

Cornfield Flowers Project



Species Cards: non-arable



Common calamint (*Clinopodium ascendens*)

Least Concern

A locally rare perennial grassland species that the CFP helps to conserve in our area

A low-key plant that can be found growing amongst tall grasses on Scarborough Castle headland

REASONS FOR DECLINE:

Inappropriate cutting regimes; scrubbing-up of former rough grassland habitat

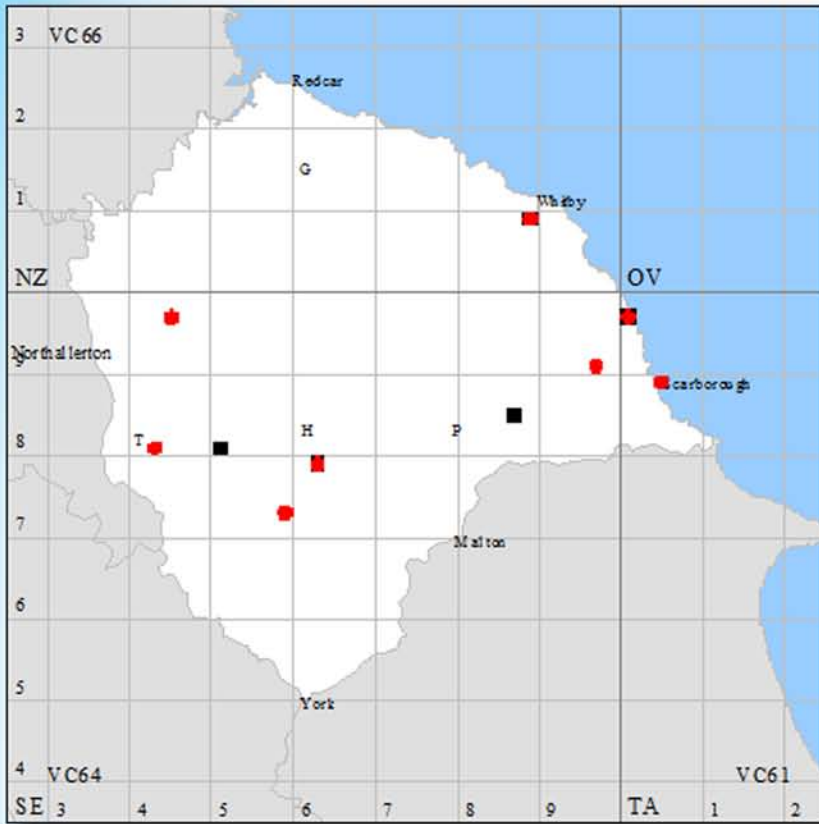
Our Common calamint experience...

Common calamint is only common south of a line drawn from Pembrokeshire to The Wash. There are only two sites for it north of our area.

Nan Sykes in *Wild Plants and their Habitats in the North York Moors* provides four sites for Common calamint, stating that it is at its northern limit climatically. It was found on dry, scrubby calcareous grassland and on limestone walls at Hayburn Wyke, Wass, Nabgate and Ruswarp. The other local site on Castle Hill, Scarborough, does not feature as it is outside the National Park; it can be seen on the path side below the castle wall in late summer if you get there before the Council strimmers. Scarborough Naturalists also record a site for it at Brompton in 1915, while Eva Crackles believes it to be extinct in the East Riding.

Because of Common calamint's rarity in our area, the Cornfield Flowers Project undertook to gather seed, grow it on and introduce to suitable sites. The seed gathering is relatively easy and germination seems good but so far spontaneous plants have only been found at Spaunton Quarry. We intend to supply more material to the Abbey House Physic Garden at Whitby, to see if we can establish it there. Some plants and seed were taken to Silpho, where they have been growing for three years and appear to be thriving on the fence line between the meadow and the arable strip.

Distribution in north-east Yorkshire: Common calamint (*Clinopodium ascendens*)



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 - Common calamint (*Clinopodium ascendens*)

- Preference for dry calcareous soils in rough grassland and hedge banks
- Will creep from rhizomes, typical of the mint family, but also readily spreads by seed
- Has a faint, dusty-mint aroma if leaves are crushed
- Overwinters as a ground-hugging mass of leaves; dead flowering stems will persist into new season if uncut

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.

