

Winter Heliotrope, *Petasites fragrans*

Overview

Short description of *Petasites fragrans*, Winter Heliotrope

A dioecious, rhizomatous, perennial herb, producing fragrant inflorescences in winter, forming large persistent patches of round leaves.

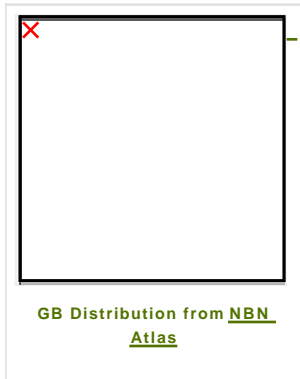
Description of *Petasites fragrans*, Winter Heliotrope status in GB

Winter heliotrope is naturalised throughout lowland Great Britain and Ireland on streambanks, railway banks and roadsides.

Habitat summary: *Petasites fragrans*, Winter Heliotrope

Rough grassland, especially roadsides, quite shade-tolerant and found on woodland margins.

Distribution map



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Last updated:

August 8th, 2011

We try to keep these factsheets up to date, however if you notice any issues please contact us

Overview table

Environment:	Terrestrial
Species status:	Non-Native
Native range:	Southwestern Europe, Southeastern Europe, Northern Africa
Functional type:	Land plant
Status in England:	Non-Native
Status in Scotland:	Non-Native
Status in Wales:	Non-Native
Location of first record:	v.c.21
Date of first record:	1835

Invasion history: *Petasites fragrans*, Winter Heliotrope

Origin

Mediterranean region of North Africa.

First Record

Introduced 1806, recorded in the wild by 1835.

Pathway and Method

Introduced as an ornamental plant and for ground cover. Distributed by dumping of discarded garden waste on roadsides, etc.

Species Status

Widely naturalised in the south and west, more local in northern GB. The recorded number of 10km squares in the British Isles increased from 486 in the period from 1970 to 1986 to 1640 between 1987 and 1999.

Ecology & Habitat: *Petasites fragrans*, Winter Heliotrope

Dispersal Mechanisms

Fragments of rhizomes can be distributed along roadsides by machinery, and along watercourses.

Reproduction

Dioecious, female plant does not occur in GB.

Known Predators/Herbivores

None known.

Resistant Stages

Winter Heliotrope perennates as rhizomes. It does not set seed in GB as the female plant is absent.

Habitat Occupied in GB

Mostly roadsides and other rough grassland and woodland edges.

Distribution: *Petasites fragrans*, Winter Heliotrope

Throughout GB, very frequent in the south and west, more local and mainly coastal in Scotland.

Impacts: *Petasites fragrans*, Winter Heliotrope

Environmental Impact

Spreads to form dense stands that exclude other vegetation.

Health and Social Impact

None known.

Economic Impact

A good source of nectar for insects early in the year. Costly to remove if it invades sites of conservation importance.

References & Links: *Petasites fragrans*, Winter Heliotrope

Identification

Stace, C.A. (2010) *New flora of the British Isles*, Third Edition, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Biology, ecology, spread, vectors

Botanical Society of the British Isles (2011). Vascular Plant Atlas Update Project <http://www.bsbimaps.org.uk/atlas/> [March 2011].

Clement, E.J. & Foster, M.C. (1994) *Alien Plants of the British Isles*, BSBI, London.

Management and impact

Cornwall Local Nature Reserves: Invasive Species.
<http://www.cornwallnr.org.uk/inspec.htm> [March 2011].

General

Ecological Flora of the British Isles
http://www.ecoflora.co.uk/search_species2.php?plant_no=1690900080 [March 2011]