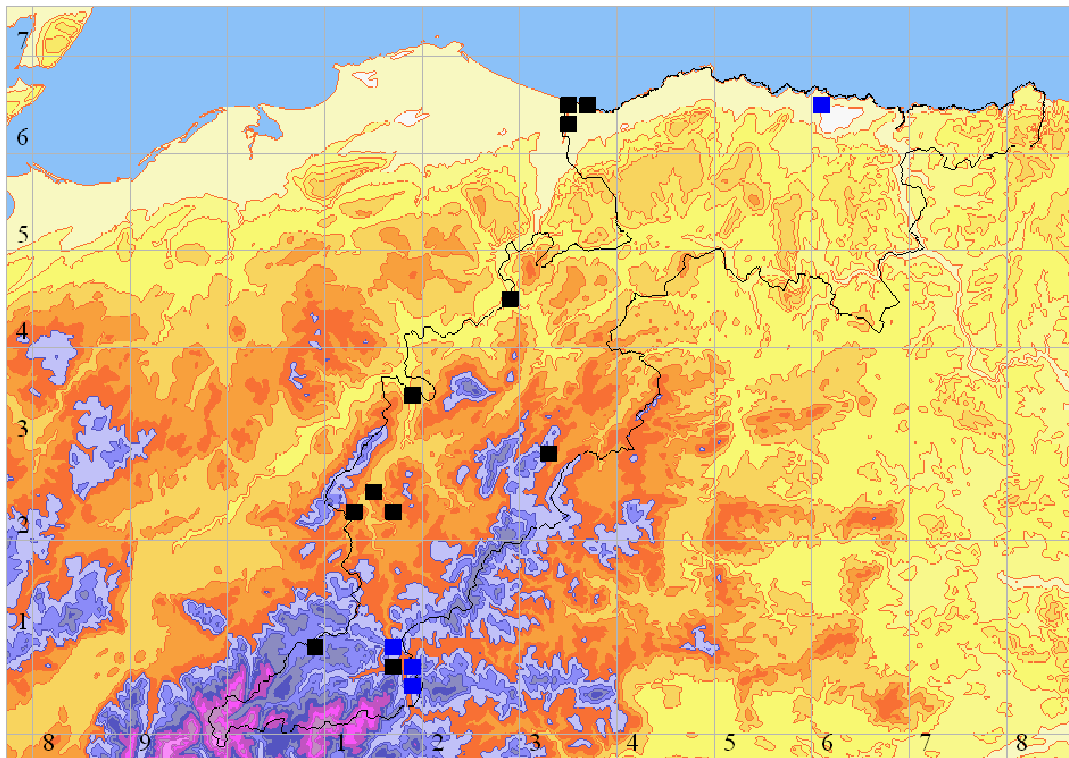


## Viola canina (Heath Dog-violet) in Banffshire (v.c. 94)

Nationally, *V. canina* (Heath Dog-violet) is a widespread but declining species. It was recorded from 569 hectads in GB in the period 1987 – 1999, with a change index of  $-0.87$  (Preston et al 2002), and is classified as *Near Threatened* (Cheffings and Farrell 2005). It is the least common of the three violets native to Banffshire, recorded from 11 tetrads in 8 hectads in the period 1980 – 2009 (Amphlett 2010). See map below:



Tetrad distribution of *Viola canina* in Banffshire. Tetrads with records for the period 1980 – 2009 are in black, pre-1980 in blue. Relief shading is at 50 m intervals up to 200 m AOD, then at 100m intervals. Areas above 500 m AOD are in blue, and above 900 m in pink (Digital Map Data Copyright © Bartholomew 2007). The vice-county boundary is shown as a black line (© All rights reserved. National Biodiversity Network Trust and Crown Copyright 2003).



Vegetative plants are present from April to October (Poland & Clement 2009), flowering from the end of April, several weeks later, though overlapping with, *V. riviniana*. *V. canina* has sky or cobalt-blue flowers, with no (or little) hint of violet which the flowers of *V. riviniana* Common Dog-violet have. Once learnt, this colour is distinctive. The spur is yellowish.

