

Cornfield Flowers Project



Species Cards



Hairy buttercup (*Ranunculus sardous*)

Least Concern

Rare in north-east Yorkshire; at its northern limit

Has a marked preference for coastal areas - inland sites are uncommon

REASONS FOR DECLINE:
Herbicides

Our Hairy buttercup experience...

Ranunculus sardous is one of Britain's rarer buttercups. It has a generally coastal distribution and becomes increasingly rare further north, being almost absent from Scotland. It seems to avoid calcareous soils and thrives on clay.

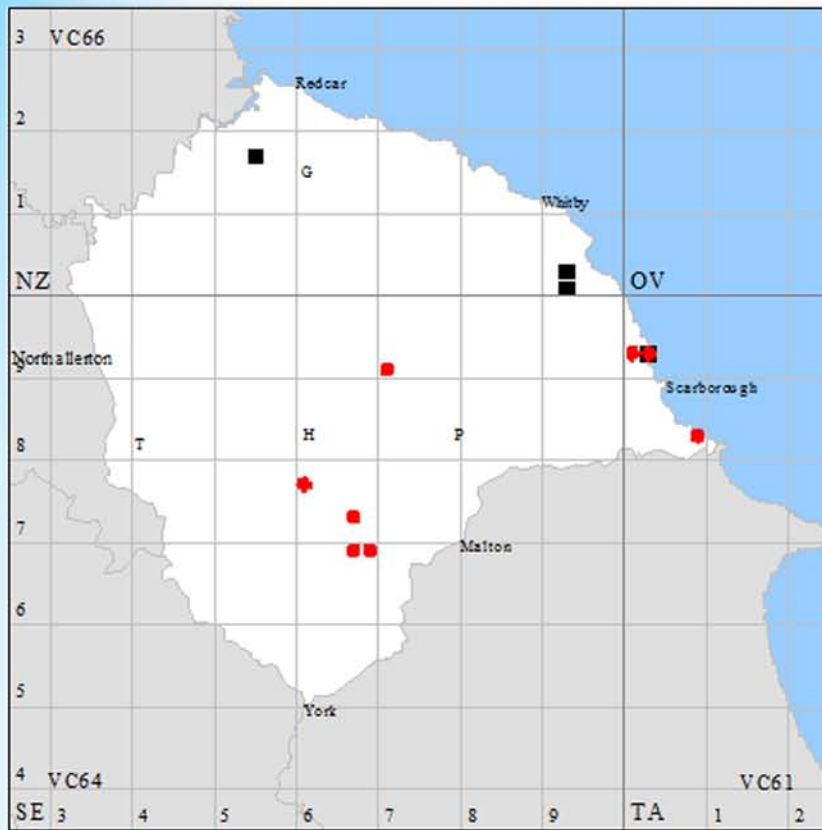
Eva Crackles in *Flora of the East Riding of Yorkshire* rates it as infrequent and most of the sites are on the banks of the Humber or coastal Holderness up to Bridlington. It also has a few sites on the banks of the Tees.

It seemed to be absent from our immediate area until the 1980s, when Karl Guerhartson brought a plant in to Richard Gulliver's botanical class. It was subsequently confirmed on Karl's site at Colcroft Farm, a few miles south of Fylingthorpe, during Nan Sykes' survey of the North York Moors and is the site referred to in her book.

In the late 1990s Cedric Gillings found it growing at Burneston. In 2004 it was found growing on Birkdale Farm, Terrington, in good numbers on summer fallow. This of course is an inland site which makes it very unusual, but the land is quite heavy clay. In 2008 the Hairy buttercup had such a good year at Birkdale that the CFP was able to gather over two-thousand seeds for the Millennium Seed Bank.

Although *R. sardous* is grown most years in the Nursery at the Ryedale Folk Museum for demonstration purposes, the lack of suitable sites has prevented us from trying to grow it elsewhere to the present.

Distribution in north-east Yorkshire: Hairy buttercup (*Ranunculus sardous*)



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 - Hairy buttercup (*Ranunculus sardous*)

- Has a preference for heavy clay soils and damp areas
- Mainly autumn germinating
- Similar looking to most common buttercups, but sepals point backwards
- Spreading hairs covering the whole plant give its common name

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.

