

***Poa infirma* Kunth**

Early Meadow-grass

Native

GB & England: Least Concern

VC5 Scarce; VC6 Scarce

An annual grass of paths, lawn edges and open grassland, historically only found in coastal clifftop grasslands. Flowering very early in the year, its small, yellowish, erect culms are distinctive only in early spring. This species is a recent addition to the Somerset flora, first found by Paul Green on the sea lawns of Weston-super-Mare (VC6) in 2004. In VC5, found for the first time in 2007 by Jeanne Webb, in Minehead. A second population was found by Stephen Parker in 2012 at Minehead Golf Course and in 2014 he discovered this species on a roadside in Bagley Green, near Wellington. In 2017 Matt Stribley found it along path edges at a campsite in Porlock. In VC6, a second site was found in 2007 in Wells, by Paul Stanley. In 2008 plants were found in Burnham-on-Sea by Robert Cropper and at Batheaston by Mark Kitchen. In 2012 Clive Lovatt discovered another site at the northbound side of Sedgemoor Services on the M5; in 2014 Paul Green found it there on the southbound side and Clive Lovatt discovered it at Gordano Services, further north up the M5. In 2015 it was found at Bristol Airport by Paul Green and in a roadside planter in Bath by Rob Randall. This species has increased its range remarkably in recent years. It was first found in Cornwall in 1876, then not seen again until 1950, when it was found in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (Hubbard, 1984). By 2000, it had appeared at many sites along the south coast and has subsequently spread around the coast and inland. Sites in Somerset are within the area of recent colonisation.



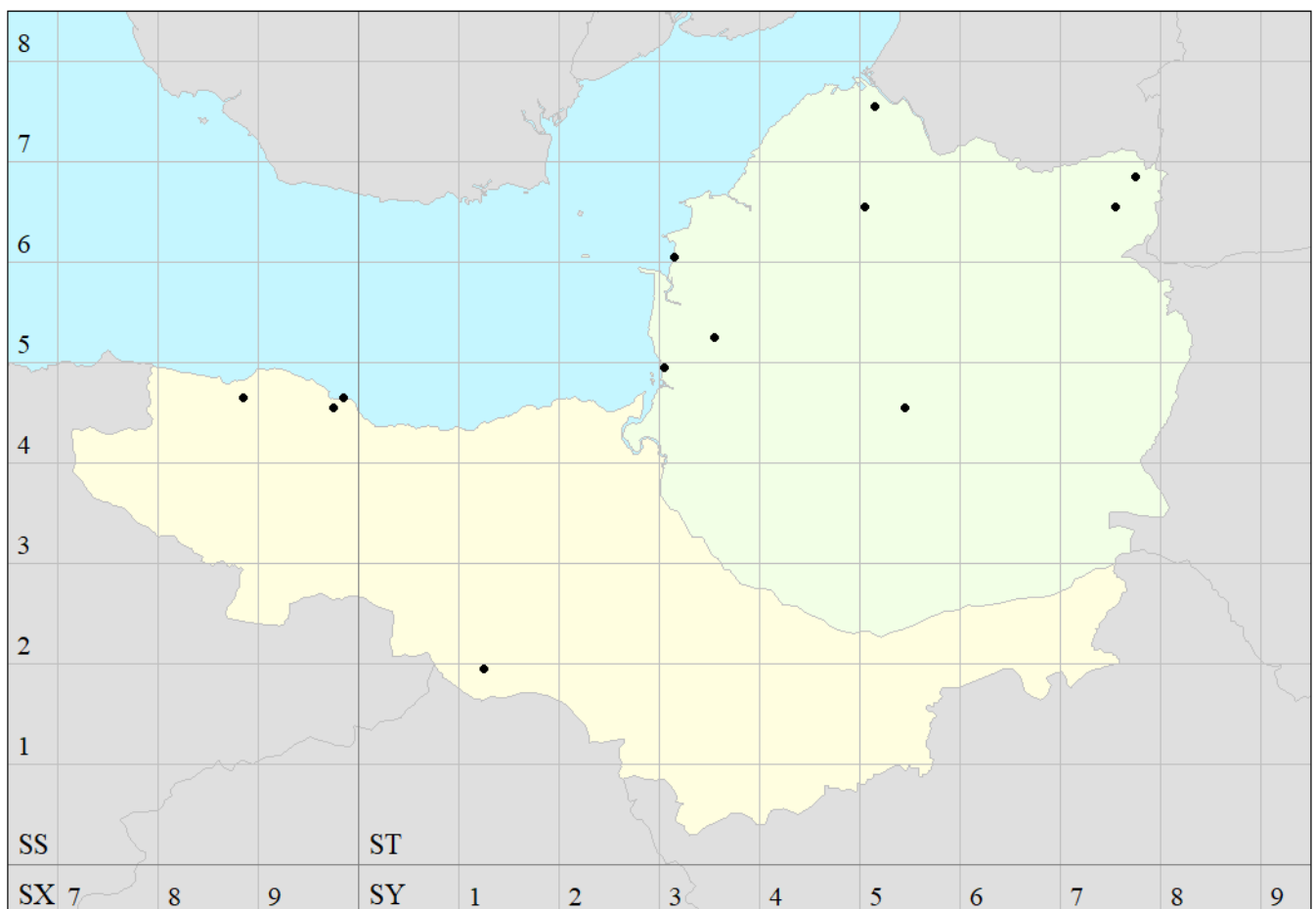
Poa infirma at Wells (2008). Photo: FJR

VC5

Minehead	SS973458	2007	JW	Pavement at base of wall in Ponsford Road
Minehead	SS985464	2012	SJP	On sandy footpath alongside golf course
Bagley Green	ST123196	2014	SJP	Small patch on roadside by kerb
Porlock	SS88664689	2017	MJS	On path edge in Sparkhayes Farm campsite

VC6

Burnham-on-Sea	ST30424918	2008	RSC	Blocking gutter of disused building
Weston-super-Mare	ST31596009	2013	SRPG	3 plants on bare sandy corner of sea lawn
Weston-super-Mare	ST31606009	2005	EJMcD	2 very small plants near model railway
Weston-super-Mare	ST316603	2004	PRG	Fewer than 20 plants on corner of sea lawn
Weston-super-Mare	ST317606	2006	RSC	c. 12 plants in rockery opposite Tropicana
Sedgemoor Services	ST35665276	2014	CML, EJMcD	Several very pale tall plants under trees
Sedgemoor Services	ST35925262	2014	CML	In flower beds by coach park
Sedgemoor Services	ST359526	2014	PRG	Lots at base of two trees
Bristol Airport	ST50666555	2015	PRG	5 plants in edge of shrub border by steps
				Few plants under trees on walkway in car park
Gordano Services	ST51027560	2014	CML	
Wells, Whiting Way	ST54614577	2017	HJC, JMC	Small patch on verge S of car park
Bath, London Road	ST753657	2015	RDR	In a raised bed
Batheaston	ST77986800	2008	HJC, CK, MARK	Many on edge of verge in Catherine Way



Distribution of *Poa infirma* in Somerset, mapped using MapMate.
Black dots are post-2000 records