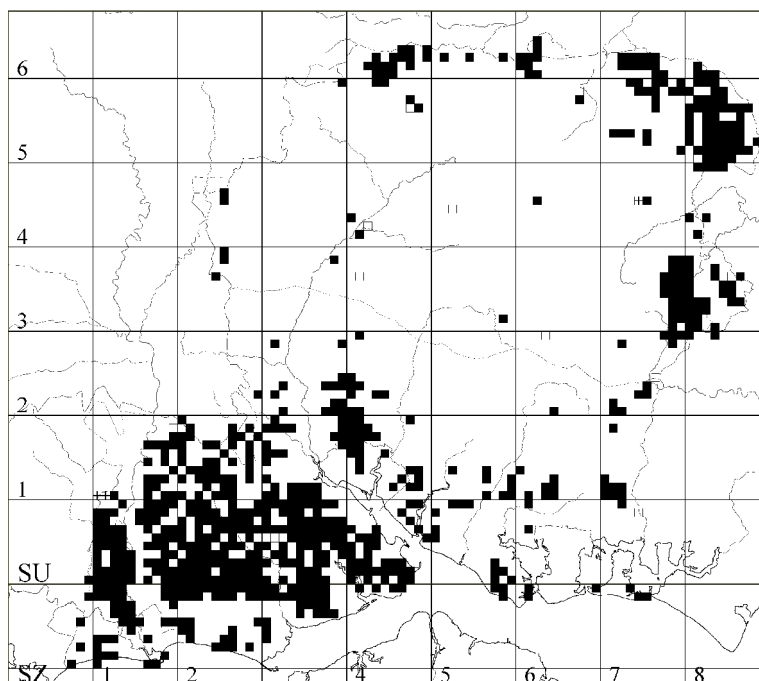


## *Calluna vulgaris* (L.) Hull

Heather  
1799-2015

National Status: Near Threatened, Not Scarce, Native



### **S Hants: Not Scarce**

Native

Heather continues to dominate large tracts of New Forest heathland where it forms a constant component of the internationally important H<sub>2</sub> and H<sub>3</sub> heathland vegetation (the latter confined in Britain to the Solent basin), on both dry and seasonally waterlogged soils. It is also a significant component of M<sub>25</sub> *Molinia* mires, especially in transitional communities. If anything the map shows an under-representation in the Forest, since many pre-2000 records will have been to tetrad level only.

Elsewhere in the south of the county it remains widespread on suitable soils, but in many places this belies its relict status following scrubbing up of formerly grazed commons, afforestation, fragmentation of sites and other forms of habitat degradation. In a few downland sites it appears in "chalk heath" on downland summits capped by leached or superficial deposits, but hardly in a thriving state.

### **N Hants: Not Scarce**

Native

Over a hundred years ago heathland was extensive in vast continuous tracts, much of it dominated by Heather, on the sand and gravel soils in the north-east of Hampshire around Aldershot, near to the Berkshire border from Newtown to Tadley and on the Lower Greensand around Bordon. Nowadays the heathlands have become very fragmented and are only relics of what previously existed, but thankfully much of what remains is now being sympathetically managed.

Of course Heather avoids the central chalk band across Hampshire, but a few outposts do occur as at Bransbury Common (SU<sub>4141</sub>) and Porton Down (SU<sub>2436</sub> & SU<sub>2538</sub>) where there is an acidic capping over the chalk.