

Euphrasia pseudokeneri Pugsley

Chalk Eyebright

Native

GB: Endangered

England: Vulnerable

UKBAP & Section 41

GB Scarce

VC5 Error; VC6 Rare

A hemiparasitic annual species of dry calcareous (particularly chalk) grassland and also calcareous fens. A single record from VC5 in 1899 (as *E. keneri*), made by C.E. Salmon (*teste* Townsend) on the roadside at Oareford, has been dismissed as an error by Roe (1981). In VC6, a specimen in Babington's herbarium at **CGE**, collected in 1830 from Bath, was identified by P.F. Yeo as this species and was thus the earliest confirmed record for Somerset. In 1955, P.F. Yeo collected a specimen (in **CGE**) of this species near Lansdown (ST720702), north of Bath. As *E. keneri*, White (1912) wrote that this species had been recorded in Cheddar in 1853 by Rev. W.H. Purchas and again in 1900 by Mrs Gregory, who in the same year also found it on the sandy coast north of Burnham. White (1912) also gave records for Shipham Bottom and boggy ground on Rowberrow Down. Although Roe (1981) believed that these were almost certainly forms of *E. nemorosa*, a 1905 specimen in **BM**, collected by Mrs Gregory amongst mining debris at Shipham, has been determined by P.F. Yeo as *E. pseudokeneri*. In 1964, C.A. Howe collected a specimen near Bruton (ST691360), which has also been determined by P.F. Yeo as *E. pseudokeneri*. A further specimen (in **BRIST**) identified as this species was collected by G.W. Garlick in Quarry 3 at Leigh Woods in 1956, whilst two populations found by C.M. Lovatt in 1980 in Quarry 2 at Leigh Woods were possibly this species (Lovatt, 1982). In 2015 *E. pseudokeneri* was refound near Bath by Helena Crouch and Dave Green (det. Chris Metherell), in species-rich calcareous grassland on the southwest-facing slope of Banner Down. This species has been lost from many sites due to agricultural improvement of grassland and is largely restricted to southern and eastern England, with outlying populations in west Wales and south Devon. The Somerset site is thus near the western edge of the main area of distribution.

VC6

Banner Down

ST78956827

2015

HJC, DEG

Many in species-rich turf at SW end of down