

***Misopates orontium* L.**

Archaeophyte

GB & England: Vulnerable

VC5 Scarce; VC6 Lost

**Weasel's-snout**

An annual plant of cultivated and disturbed ground, always been described as very rare in Somerset (Murray, 1896; Roe, 1981; Green *et al.*, 1997). In VC5 Murray (1896) listed records from Minehead, and also Enmore, North Petherton and Halse (all north of Taunton). Marshall (1914) recorded it as a casual in his garden at West Monkton and there have been further records from around Taunton. In the period 1987-1999 it was recorded in arable fields at Porlock and Porlock Marsh, in fields at Selworthy and Headon Cross, in a garden at Wooten Courtenay and as a possible relict at Hartford. Further east it was found in a field at Moor House Farm, in a vegetable garden in Wellington and as a garden weed at Crewkerne. All post-2000 records are from Minehead west to Bossington, Porlock, Porlock Marsh and Horner; this is the only area from which it is currently known in Somerset. In VC6, the earliest record is for cornfields around Bath (Babington, 1834); it was also recorded by J.H. Cundall in a field near Whitchurch in 1850 (White, 1912) and reported as very local in potato fields near Bath by T.B. Flower in 1877 (Murray, 1896). It was found at Burnham in 1918, and many plants were recorded by D. Coombe in the garden of an empty cottage at Stone-edge Batch, Tickenham in 1944 (Sandwith, 1945). There were no further records until Ian Green and Geraldine Crouch found about 50 plants in 1990 in the weedy flower bed of a disused garage at Leigh Common in the far southeast of VC6, where it was still present in 1996. It has also been recorded in ST55, a record made 1987-1999 (mapped by Preston *et al.*, 2002). *Misopates orontium* has declined across Britain and Ireland due to its susceptibility to many broad-spectrum herbicides, the increase in autumn crop-sowing and the conversion of arable land to pasture.



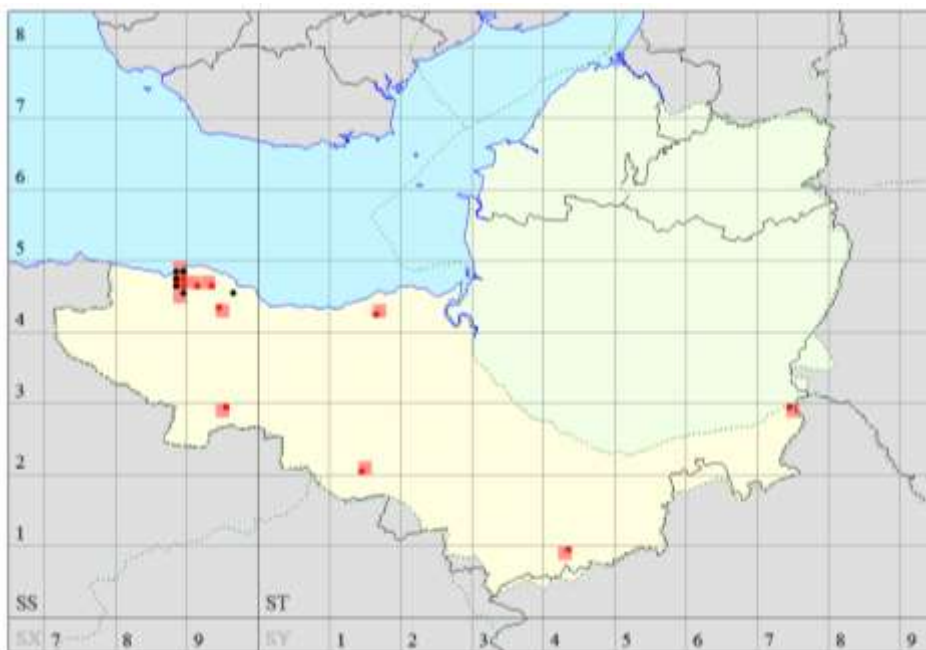
*Misopates orontium* at Porlock Marsh (2014). Photo: GEL

## VC5

Porlock		SS8846	1991	DS, JS	Scattered through field of flax nr Villes Lane
Porlock		SS88624628	2017	GEL	4 plants in vegetable growing allotment
Porlock		SS88624629	2017	GEL	10 plants in vegetable growing allotment
Porlock		SS88704682	2004	AS	Few plants, base of wall in Sparkhayes Lane
Porlock		SS886475	1988	EBG	Second barley field from Sparkhayes Lane
Porlock Marsh		SS888475	2014	GEL	10 plants
Porlock Marsh		SS8848	2002	SRPG	1 plant
Horner		SS898455	2002	CJG	2 plants in corn field with <i>Spergula arvensis</i>
Horner		SS898456	2002	CJG	
Porlock		SS896467	1989	CJG	In kale field, NW of Red Post
Bossington		SS89034774	2017	EJMcD, WFS	2 pl in corner of field & a few at edge of crop
Porlock Marsh		SS89034780	2017	GEL	20 pl flowering in arable field
Porlock Marsh		SS891475	1999	BL & CL	19 plants at edge of cultivated flax field
Bossington		SS89234790	2017	EJMcD, WFS	22 plants at edge of Barley crop
Bossington		SS89344799	2017	EJMcD, WFS	Dozens of plants in corner of Barley crop
Bossington		SS89404778	2016	GEL	50 plants in arable field
Bossington		SS89414780	2017	GEL	50 plants scattered in arable field
Bossington		SS8948	2004	RD	1 plant in headland around arable field
Porlock Marsh	SSSI	SS890482	1997	Mr/Mrs DSL	Inland of Bossington Beach
Porlock Marsh	SSSI	SS891482	2014	GEL	500-1000 plants in set-aside field
Porlock Marsh		SS893481	2002	IPG	2 plants by footpath in wheat field
Bossington		SS894480	2016	SJP	Few plants in arable field
Bossington		SS892481	2000	IPG	2 plants in arable field on NE side of path
Selworthy		SS910467	1993	CJG	In a weedy field
Headon Cross		SS935460	1996	CJG	In W extremity of field NE of Cross roads
Wootton Courtenay		SS946433	1992	RDM	Weed at Ranscombe Lodge, for a few years
Hartford, N of		SS956299	1987	CJG	At Hiccombe, possibly relict
Minehead		SS9645	2008	CJG	Weed in garden container, for 3 years
Holford		ST163424	1996	PMM	Field east of Moor House Farm
Wellington		ST143208	1989	MEH	Vegetable garden
Crewkerne		ST4309	1990	JGK	Garden weed at Grovely Farm, 1985 to 1990

## VC6

		ST55	DC3		Hectad spot in New Atlas (2002)
Leigh Common		ST741298	1996	IPG	In a very weedy flower bed of the garage



Distribution of *Misopates orontium* in Somerset, mapped using MapMate.  
Black dots are post-2000 records; red squares are 1987-1999 records