Leaves are triangular, noticeably longer than wide, slightly fleshy, and usually hairless (see photo below). All the leaves grow from stems that end in a flower – there is no rosette of leaves at the base of the plant.



In contrast, *V. riviniana* has thin, heart-shaped leaves, about as long as wide (or just a little longer). Its leaves are often slightly hairy & a rosette of basal leaves is present. Flower colour varies from dark to pale violet-blue, and the spur is whitish or pale violet, but can be yellowish.

Field work over the last 10 years indicates that *V. canina* is a genuinely scarce plant in the county, with records from 7 tetrads. All records for the period 1980 – 2009 are summarised in Table 1 below. *V. canina* should be looked for in close-cropped grassland, eg. near the coast, on track-sides and river shingle, & in seasonally wet hollows and loch margins. It is also recorded from short-cropped calcareous grassland.

Andy Amphlett  
7<sup>th</sup> March 2010

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Hectad	Tetrad	Year	Site Name	Gridref	Recorder	Comment
NJ00	NJ00Z	1999	Water of Caiplich	NJ0809	Green, Ian P.	
NJ10		1982	Inchrory	NJ10	M. McCallum Webster	
	NJ10T	2005	Inchrory, Glen Builg	NJ1707	Amphlett, A. Green, Ian P., Roberts, G. & Finch, R.	East of Builg Burn
NJ12	NJ12M	1980	Ballantruan to Cairn Ballantruan	NJ12M	Heyward	
		1980	NJ12 SW quadrant	NJ12SW	M. McCallum Webster	
	NJ12M	1981	Cairn Ballantruan	NJ1524	S. & V. Heyward	
	NJ12R	1981	Carn Meilich & Conglass Water	NJ12R	Heyward	
		1981	Ballintruan SE quadrant	NJ12SE	S. & V. Heyward	
	NJ12G	2006	Burn of Lochy (VC94 side)	NJ128226	Amphlett, A.	10s of plants in very short, stony, <i>Nardus</i> dominated grassland, on long stabilised shingle. First noted at NJ 1287 2258. Centre of site at NJ 1289 2262.
NJ13	NJ13X	2009	W. of R. Avon	NJ183351	Amphlett, A.	2 plants on part vegetated area on west side of track.
NJ24	NJ24X	1984	Craigellachie	NJ2945	M. McCallum Webster	Roadside verge
	NJ24X	1984	River Spey shingle, Craigellachie	NJ2844	M. McCallum Webster	
	NJ24X	2009	E. side of River Spey	NJ292458	Amphlett, A.	4 clumps at NJ 2921 4589, on stony / sandy, part vegetated area on river bank.
NJ32	NJ32J	1983	Blackwater Lodge	NJ3328	M. McCallum Webster	Shingle
NJ36	NJ36L	2004	Bogmoor	NJ34806228	Green, Ian P.	2 plants growing in centre of track
	NJ36M	2004	Spey Bay	NJ35816478	Green, Ian P.	200 plants growing in damp areas in clearings amongst trees
	NJ36M	2005	Tugnet	NJ36M	Green, Ian P. & Amphlett, A.	
	NJ36M	2005	Spey Bay	NJ3564	Green, Ian P.	
	NJ36S	2005	Nether Dallachy Landfill Site	NJ3664	Green, Ian P.	Growing on Nether Dallachy Landfill Site.
	NJ36M	2006	Cunninghaugh	NJ3564	Green, Ian P.	
	NJ36M	2006	Spey Bay	NJ35776486	Green, Ian P. & BSBI	Lots growing in open area amongst gorse and trees, on S. side of the golf course
	NJ36S	2006	Spey Bay	NJ3664	Green, Ian P.	Growing in rough area just outside the tip, N. side
	NJ36S	2006	Spey Bay Golf Course	NJ366648	Amphlett, A.	Patch, with 6 small clumps.
NJ66		1984	Whitehills to Burn of Boyne (NW Quadrant)	NJ66NW	Inverness Botany Group	

Table 1. *Viola canina* records from v.c. 94, 1980 – 2009.