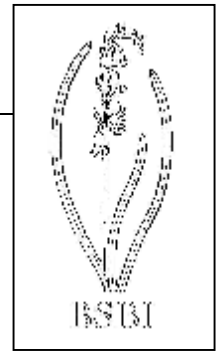


Plant Crib

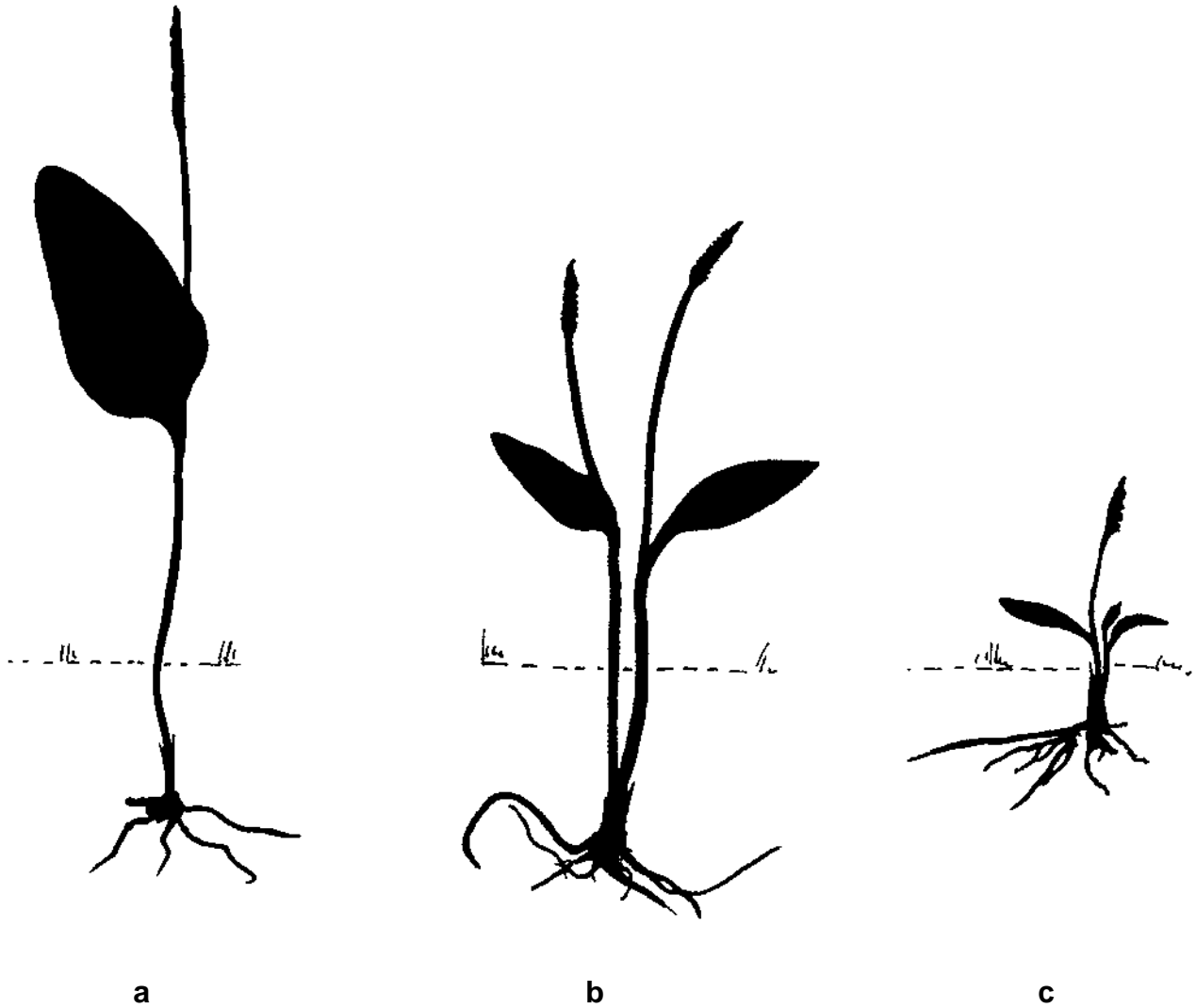


OPHIOGLOSSUM

Ophioglossum vulgatum is a variable plant in leaf size and texture and small plants of grazed sand dune slacks have been recorded in error as *O. azoricum*. The latter species may have arisen as a hybrid of *O. vulgatum* with *O. lusitanicum* and shares some characters of that species. The latter, although very rare in Britain, is therefore included in the table below. The morphology and distribution of *O. azoricum* was discussed by Paul (1987).

	<i>Ophioglossum vulgatum</i> L.	<i>O. azoricum</i> C. Presl	<i>O. lusitanicum</i> L.
Plant	8-30 cm tall, typically with leaves appearing singly in late May to mid June, dying down mid August / September	3-8 cm tall, leaves typically clustered in pairs or triplets, appearing in May, dying down in July	1-1.5 cm tall, typically with leaves clustered in pairs, appearing in early winter (October) and dying down late April
Leaf-blade	Up to 150 mm long, held erect, broadly ovate-lanceolate to ovate, widest below the middle, apex often broadly rounded, or obtuse, base attenuate to cordate and often clasping the leaf stalk (Fig. a)	9-22(-40) × 4-10(-14) mm, convex, reflexed, broadly elliptic-lanceolate to ovate, widest at or just below the middle, apex acute, base cuneate (Fig. b)	8-23(-38) cm long, typically reflexed and lying close to turf but may be more erect, narrowly lanceolate, widest at the middle, narrowing to the base and acute apex (Fig. c)
Leaf-blade texture	Herbaceous, if thick then soft	Often fleshy, ± thick	Thick, very fleshy, often glossy
Stalk bearing fused sporangia (sporophore)	Herbaceous, sporangia 10-44 pairs	Herbaceous, sporangia 4-13(-17) pairs	Stout and fleshy, sporangia 3-8(-13) pairs

Plant Crib



Habitat and leaf-shapes in *Ophioglossum*: (a) *O. vulgatum*, (b) *O. azoricum*, (c) *O. lusitanicum*.

Reference Paul, A. M. (1987). *Fern Gazette* **13**:173-187.

Authors A. C. Jermy & J. M. Camus (*Fern Guide* 1991).