

A close-up, high-angle photograph of a dense field of yellow dandelion flowers. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, with some fully open and others as buds. The green leaves are interspersed among the flowers, creating a vibrant, textured background. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

**2. Introduction to
dandelion
sections.
BSBI 2018**

Tim Rich

Section *Erythrosperma*

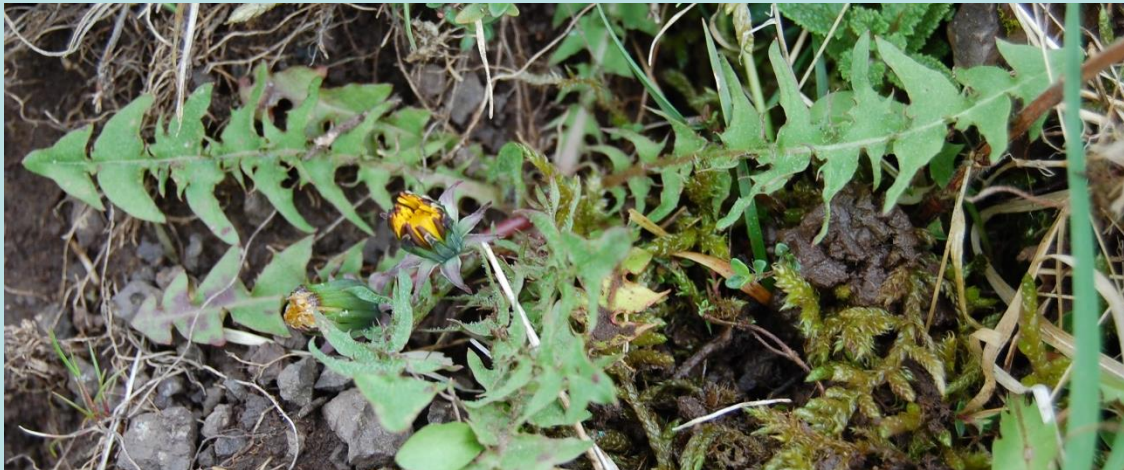
- Typically known as the small dandelions of dry ground, eg dunes, eskers, dry grasslands

Characterised by:

- Small and delicate, often with highly dissected leaves.
(*T. inopinatum* has spotted leaves).
- Exterior bracts are <9 mm long, and usually <7 mm.
- Open capitulum is usually <30 mm in diameter, often less.
- Many species lack pollen and/or have yellow styles.
- Achenes are frequently reddish to dark purple in colour with a narrowly cylindrical cone c. 1 mm



cone



Section *Obliqua*

- 2 specialist sea shore species

Characterised by:

- Small plants with dissected leaves.
- Usually 6 or more pairs of lateral lobes
- Exterior bracts usually 6-7 mm.
- Capitula 10-30 mm in diameter.
- Pollen present or not.
- Achenes grey-brown, cone pyramidal, short c. 0.4 mm
- Easily confused with Section *Erythrosperma* species (especially *T. haworthianum*) but have greyish achenes with a short, conical cone.



Section *Palustris*

- primarily occur in wet, mineral-rich grassland and fen habitats – high quality species!
- 5 species (+?)

Characterised by:

- leaves unlobed or with simple lobes.
- appressed or loosely appressed, ovate outer bracts with broadly bordered margins.
- ±long cylindrical cone on the achene.



