threatened

England: Least Concern

GB Scarce

VC5 Absent; VC6 Lost

A perennial aquatic of brackish ditches, creeks and pools. First recorded in Somerset (VC6) in 1773 by Banks and Lightfoot "In the ditches in the marsh going from Brean Down to Uphill"; later collected from the salt-marsh at the eastern end of Brean Down by T. Clark in 1836 and from Uphill by F.J.A. Hort in 1850 and recorded in the salt-marsh towards Brean Down in 1909 by C. Bucknell (White, 1912). Also found at two other sites in VC6: in 1849 collected by C.C. Babington at Clevedon, south of the Middle Yeo outlet (specimen in **CGE**) and in 1920 found by I.M. Roper in a rhyne at Kingston Seymour (specimen in **BIRM**). There have been no further records from these two sites; however in 1967, P.J.M. Nethercott found this species still surviving in the marshland between Brean Down and Uphill, in spite of vigorous cleaning of some of the ditches (Willis, 1968). This was the last record for Somerset. *Ruppia spiralis* has been lost from sites in southwest England, west of The Fleet in Dorset. It is most frequent in the south and east of England, with scattered sites elsewhere in Britain and Ireland.