

***Carex pulicaris* L.**

Flea Sedge

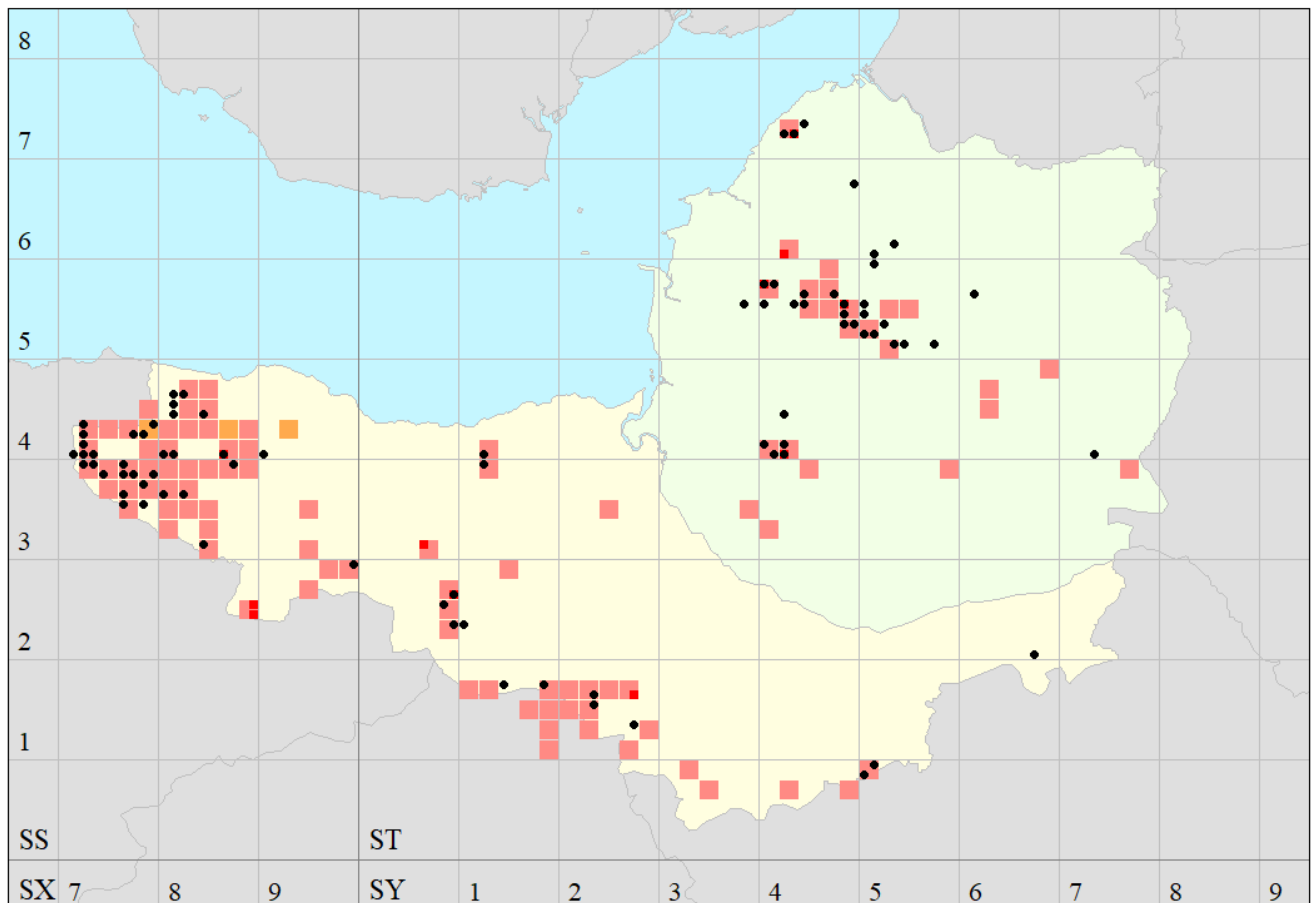
Native

GB: Least Concern

England: Near Threatened

VC5 Not Scarce; VC6 Not Scarce

A densely tufted or shortly rhizomatous perennial sedge of damp calcareous grassland, base-rich flushes, and also mires, bogs and wet heaths. In Somerset described by Murray (1896) as common. Roe (1981), however, noted that although frequent on moorland and other acid soils, this species was “Rather rare and decreasing due to drainage elsewhere”. By the end of the twentieth century, *Carex pulicaris* was found mostly on Exmoor, the Blackdowns, the Peat Moors, the Mendips and in the Gordano Valley, with scattered sites elsewhere (Green *et al.*, 1997; Green *et al.*, 2000). *Carex pulicaris* has declined in lowland England due to drainage and destruction of damp meadows and pastures. In Somerset this decline, first noted by Roe, has continued, with this species apparently lost from many tetrads mapped by Green *et al.* (1997), especially away from the Mendip Hills and Exmoor.



Distribution of ***Carex pulicaris*** in Somerset, mapped using MapMate. Black dots are post-2000 records; red squares are 1987-1999 records; sepia squares are pre-1987 records