

TARAXACUM SECTION NAEVOSA

Section *Naevosa* species are mostly found in the western and northern districts of the British Isles, becoming scarce in the south-east and midlands of England where they are mostly restricted to marshy semi-natural habitats. Elsewhere, they occur in a range of habitats from mountain cliffs to lane banks and grasslands, but they are rarely found in waste places as ruderals or weeds.

Fourteen species are known from the British Isles (Dudman & Richards 1997; Margetts 2007). In addition, *T. berthae* and *T. olgae* (section *Celtica*), western spotted relatives of *T. nordstedtii*, are also included in the key here as they have leaf spots; *T. fulgidum* may have blackish smudges along the midrib and is not covered (see section *Celtica* crib). *Naevosa* species are closely related to section *Celtica* species and might well be included in the latter section. They differ by a single conspicuous character, dark spotting on the upper surface of the leaf, a feature nearly unique to sections *Naevosa* and *Spectabilia*. Some but not all *Naevosa* species also have roughly hairy leaves. A western group (*T. ronaae*, *T. drucei*, *T. cornubiense*, *T. pseudomarklundii*) exhibit distinctive, but inconsistent dark flecking on smooth, rather tenuous leaves.

Sections *Naevosa* and *Spectabilia* can be separated as follows:

Section *Naevosa*: Leaves typically roughly hairy, coarsely lobed; achene body (including cone) < 4.0 mm, narrowly top-shaped; outer row of exterior bracts erect to recurved; ligules striped grey, grey-purple, purple, red-purple, rarely red; pollen present or absent.

Section *Spectabilia*: Leaves typically spathulate, entire or shallowly lobed; achene body (including cone) > 4.5 mm, oblong; outer row of exterior bracts usually appressed; ligules usually with red stripes on lower side; pollen usually absent.



Otherwise leaf spotting is found in *T. inopinatum* (section *Erythrosperma*), *T. pycnostictum* (section *Taraxacum*) and *T. melanthoides* (section *Ruderalia*; very small spots).

Leaf spotting should not be confused with interlobe blotching (which is exhibited on both leaf surfaces in many section *Hamata* and *Ruderalia*), or damage from insects, fungi etc. (also usually on both surfaces, often brownish). Examination with a lens should reveal whether spotting is innate or environmental in origin.



Dark spotting on leaf surface in Section *Naevosa*



Interlobe blotching



Leaf damage

- References**
- Dudman, A. & Richards, A. J. (1997). *Dandelions of Great Britain and Ireland*. Botanical Society of the British Isles, London.
 - Margetts, L. J. (2007). A new species of *Taraxacum* Wigg. (Asteraceae) from south-west England and Ireland. *Watsonia* **26**: 481–484.
 - Richards, A. J. & Ferguson-Smyth, C. (2016). Notes on the *Taraxacum* Flora of the Orkney Islands (v.c. 111), British Isles. *New Journal of Botany* **6**: 71-78.

Plant Crib 3

A. J. Richards 2020. Additional photos C. Ferguson-Smyth, T. Rich, P. Smith, L. Tucker

- 1a. Species lacking pollen or almost so (pollen is extruded from anthers by the stigmas; check with a x20 lens)
(see page 4 for lead 1b)
- 2a. At least inner (upper) exterior bracts erect (3a-3b)
- 3a. Lateral leaf-lobes 2-4 pairs, sigmoid on distal margin (4a-4b)
- 4a. Stigmas blackish; exterior bracts green, lanceolate; achene body <3.0 mm. Rare, Solway Firth **T. olgae**



4b. Stigmas paler; exterior bracts pruinose; achene body > 3.0 mm (5a-5b)

