

## ***Allium oleraceum* L.**

## **Field Garlic**

Native

GB: Vulnerable

England: Least Concern

VC5 Scarce; VC6 Not Scarce

A bulbous perennial of dry field edges, hedgerows, lane sides and other grassy places. In VC5 this species was first recorded in 1911, when one plant was seen on the bank of a lane south of Staple Fitzpaine (Marshall, 1914). In 1924 it was found on Wembdon Hill by E.J. Hamlin; there have been no further records for these two sites. In 1975, C.A. Howe found this species at Cleeve Hill, which was the only VC5 site given by Green *et al.* (1997). Since then, it has been found at Ford Farm on Exmoor, Old Cleeve, Huish and Currymead Lane, south of Curry Rivel, Isle Abbotts and near Hardington Mandeville. At Old Cleeve, numbers have increased from a few dozen plants in 2008 to 487 plants in 2018.

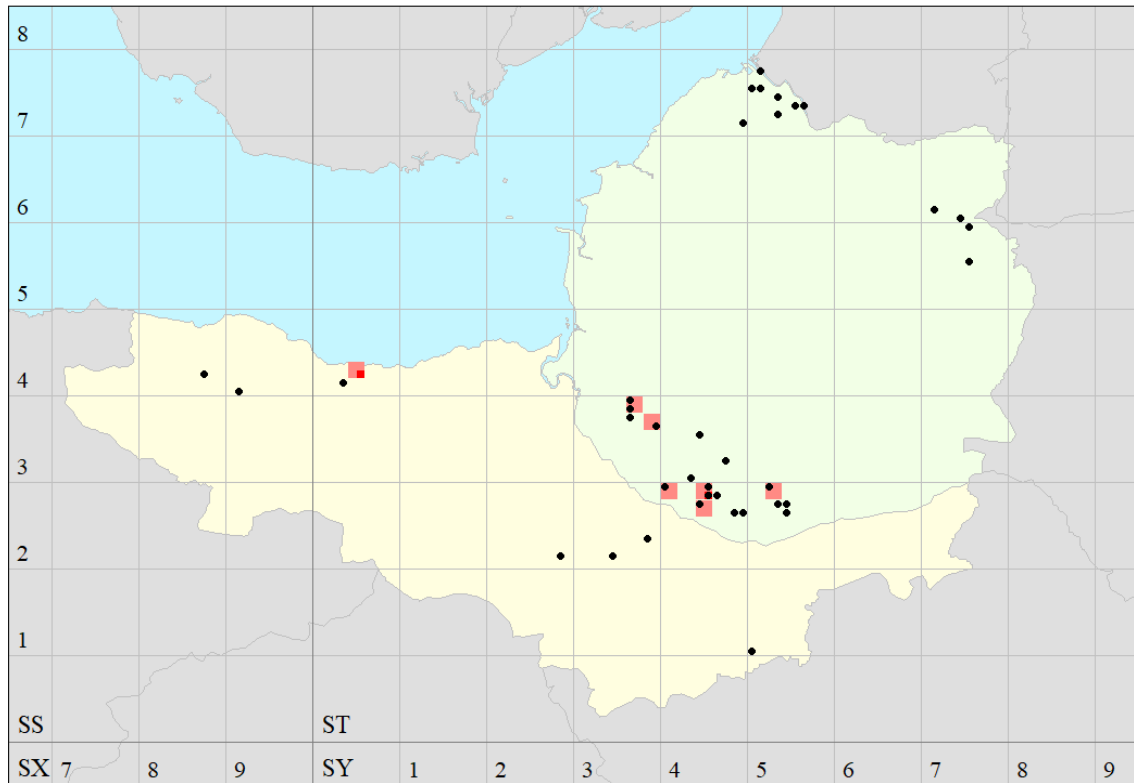
In VC6 *Allium oleraceum* is not scarce but its distribution is restricted to three areas. In the south, particularly found around the Poldens, southeast to Lytes Cary. Near Bristol, there are several sites south of the River Avon, from Pill to Leighwoods, and it was discovered at Tyntesfield (National Trust estate) in 2004 by Pam Millman. South of Bath, it was collected in 1851 by L. Jenyns near Southstoke, recorded there in 1907 by White (1012), but not found again until 2011, when Rob Randall found a few plants on the verge of the road to Combe Hay, where it persists. In 1944 D. Combe recorded this species in a lane between Burnt House [Odd Down, Bath] and Priston, where it was also re-found by Rob Randall in 2019. It has recently been found at two new sites south of Bath by Helena Crouch and Dave Green: on a verge near Twinhoe, and along a field edge west of Norton St Philip; however this species has also been lost from many former sites in VC6. At the coast, it was recorded at Clevedon in 1853 by Leo H. Grindon (White, 1912); in plenty on the hill near the entrenchment, Weston-super-Mare by D.Fry (Murray, 1896) and at Uphill by E.J. Hamlin in 1951 (Sandwith & Sandwith, 1953). The last record from that area of the coast was made by G. Kidder in 1982 at Worlebury Hill, Weston-super-Mare (Roe, 1983). This species was also formerly known from lanes at Shipham and Sidcot; in a field hedge at Stanton Drew, found in 1887 by D. Fry (White, 1912); at Burledge Hill south of Bishop Sutton, found by R.M. Payne and R.G.B. Roe in 1985 (Willis, 1987); in a field by a lane leading from Ursleigh Hill to Publow, found in 1907 by D. Fry (White, 1912); on the border of a wood near Bathampton, found by Miss Peck (White, 1912). There are no recent records for any of these sites.

*Allium oleraceum* has declined throughout its range but in Somerset, although lost from some areas, it appears to have increased in others in recent years; sites in Somerset are near the western edge of its distribution in Britain.



*Allium oleraceum* at Pill (2012). Photo: FJR

VC5					
Ford Farm, Drapers Way		SS9140	2010	RJB	
Old Cleeve		ST03614146	2018	JW	487 plants in long grass along footpath over 100m
Cleeve Hill	SSSI	ST052429	1992	IPG	10 plants on edge of scrub by path
Huish		ST28102185	2013	JP	c. 30 plants, W side of hedgerow along footpath
Isle Abbots, NW of		ST34132154	2019	JP	Edge of maize field, for about 7m along hedge
Currymead Lane		ST38542355	2011	JP	9 fruiting spikes, corner of arable headland
Hardington Mandeville, S of		ST50711089	2018	JP	Edge of stubble, W of hedge, in rank grass
Hardington Mandeville, S of	SSSI	ST50841063	2018	JP	Large patch in field corner



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



*Allium oleraceum* at Lytes Cary (2012). Photo: HJC