

***Sparganium natans* L.**

Least Bur-reed

Native

GB: Least Concern

England: Vulnerable

VC5 Rare; VC6 Lost

A floating aquatic plant of the edges of acid or alkaline lakes, pools or ditches. In VC5 first found in 1993 by Paul Green, Caroline Giddens, Mike Edgington and others in Pinkworthy (Pinkery) Pond on Exmoor, at the western edge of Somerset. This is now the only Somerset site for this species. In VC6, collected by Thomas Clark on the turf moor at Burtle in 1835 and 1836 (White, 1912), seen by Murray (1896) on the Peat Moors south of Ashcott Station, and recorded by C. Bucknall in 1906 with *Utricularia minor* in a ditch on Shapwick Moor (White, 1912). In 1913 it was found abundantly in a pool between Shapwick and Ashcott Stations (Marshall, 1914); in 1935 H.S. Thompson reported that a peat cutting on Ashcott Heath was largely choked with it. In 1945, R.D. Graham discovered *Sparganium natans* growing at Street Heath with plentiful *Utricularia minor*; it was recorded at Street Heath by P.J.M. Nethercott in 1968, flowering well in three or four of the cuttings, and seen by David Goode and J.K. Hibberd in 1970 growing with *Utricularia minor* (Willis, 1971). In 1990 it could be found in only one pit on Street Heath; the final record was made by M.J. Collins in 1995, when it was struggling to survive due to changes in the water table as a result of peat extraction nearby (Green *et al.*, 1997). *Sparganium natans* has declined considerably in England due to drainage and eutrophication of sites. Pinkery Pond is one of only a few remaining sites in southern England and is the most southwestern location for this species.

VC5

Pinkery Pond	SSSI	SS72244225	2015	AS	A couple of patches
Pinkery Pond	SSSI	SS72274225	2022	HJC, GEL, GHR, FJR	Few in flower at S end of pond
Pinkery Pond	SSSI	SS72294231	2022	HJC, GEL, GHR, FJR	5 fl shoots near W edge of pond
Pinkery Pond	SSSI	SS72354237	2022	HJC, GEL, GHR, FJR	Many plants near N edge of pond



Sparganium natans at Pinkery Pool (2022). Photo: FJR