

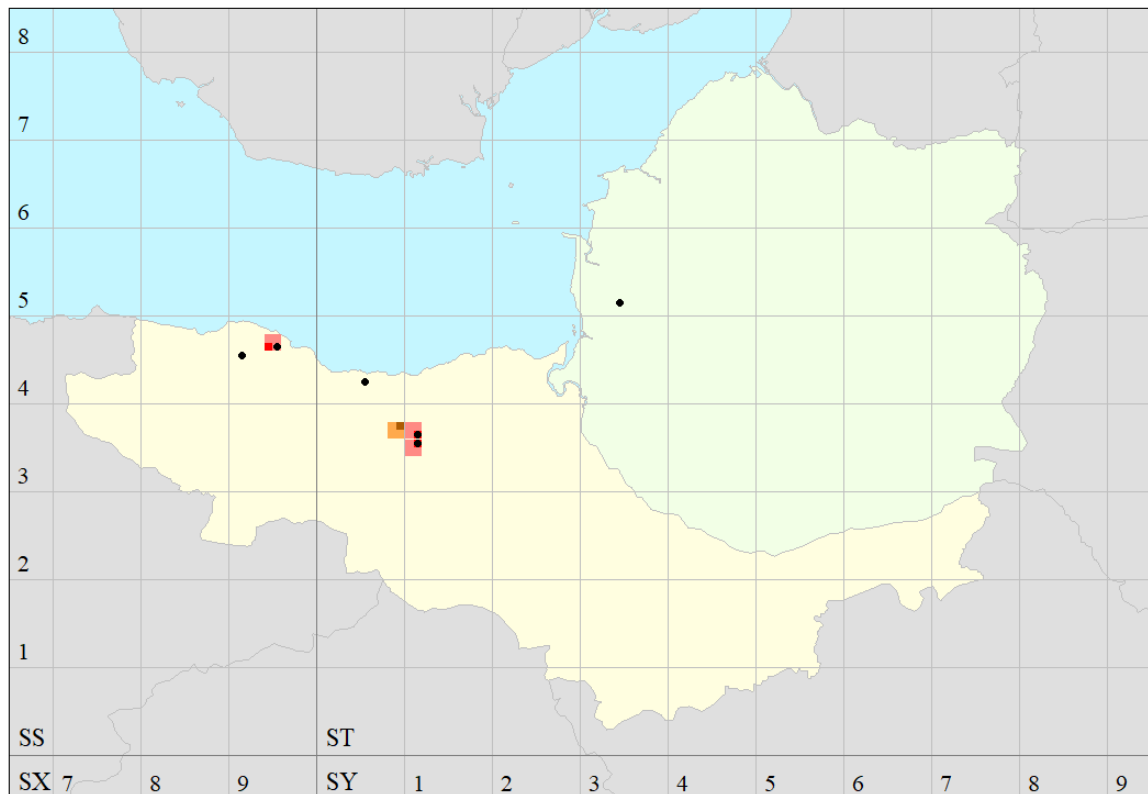
Leucojum vernum L.

Spring Snowflake

Neophyte

VC5 Scarce; VC6 Rare

A bulbous herbaceous perennial of damp woodland and stream banks, native to central and southern Europe. In Britain, sometimes considered native in Somerset and Dorset (eg. Perring & Farrell, 1983; Clement & Foster, 1994), but now regarded as a neophyte, long naturalised in some sites. In VC5, first recorded by Miss M.A. Hellard who showed it to E.S. Marshall in 1914 at a location between Bishop's Lydeard and Williton, where she had known it for some years (Marshall, 1914). Still known near Stogumber, where it grows at two sites 1km apart on the banks of Doniford Stream, at Northam Mill/Water Bridge and at Lower Vexford. The upstream site is near an old ruin and may have been the original source of the plants found further downstream by Miss Hellard (Green *et al.*, 1997) The vegetation of the original site was described by Marren (1999) as impeccably natural. Plants at all sites found subsequently, away from Stogumber, have been more clearly of garden origin. In 1999, this species was recorded by J.A. Edwards in a field near Bratton (just west of Minehead) evidently introduced; more plants were found by Caroline Giddens in 2004 in nearby Whitecross Wood. In 2008, Caroline Giddens recorded plants in a hedgerow near a house near Holnicote. In 2014, Jeanne Webb found plants on the verge of a campsite at Cleeve Hill. In VC6, two clumps of *Leucojum vernum* were found by Clare and Mark Kitchen at The Monument, Lansdown, north of Bath in 1982: there have been no further records for that site. A record made in 2021 at East Brent churchyard is for plants which are obviously planted. This early spring-flowering species was in cultivation in Britain by 1596 and has been found as a garden escape at scattered sites from southern England north to Moray.



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

VC5

Holnicote	SS9145	2008	CJG	Garden escapes in hedge by house
Bratton	SS943460	1999	JAE	A few plants in field evidently introduced
Whitecross Wood	SS957465	2004	CJG	Several clumps at foot of wood by Porlock Road
Cleeve Hill	ST0542	2014	JW	On verge of Warren Bay campsite
Northam Mill	ST11653636	2019	GEL, RFitzG <i>et al.</i>	20-30 plants on bank of stream
Northam Mill	ST11673628	2019	GEL, RFitzG <i>et al.</i>	Frequent on banks of stream
Northam Mill	ST11673633	2019	GEL, RFitzG <i>et al.</i>	2 clumps on bank of stream
Northam Mill	ST11683625	2019	GEL, RFitzG <i>et al.</i>	Frequent on banks of stream
Northam Mill	ST11703615	2019	GEL, RFitzG <i>et al.</i>	Frequent on banks of stream
Water Bridge	ST11713615	2017	RFitzG	Both side of path
Lower Vexford	ST11793520	2022	HJC, FJR	Large patch 3m x 3m on E bank of stream

VC6

East Brent	ST3451	2021	VG, SBG	Planted on grave plot in churchyard
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Leucojum vernum at Lower Vexford (2022). Photo: HJC