

Cerastium nigrescens (H.C. Watson)

Edmondston ex H.C. Watson

Shetland Mouse-ear

Key:

Dots refer to the native sites of the species

Numbers refer to the nearby Botanical Collections



Starting references

Family

Caryophyllaceae

IUCN category (2001)

Endangered. Endemic.

Habit

Tufted herb (perennial).

Habitat

Hills on very exposed, sparsely-vegetated fell-field, between the shattered angular rocks and stones.

Reasons for decline

Pasture improvement; grazing change.

Distribution in wild

Country	Locality & Vice County	Sites (10km ² occurrences)	Population (plants)
Scotland	The Keen of Hamar & Muckle Heog and another smaller debris area on the island of Unst, Shetland Isles	2	300-9,200

Ex situ Collections

Gardens close to the region of distribution of the species

- 1 Cruickshank Botanic Garden
- 2 University of Dundee Botanic Garden
- 3 St Andrew Botanic Garden
- 4 RBG Edinburgh

Botanical Collections with specialisation on family Caryophyllaceae

University of Oxford Botanic Garden

Potential to grow the species in ex situ Collections

Conservation information

Linkages to BAPs

Living Shetland Project

A Species Action Plan has been produced for *C. nigrescens*

No local implementation.

Habitat Management

Current management at existing sites (action: SNH).

The Keen of Hamar is a NNR and the other population is also on a site notified as an SSSI and subject to a management agreement.

Grazing animals have been excluded by agreement from key areas.

More protected sites are listed on <http://www.searchnbn.net/speciesInfo/>

Conservation programmes

A study of the population dynamics of *C. nigrescens* (and the other rarities of the serpentine debris) has been recently carried out at Stirling University, supported by SNH.

The species has been experimentally introduced to another SSSI on Unst by researchers.

Seed stored in the Millenium Seed Bank at Wakehurst Place should be made available for reintroductions, if necessary, (ACTION: RBG Kew, SNH).

Web References

- UK Species Action Plan: <http://www.ukbap.org.uk/UKPlans.aspx?ID=200>
- NBN Gateway database: <http://www.searchnbn.net>