

Cornfield Flowers Project



Species Cards



Corn spurrey (*Spergula arvensis*)

Vulnerable

A distinctive annual of non-calcareous arable soils, its flowers only open in sunny weather

Relatively common in our area - recorded in 45% of CFP surveys

REASONS FOR DECLINE:
Nitrogen application, herbicides,
shift to autumn cultivations

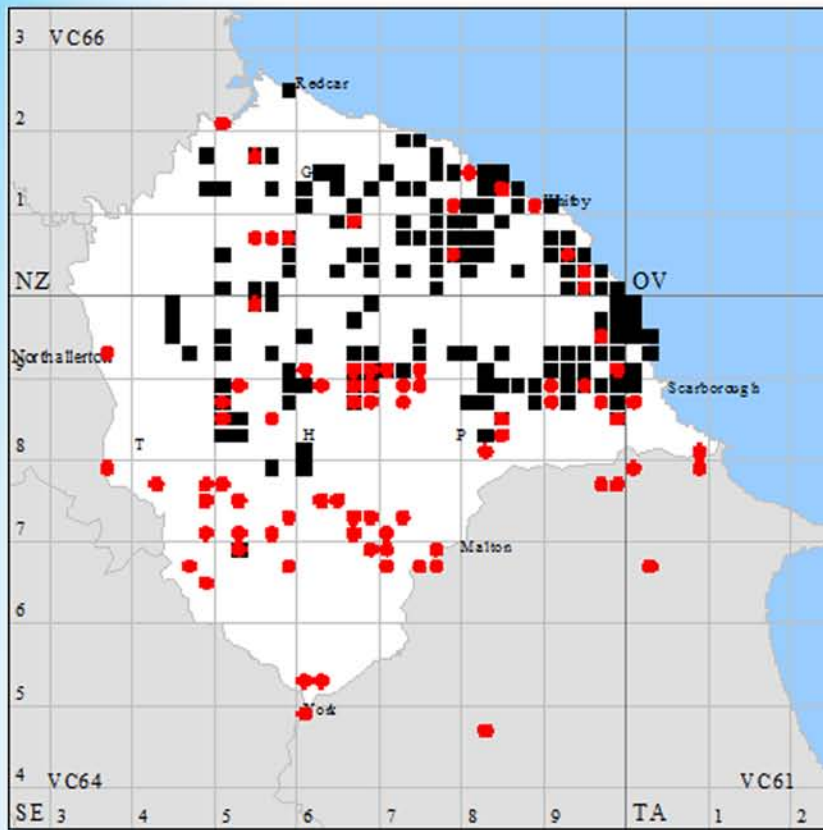
Our Corn spurrey experience...

Corn spurrey is a very common plant in our area on sandy and even clay soils - if it has a tendency at all, it is towards the acidic side of neutral. A true arable plant, rarely ever found in grassland, it is mainly spring germinating and so does best in spring-sown crops.

All our sources class Corn spurrey as common or widespread, even to the present day. Despite this, it has still declined markedly since the 1950s due to agricultural intensification, and so is nationally classified as 'Vulnerable'.

One of the best places to see it is the cornfield at the Ryedale Folk Museum, where thousands of Spurrey plants can be seen from mid-June onwards. You should, however, go on a sunny afternoon as it is a late-riser and needs a sunny day to show off its best.

Distribution in north-east Yorkshire: Corn spurrey (*Spergula arvensis*)



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 - Corn spurrey (*Spergula arvensis*)

- Generally prefers light, sandy acidic soils
- Predominantly spring germinating
- Reasonably common locally, recorded in just under half of all CFP surveys
- Distinctive narrow leaves in whorls around stem, whole plant sticky, white flowers only open in sunny conditions

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.