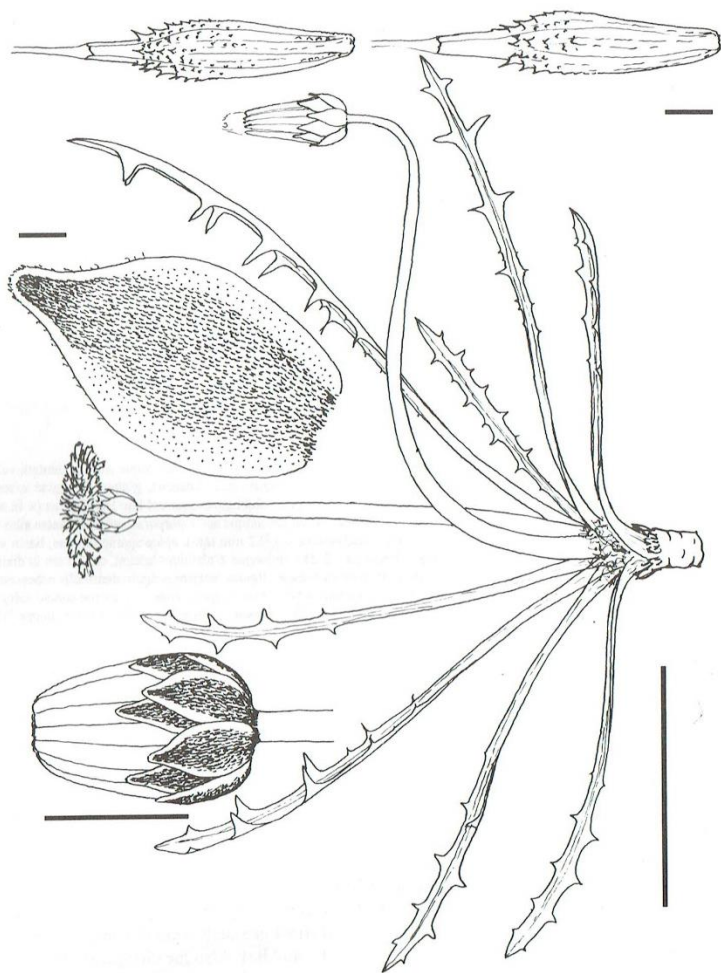
Jan KIRSCHNER & Jan ŠTĚPÁNEK
A MONOGRAPH OF TARAXACUM
SECT. PALUSTRIA



PRŮHONICE, 1998



Jan Kirschner with *T. amarellum*,
Mulloughmore 1994



2 *Taraxacum amarellum* KIRSCHNER & ŠTĚPÁNEK. General habit, no. JK 3517; capitulum, no. JK 3617; bract, no. JK 3617; achenes, no. JK 3624, 3617.

rare in W Europe.

Distribution: *Taraxacum amarellum* is confined to western part of Ireland. Literature records of *T. webbii* from Co. Clare (RICHARDS 1981: 187), East Mayo, and Sligo (DUDMAN & RICHARDS 1997) may belong to *T. amarellum*. We have studied live material from counties Clare, Offaly and Roscommon; other sites were found in herbaria. [Conservation status: EN]

Specimens examined:

Ireland: Co. Clare (H9), Lough Bulla near Boston. KIRSCHNER, RICH & KAY 1994 PRA (no. det. #11292, #11293). - ½ foot of Mullagh More, NE of Killinaboy. KIRSCHNER, RICH & KAY 1994 PRA (no. det. 11295). - Co. Offaly (H18), Shannonbridge, bank of Shannon near the bridge. KIRSCHNER, RICH & KAY 1994 PRA (no. det. #11294). - Co. Roscommon (H25), Shannonbridge, bank of Shannon 0.5 km SW of the bridge. KIRSCHNER, RICH & KAY 1994 PRA (no. det. 11310). - Co. West Mayo (H27), L. Beltra. WEBB 1985 herb. (no. det. 7137). - County Clare, H9 [without other data], GORDON 1869 OXF (no. det. 7649). - Gort, Galway. DRUCE 1909 OXF (no. det. *7654).

Locality of the aberrant:

Ireland: Co. East Mayo (H26), L. Mask SW of Keel Br. WEBB 1985 herb. (no. det. 7136, #11344).

3 *Taraxacum webbii* A. J. RICHARDS, *Watsonia* 13: 187, 1981.

HT: 'Ballyvaughan' WEBB 1972 TCD (photos 1).

