

Veronica officinalis L.

Heath Speedwell

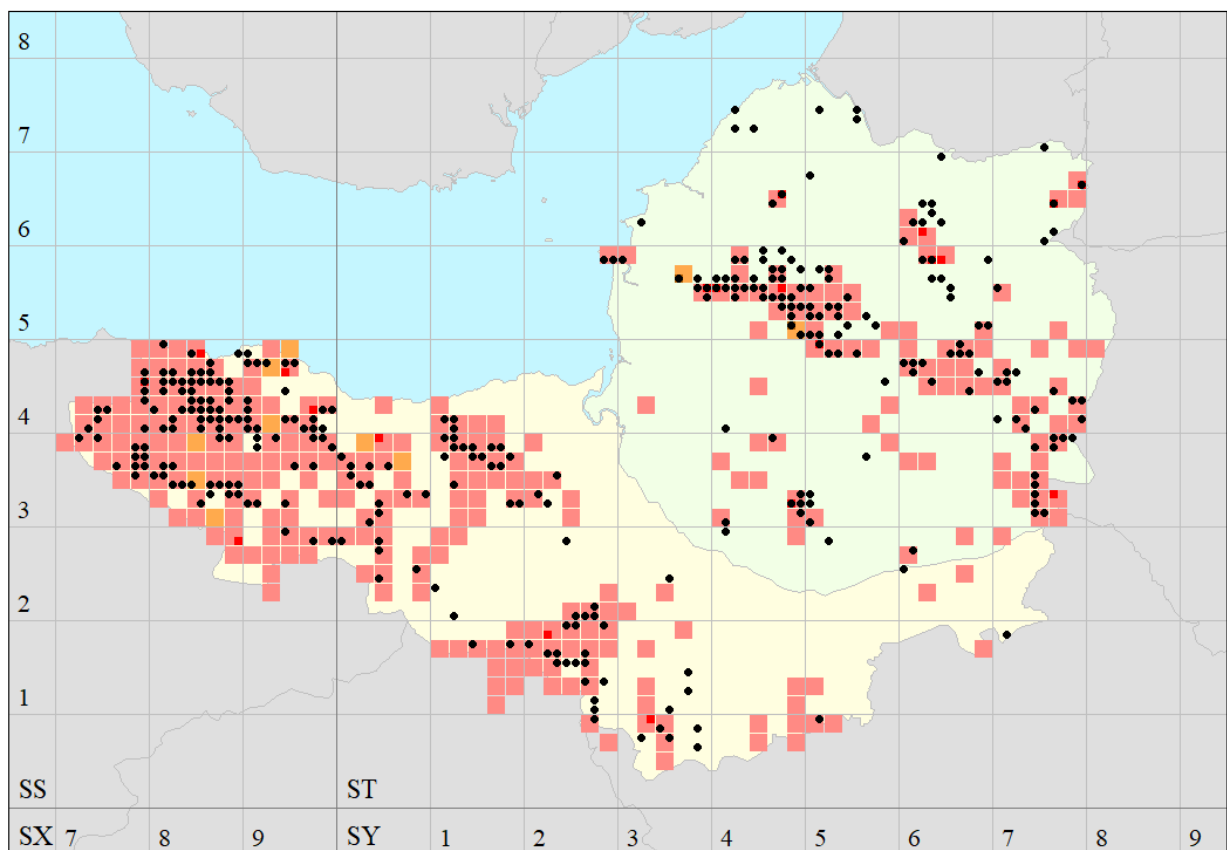
Native

GB: Least Concern

England: Near Threatened

VC5 Not Scarce; VC6 Not Scarce

A perennial herb of heathland, grassland, coal spoil heaps, open woods and banks, on well-drained moderately acidic or leached soils. In Somerset described by Murray (1896) as “Common, and generally distributed”. Roe (1981) regarded it to be common in the west and the south, on the Peat Moors and the acid areas of the Mendips, and frequent elsewhere in suitable places. Green *et al.* (1987) noted that away from these strongholds it is usually only found in small quantity, which may explain why it has not been re-found recently at many sites, especially in central Somerset. However, it also appears to have declined on Exmoor, the Quantocks and the Blackdowns, although losses shown on the map below may partially reflect lack of recording in those areas. *Veronica officinalis* is one of many widespread species which have declined in lowland England due to loss of habitat and eutrophication (Stroh *et al.*, 2014): this decline has clearly occurred in Somerset.



Distribution of *Veronica officinalis* in Somerset, mapped using MapMate.

Black dots are post-2000 records; red squares are 1987-1999 records;
sepia squares are pre-1987 records

Note that this map does not show records from Green *et al.* (2000) for the north part of VC6.