

Cornfield Flowers Project



Species Cards



Dwarf spurge (*Euphorbia exigua*)

Near Threatened

One of three *Euphorbia* found in arable habitats - by far the rarer and most charming

A small, low-growing calcareous soil specialist, typically found on Wolds chalk

REASONS FOR DECLINE:

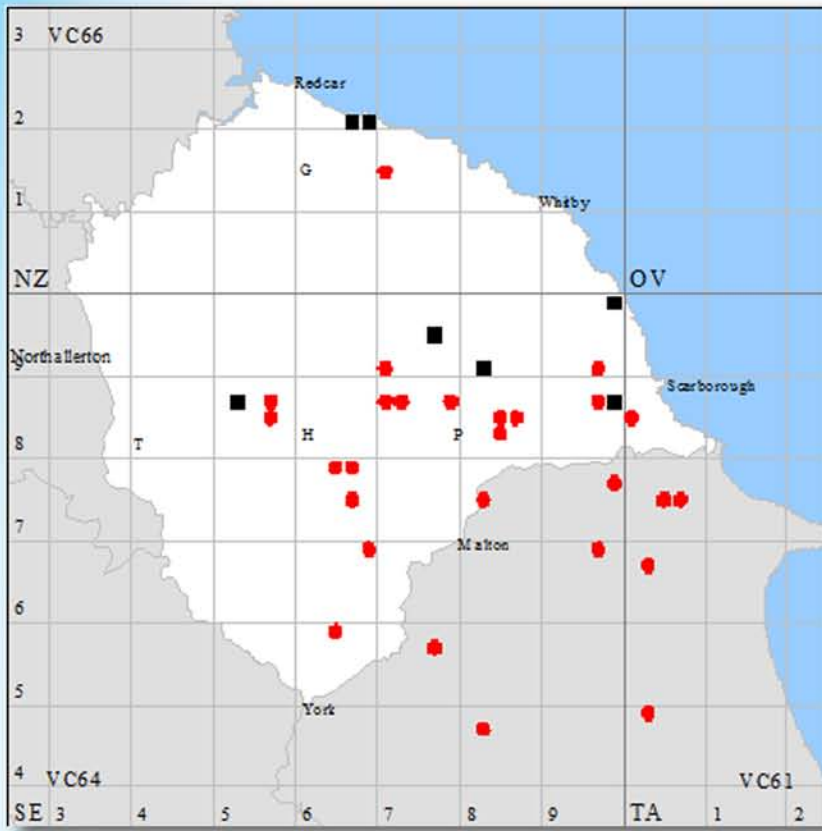
Herbicides; nitrogen application;
modern competitive crop varieties

Our Dwarf spurge experience...

Although Dwarf spurge was said to be 'common in fields' by Scarborough Naturalists in 1953, by the late 1980s Nan Sykes in *Wild Plants and their Habitats in the North York Moors* recorded it on only four sites, and Eva Crackles states 'infrequent; most records for the Wolds' in *Flora of the East Riding of Yorkshire*.

We certainly find it on the Wolds today, possibly a bit better than infrequent, while on the limestone southern edge of the North York Moors we have a good few sites for it. We can usually find it at Spikers Hill Farm, West Ayton on Peter Hutchinson's arable headland and also on the eastern side of Forge Valley.

Distribution in north-east Yorkshire: Dwarf spurge (*Euphorbia exigua*)



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 - Dwarf spurge (*Euphorbia exigua*)

- Preference for light, well drained calcareous soils
- Towards the northern limit of its range in our area
- Spring germinating
- Not a typical-looking *Euphorbia* due to the narrow leaf-like bracts around the flowers. *Euphorbia* bracts typically large and rounded - see Sun spurge (*Euphorbia helioscopia*)

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.

