

TARAXACUM SECTION HAMATA

Hamata species are common and widespread throughout the British Isles in a wide variety of habitats from 'wildwood' (usually *T. hamatum* or *T. atactum*) to grasslands and wasteland. Mostly they are absent above 500 m altitude. They are much more common here than in the rest of Europe, and mostly they are native (except probably *T. pruinatum*, *T. prionum*, *T. fusciflorum*, *T. subericinum*). In the UK, a closely related group of 18 species which probably share a single asexual progenitor, as all are triploid but with only two NOR chromosomes.

Species in this section are diagnosed by the following features:

- Midrib above with closely woven red and green strands (use lens) (also in some *Celtica*, but not in *Ruderalia*).
- Leaf dark bottle-green ('Great Western Railway green'), unspotted.
- Exterior bracts rather blue-green and pruinose, usually <12 mm long (also in some *Celtica*, *Naevosa*, *Erythrosperma*, *Taraxacum*, but not *Ruderalia*)
- Exterior bracts spreading-arcuate (except *T. hamatum*) (*Celtica* have patent to erect exterior bracts)
- Pollen always present, stigmas never drying pure yellow (many *Celtica* and *Naevosa* lack pollen and/or have yellow stigmas)
- Lateral leaf-lobes 'hamate', that is, recurved with a \pm convex distal margin.

1a. Species lacking a border to the exterior bracts (2a-2g).



Unbordered



Bordered

Plant Crib 3

- 2a. Exterior bracts spreading to erect, stellate in bud. Interior bracts in bud inky black at apex

Taraxacum hamatum



- 2b. Some terminal leaf-lobes longer than lateral lobes, with a single unilateral tooth

Taraxacum atactum



Plant Crib 3

- 2c. Exterior bracts suffused purple above; some distal margin of some upper lateral leaf-lobes dentate
Taraxacum marklundii



- 2d. Terminal lobe shortly excurrent at apex. Ligule teeth orange

Taraxacum subhamatum



Plant Crib 3

2e. Rudimentary exterior bracts below involucre. Lateral lobes often not opposite (3a-3b).

3a. Leaf-lobes finely acuminate

3b. Leaf-lobes subobtuse to acute

Taraxacum spiculatum (not illustrated)

Taraxacum hamatiforme



2f. Lateral leaf-lobes narrow, with large teeth on distal margin (4a-4b).

4a. Exterior bracts > 3.5 mm wide; ligules striped violet

4b. Exterior bracts < 3.5 mm wide; ligule ends orange

Taraxacum kernianum

Taraxacum lancidens



T. kernianum



T. lancidens

Plant Crib 3

- 2g. Ligule stripes dull brown, suffusing ligule end below; robust plant, exterior bracts >3.5 mm wide (rare) **T. fusciflorum**



- 1b. Species with a pale border to the exterior bracts (5a-5f).

- 5a. Robust plants; exterior bracts > 3.5 mm wide (very common species; 6a-6b)

- 6a. Distal margin to lateral leaf-lobes dentate; interlobes smudged blackish; exterior bracts purplish **Taraxacum lamprophyllum**



Plant Crib 3

6b. Distal margin to upper leaf lobes entire; interlobes usually green; bracts not purplish

Taraxacum pseudohamatum



5b. Interior bracts varying in width (fused pairs); lateral leaf lobes \pm entire

Taraxacum hamiferum



Plant Crib 3

- 5c. Mid-rib brilliant red-purple to apex; terminal leaf-lobes rounded, often subdivided. (Note, easily confused with the Celtica *T. bracteatum* which has spreading-erect exterior bracts in bud)

Taraxacum boekmanii



- 5d. Leaves flat, dark bluish-green; lateral leaf-lobes deltoid; achene body >3.5 mm (7a-7b)

- 7a. Terminal leaf-lobe triangular; petioles unwinged below; leaf subglabrous **Taraxacum quadrans**



Plant Crib 3

7b. Terminal leaf-lobe small, apiculate; petioles parallel-winged; leaf hairy

Taraxacum prionum (uncommon)



5e. Apices to leaf-lobes strongly recurved; borders to exterior bracts white, dentate (lens); plant not robust

Taraxacum hamatulum



Plant Crib 3

5f. Mid-ribs greenish; petioles white to faintly coloured (8a-8b)

8a. Leaves dark, dirty green, broadly and irregularly lobed

Taraxacum sahalinianum



8b. Leaves pale green, slender, regularly lobate; bracts heavily pruinose

Taraxacum pruinatum



Plant Crib 3

References Dudman, A. & Richards, A. J. (1997). *Dandelions of Great Britain and Ireland*. London: Botanical Society of the British Isles.

Further pictures of Section *Hamata* species can be found on iSpot
<http://www.ispot.org.uk/>

Author A. J. Richards 2012
Pictures A. J. Richards and T. C. G. Rich