



Northumberland Pond © NBP Photographer John Williamson

*Working with Wildlife*

## Violet Crystalwort (*Riccia huebeneriana*) Species Action Plan

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Plan Lead	Northumbrian Water
Latest version	November 2009

### Description

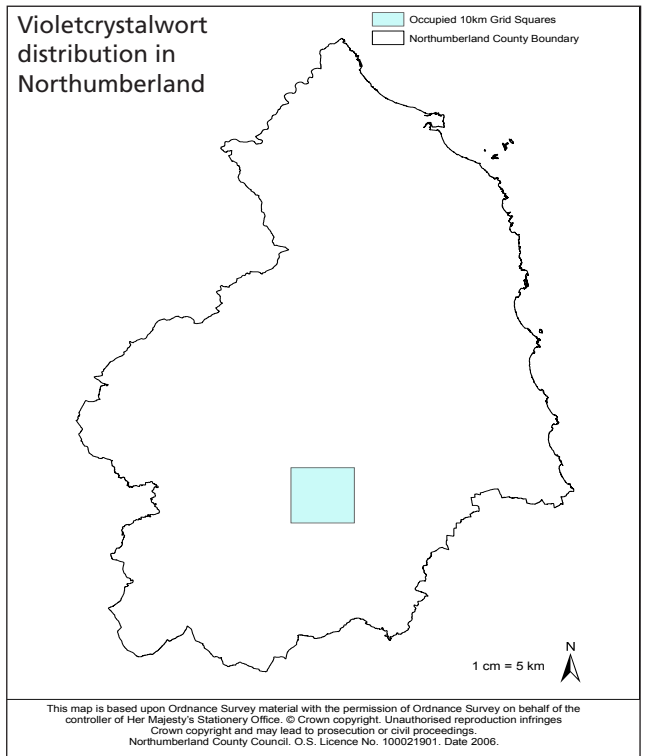
Violet crystalwort is a small thalloid liverwort which is essentially a colonist, growing on nutrient-poor mud at the edge of large ponds, lakes, reservoirs and rivers. It grows as tiny rosettes, smaller than a five pence piece, and is greenish in colour with the edges often having a violet or reddish tinge as it matures. It appears to favour locations that are exposed following dry summers, but are under water during the winter. Abundant capsules are produced in late summer and autumn, and the spores are presumably capable of lying dormant in the mud for several years until the right conditions for growth return. The appearance depends largely on environmental conditions. In drought years there can be very large populations. The natural distribution of this plant is limited by its need for slightly acidic mud.

### Conservation Status

UK Red Data List, vulnerable  
UK Biodiversity Action Plan Species  
North East Biodiversity Action Plan Species

### Current Extent in Northumberland

Violet crystalwort is found at one location in the county in the district of Tynedale. In Britain, this species has been recorded from over 20 widely scattered sites. It has not been recorded at many of these localities since 1970, but this may not reflect its true status because of its erratic population fluctuations.



### Current Factors Causing Loss or Decline

- Stabilisation of water levels (for recreational/amenity purposes) leading to a loss of seasonal fluctuations which are a requirement of this species.
- Nitrate and phosphate pollution
- Human disturbance – watersports, fishing
- Competition from invasive non native species
- Scrub encroachment

### Associated Action Plans

Ponds, Lakes and Reservoirs

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### Further Information

This violet crystalwort action plan links to the violet crystalwort UK BAP action plan, whose lead partners are Plantlife and Natural England.

### Targets

**Maintain the current range of Violet Crystalwort in Northumberland of 1 occupied 10km grid square by 2015**

Code	Priority Actions	Date
VC A01	Monitor the population of violet crystalwort	ongoing
VC A02	Explore the feasibility of expanding the range of the species in Northumberland	2010