

Cornfield Flowers Project



Species Cards



Mousetail (*Myosurus minimus*)

Vulnerable

An unusual looking plant, related to Buttercups. Its common name derives from the elongated seed heads that look like mice-tails

Locally rare and only found just outside the CFP area - sites indicated on the map overleaf are introductions

REASONS FOR DECLINE:

Drainage improvements, loss of disturbance

Our Mousetail experience...

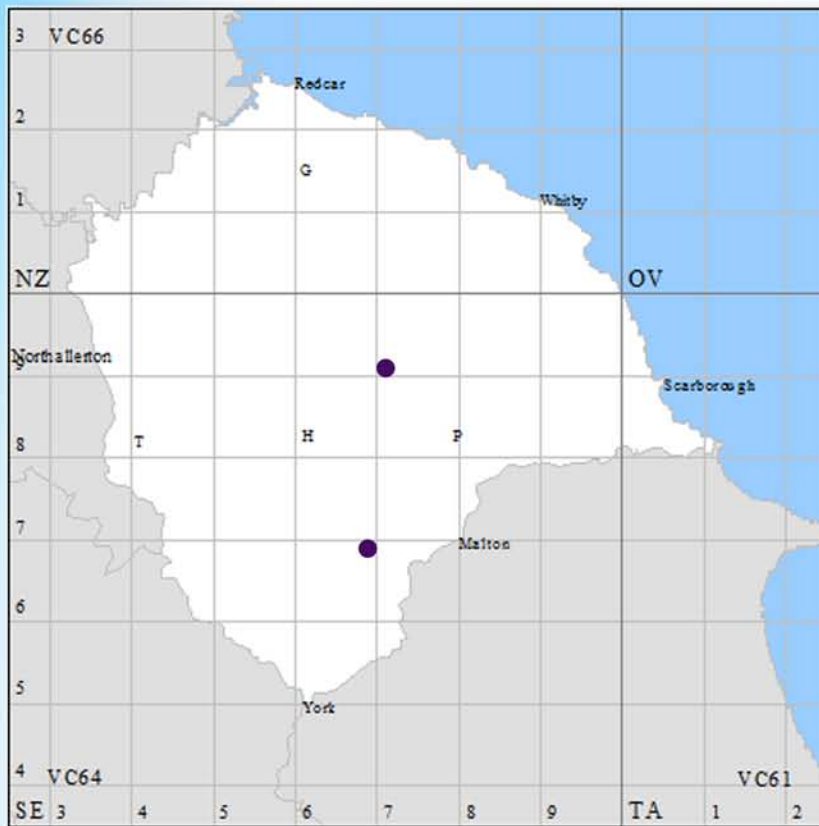
Mousetail is reaching the northernmost limits of its range in our area. There are a few scattered records, pre- 1970, in the North Riding of Yorkshire. It was not found in Nan Sykes' survey of the North York Moors, and nor subsequently. Scarborough Naturalists make no mention of it.

Eva Crackles classifies Mousetail as 'rare' and gives three sites for it in the Lower Derwent Valley and one in Holderness. The most prolific site was said to have several thousand plants on a farm track and by a gateway in Bubwith, 1975. There are only two more recent records in the East Riding, one from 1999 at Burton Constable Estate, the other at Ellerton in 2009.

Martin Stringer of Old Rectory Farm, Nunburnholme, showed Mousetail to a small group of people in 2010. It was growing in wheel ruts at the end of the track going from East Cottingwith to its Ings -the ruts still had water in them in June and the spot was obviously very wet. The Mousetail was growing amongst Toad rush, which it so closely resembles as to make them almost indistinguishable until they flower.

Some seed was gathered at the time and we found it quite easy to grow - it thrives when over-watered - so some of our volunteers grow it every year now but mainly for demonstration purposes because of the lack of suitable introduction sites.

Distribution in north-east Yorkshire: Mousetail (*Myosurus minimus*)



Key

- Introduced sites (Birkdale Fm, Terrington; Ryedale Folk Museum)

Data: BSBI, 2014 Maps produced by MapMate®

Key Facts - Mousetail (*Myosurus minimus*)

- Very specialist preference for bare and damp non-calcareous soils
- Found in damp and trampled areas of arable land, such as field entrances and around cattle troughs
- Autumn and spring germinating
- An easily overlooked small-growing plant, but unmistakable when in seed

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.