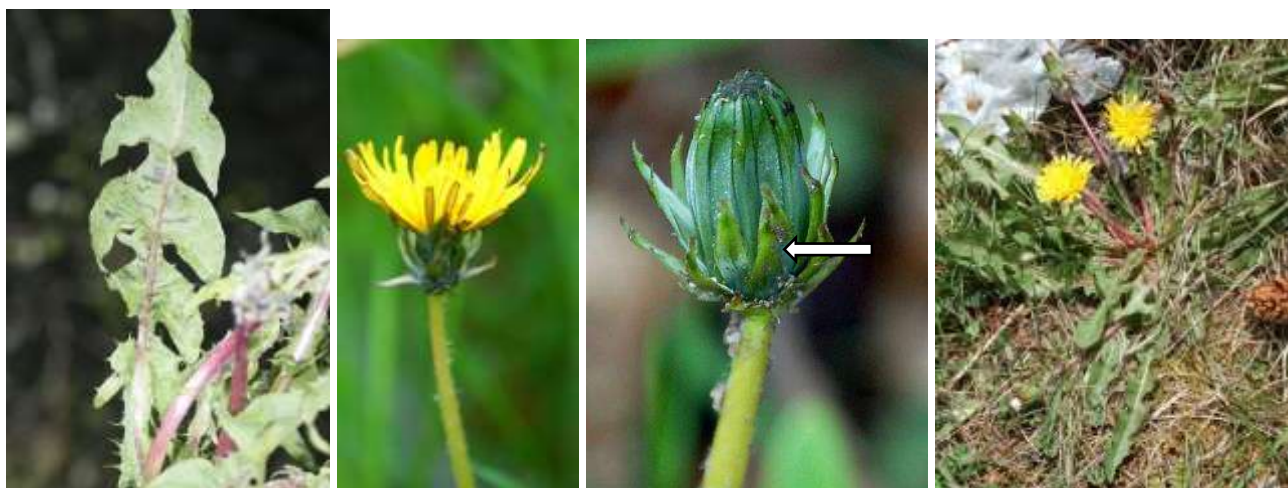
5a. Exterior bracts ovate, bordered; leaves spatulate, scarcely hairy

T. berthae



5b. Exterior bracts lanceolate; leaves narrowly lanceolate, hairy

T. maculosum



Plant Crib 3

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- 3b.** Lateral leaf-lobes 5-7, \pm straight on distal margin; exterior bracts not bluish or pruinose, crowded
T. richardsianum



- 2b.** All exterior bracts spreading to recurved (6a-6b)
6a. Petioles winged; exterior bracts mostly >3.0 mm wide, bordered, pruinose; ligules striped purple (7a-7b)
7a. Leaves densely bristly-hairy above, brownish-green; inner ligules tipped reddish, achene body >4.0 mm, chestnut. N Scotland beaches
T. rufofructum (*T. rubellum*, non M. P Christ)



- 7b.** Leaves sparsely hairy above, green; ligules tipped yellow; achenes brown, widespread
T. euryphyllum



Plant Crib 3

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6b. Petioles \pm unwinged; exterior bracts mostly <3.0 mm wide, unbordered; ligules striped brown

T. subnaevosum



1b. Species bearing pollen (8a-8b)

8a. At least inner (upper) exterior bracts erect throughout (9a-9b)

9a. Leaves hairy, thick; involucre crowded (see *T. richardsianum*); achenes with spines at top **T. stictophyllum**



9b. Leaves subglabrous, tenuous; terminal lobe obtuse to rounded; exterior bracts few; achene spines absent or few, leaf spots inconstant (10a-c)

10a. Terminal lobes of inner leaves mucronate; interlobes often present; exterior bracts bordered (Devon)

T. pseudomarklundii



Plant Crib 3

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- 10b.** Terminal leaf-lobes rounded, leaf-lobes cucullate; exterior bracts unborded; stigmas pure yellow; scarce, Atlantic rocks and cliffs **T. drucei**



- 10c.** Terminal leaf-lobe obtuse but not rounded; exterior bracts few, narrowly bordered; achenes spinose at apex. South-west England and Ireland **T. ronae**



- 8b.** All exterior bracts spreading to recurved (sometimes suberect at apex) (11a-11b)

- 11a.** Exterior bracts <3.0 mm in width, recurved; leaves subglabrous above (12a-12b)

- 12a.** Leaves heavily suffused with coalescing spots at first, spots fading; distal leaf-lobes entire. Widespread in N Britain **T. pseudolarssonii**



Plant Crib 3

A. J. Richards 2020. Additional photos C. Ferguson-Smyth, T. Rich, P. Smith, L. Tucker

12b. Spots small, discrete, punctate, inconstant; distal leaf-lobes dentate. Cornwall

T. cornubiense



11b. Exterior bracts >3.0 mm in width, spreading to suberect distally; leaves bristly hairy above (13a-13b)

13a. Upper surface of leaves dull grey-green, densely hairy; stigmas orange. Shetland

T. hirsutissimum



13b. Upper surface of leaves mid to dark green, rather sparsely hairy; stigmas yellowish, becoming discoloured when dry. Widespread in N Britain (14a-14b)

14a. Open capitula >50 mm in diameter; leaf-lobes subpatent

T. naevosum



Plant Crib 3

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14b. Open capitulum usually <50 mm in diameter; leaf-lobes heavily recurved

T. naevosiforme

