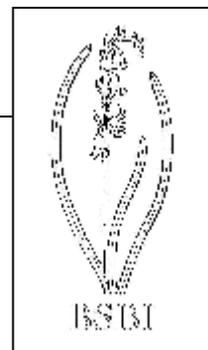


Plant Crib



MYOSOTIS

When collecting specimens, please note flower diameter when fresh and whether the calyx is open or closed in fruit (both may be distorted in pressed material).

1. *Myosotis* ´ *suzae* (*M. scorpioides* ´ *M. laxa*)

Patch-forming plants with oddly long racemes continuing to flower well into the autumn may be this hybrid which is probably widely over-looked. It is a partially fertile, vigorous, perennial, which is morphologically intermediate between its parents and sometimes forms hybrid complexes.

	<i>Myosotis scorpioides</i> L.	<i>Myosotis</i> × <i>suzae</i> Domin	<i>Myosotis laxa</i> Lehm.
Habit	Stoloniferous/rhizomatous perennial	Stoloniferous/rhizomatous perennial, sterile shoots produced in autumn	Annual-biennial without stolons/rhizomes
Racemes	To c. 20(-30) cm long, calyces usually green and persistent in fruit	Longer to c. 30(-37) cm long with small calyces which become brown and shrivelled	To c. 15(-30) cm long, calyces usually green and persistent in fruit
Corolla diameter	(7-)8-13 mm	c. 5-8 mm	3.5-4(-5) mm
Style in fruit	Longer than seeds and ± as long as calyx	About as long as seeds, shorter than calyx	Much shorter than seeds and calyx
Pollen	Well-formed	Irregular in size and shape, partially sterile	Well-formed
Seeds	Usually 2-4	0-1(-2)	Usually 2-4

Reference Benoit, P. M. (1958). *Proc. BSBI* 3: 46-47.

Plant Crib

2. *Myosotis arvensis* / *M. sylvatica*

Some small forms of *M. sylvatica* or large forms of *M. arvensis* (especially subsp. *umbrata* (Mert. & W. D. J. Koch) O. Schwarz, cf. below) are regularly confused. Nutlet length overlaps significantly in both taxa (1.5-2.5 mm in *M. arvensis*, 1.5-2.2 mm in *M. sylvatica* in the few samples measured). Corolla size is a good character; if in doubt about the identity of a plant then it is probably large *M. arvensis*, which can be checked in fresh material from the appressed fruiting calyx.

Deeply shaded *M. sylvatica* may be very spindly and small. Other small forms (cf. var. *micrantha* Fiori) have corollas 4-5 mm in diameter and appear to be very rare; they have the calyx open in fruit. The annual garden form of *M. sylvatica*, var. *culta* Voss. is becoming widespread as an escape from cultivation.

In woodland, *M. arvensis* subsp. *umbrata* seems to favour only moderately fertile soils and is less frequent in the richer, damper sites favoured by *M. sylvatica*.

	<i>M. arvensis</i> (L.) Hill subsp. <i>umbrata</i>	<i>M. sylvatica</i> Hoffm.
Habit	Annual-biennial	Usually perennial, but garden forms may behave as biennials or annuals
Corolla diameter	2.5-5 mm	(4-)6-10(-11) mm
Fruiting calyx	Appressed in fresh material and concealing seeds; \pm more erecto-patent in herbarium material	Erect to erecto-patent in fresh and herbarium material, exposing seeds

Authors A. J. Silverside & T. C. G. Rich, August 1997.

3. *Myosotis discolor* subspecies

Two morphologically and ecologically distinct subspecies of *M. discolor* Pers. occur. Both are widespread in Britain.

Subsp. *discolor*: Corolla initially bright yellow; two uppermost leaves on the main stem opposite. Plant of dry, sandy or peaty ground, sometimes a conspicuous member of the annual flora on ultrabasic rocks.

Subsp. *dubia* (Arrond.) Blaise: Corolla initially and often very transiently cream or creamy yellow; two uppermost leaves on the main stem not forming an opposite pair. Plant of damp, base-poor pastures, moorland edges and muddy tracks, often with *Juncus bufonius*.

Author A. J. Silverside, February 1998.

Plant Crib

4. *Myosotis arvensis* subspecies

A large woodland form of *M. arvensis* (L.) Hill was frequently mentioned in the older Floras, usually as var. *umbrosa* Bab. or var. *sylvestris* Schtdl., with warnings that it could be confused with *M. sylvatica* (cf. above). It is recognised as subsp. *umbrata* (Mert. & W. D. J. Koch) O. Schwarz in *Flora Europaea* 3:112, apparently differing from subsp. *arvensis* in chromosome number. While British material perhaps needs cytological investigation, plants corresponding morphologically to subsp. *umbrata* are widespread and locally frequent, at least throughout mainland Britain. The two subspecies can be distinguished as follows:

Subsp. *arvensis*: Annual to biennial; height 5-40 cm; corolla about 3 mm diameter, lobes concave; hooked hairs on calyx tube less than 0.4 mm; calyx less than 5 mm in fruit. Plant of arable land and disturbed ground.

Subsp. *umbrata*: Biennial (with basal leaves more persistent?); height 10-70 cm (rarely to 120 cm); corolla usually 3-4 mm in diameter, lobes concave to flat; hooked hairs on calyx tube exceeding 0.5 mm (typically 0.6-0.7 mm); calyx frequently exceeding 5 mm in fruit. Plant of woodland edges, hedgerows and shady places, often abundant along sides of forestry tracks.

Author A. J. Silverside, August 1997.