

# Cornfield Flowers Project



## Species Cards: non-arable



### Dyer's greenweed (*Genista tinctoria*)

#### Least Concern

A low-growing, attractive deciduous shrub of old pastures and cliffs; one of the non-arable species the CFP conserves

Has declined considerably throughout UK due to loss of old meadows and pastures

**REASONS FOR DECLINE:**  
Habitat loss; land-use change

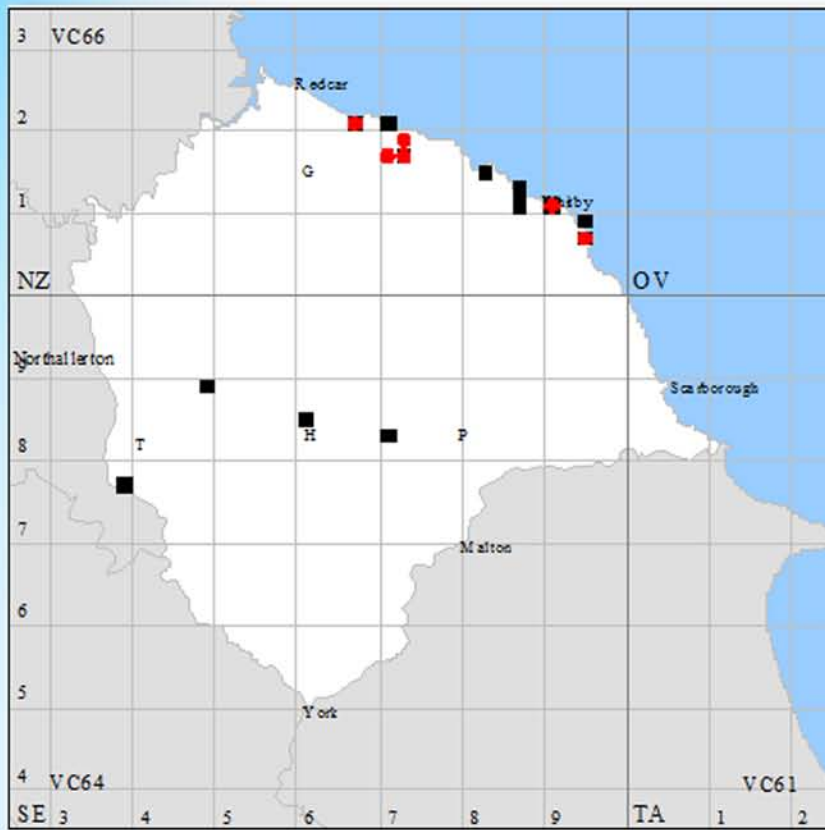
#### ***Our Dyer's greenweed experience...***

In Britain, Dyer's greenweed is almost confined to England and Wales. It occurs in Scotland on the northern side of the Solway Firth around Dumfries, but avoids the rest of Scotland entirely. It does not occur in Ireland at all.

In our area there are a cluster of sites following the sea cliffs from Whitby to the mouth of the River Tees. In the East Riding, Eva Crackles describes only one post-1950 record at Risby in 1957, whose habitat was later destroyed. Nan Sykes found a few plants at eight sites during her North York Moors surveys. Once described as one of the worst weeds of pasture, it is now locally rare and confined to rough grassland on coastal boulder clay.

Scarborough Naturalists' records cite it as rare, known only from Saltwick Nab in 1912 and Cloughton Cliffs in 1947. The Saltwick Nab site is still flourishing and it was from there we took material to try and grow it on for reintroduction as part of the Scarborough Biodiversity Action Plan. Seed gathering was difficult and we only managed to gather three seeds. Project officer Chris Wilson also tried to grow it from cuttings, giving some to volunteer Belinda Terry of Stoupe Brow Cottage Farm, Ravenscar. These grew quite successfully but the first ones planted out in the wild failed. One was destroyed by sheep when they escaped through a fence. We still have hopes for one of the reintroduction sites, but have been unable to find the plant in two successive years. Possibly time for a restart on this one...

# Distribution in north-east Yorkshire: Dyer's greenweed (*Genista tinctoria*)



## Key

● Post-2000 records  
(inc. CFP introductions)

■ Pre-2000 records

G: Guisborough T: Thirsk

H: Helmsley P: Pickering

Data: BSBI, 2014 Maps produced by MapMate®

## Key Facts - Dyer's greenweed (*Genista tinctoria*)

- Has a preference for heavy soils, now only on coastal cliffs in our area
- A notable component of species-rich meadows and pastures outside of North Yorkshire
- Historically used to produce a yellow dye, hence the common and latin names
- A small deciduous shrub in the *Fabaceae*, or pea, family; related to Gorse and Broom

### UK Conservation Designations

The Vascular Plant Red Data List for Great Britain (2006) designates all UK wildflowers by their rarity, and hence conservation importance, in the following order:

Extinct ➔ Extinct in the wild ➔ Critically Endangered ➔ Endangered  
Vulnerable ➔ Near Threatened ➔ Least Concern

The Cornfield Flowers Project is spearheaded by the Carstairs Countryside Trust, Ryedale Folk Museum, North Yorkshire Moors Association and North York Moors National Park Authority. It has a demonstration field and nursery at Ryedale Folk Museum and a working arable field at Silpho, near Scarborough. It is supported by the North York Moors National Park Sustainable Development Fund, North York Moors Coast & Hills LEADER Programme and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