Plants small. Leaves suberect, medium green, ± linear to narrowly linear-oblancoelate, undivided, usually ± entire to ± regularly denticulate, with (0) 2-3 (5) tooth pairs. Petioles narrow, usually brownish purple. Scapes only slightly overtopping, or often equalling, the leaves, subglabrous or with solitary hairs below the capitulum, often sparsely araneous at the base. Outer bracts 10-12 (13), adpressed, not distinctly imbricate, broadly ovate to ovate, 5.5-6.5 mm long and 3.0-4.5 mm wide, distinctly marginate, ciliate, suffused with purple near the apex, middle part blackish green to dark green, about 2 mm wide, pale (whitish to pale green) border (incl. the membranaceous margins) 0.9-1.2 mm wide, membranaceous margins scarious to whitish, 0.2-0.4 mm wide. Capitulum bright yellow, 2.5-3.0 cm in diameter, outer ligules striped reddish to blackish-reddish, inner ligule teeth reddish. Stigmas ± yellow to dirty yellow, rarely discoloured with greyish hairs, pollen absent (rarely anther tubes or style bases with few abortive pollen grains). Achenes 4.5-5.0 mm long, achene body distinctly spinulose above (spinules usually ± coarse), gradually narrowing to a ± thick, 0.8-1.0 mm long, ± cylindrical to subconical cone, rostrum 6.5-7.5 mm long, pappus 5.5-6.5 mm long. The pollen presence/absence variation reported by KIRSCHNER et al. (1993) for *T. webbii*, also mentioned (as a result of misprint) in the protologue of *T. webbii* (RICHARDS, 1981), refers to the polliniferous aberrant of *T. amarellum* described above.

Ecology and distribution: Both the ecological and geographical ranges of *T. webbii* are similar to those of *T. amarellum*: shores of lakes and turloughs in W Ireland. However, *T. webbii* seems to be much less frequent. We have seen material from Co. Clare only. [Conservation status: CR]

Specimens examined:

Ireland: Co. Clare (H9), Bally Vaughan. PLAYFAIR 1899 K (no. det. 2385). - The Burren, shore of Lough Bulla near Boston. KIRSCHNER, T.C.G. RICH & G. KAY 1994 PRA (no. det. #11328, #11329, #11326).

Specimens of lower quality, similar to *T. webbii* and *T. amarellum* but not assigned to the microspecies:

Ireland: Co. Clare (H9), Turlough villgs. WEBB 1971 TCD (no. det. *5044). - Corofin. ELWELL 1961 CGE (no. det. 12276). - Co. Longford (H24), Castel Lodge, L. Ree. ALLEN 1958 TCD (no. det. *5042). - Co. West Galway (H16), L. Corrib at Oughterard pier. WEBB 1985 herb. (no. det. *7135). - Co. North-east Galway (H17), L. Corrib, E shore WEBB 1985 herb. (no. det. 7134, one of the plants polliniferous).

Section *Naevosa*

- Often damp grasslands and uplands

Characterised by:

- Dark spotting on the upper surface of the leaf (rarely absent, rarely occurs in other sections)
- Leaves typically roughly hairy, coarsely lobed.
- Midrib often green and red interwoven.
- Outer row of exterior bracts erect to recurved.
- Ligules striped grey, grey-purple, purple, red-purple (rarely red).
- Pollen present or absent
- Achene body (including cone) < 4.0 mm, narrowly top-shaped.



Interpretation of characters: Spotted leaves – very black spots



Yes, Sect Naevosa



No, feeding damage *T. sahalinianum*

Interwoven midrib

Sections:

- Celtica
- Hamata
- Spectabilia
- Naevosa



sahlinianum



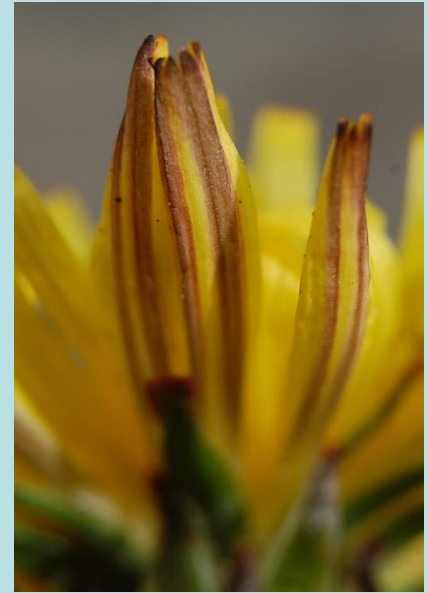
palmeri

Section *Spectabilia*

- Semi-upland species of damp grassland

Characterised by:

- Small to medium-sized plants
 - Olive-green or grey-green, entire or simply lobed, spatulate leaves which are variable spotted or blotched,
 - Red and green striped midribs,
 - Erect to appressed exterior bracts,
 - Red to purple-striped ligules
 - Pollen usually absent
 - Achenes 4–5 mm long, broad
-
- Only 1 common species *T. faeroense* (4 rare)
 - very variable
 - appressed bracts
 - Incomplete red stripes on ligules



Section *Celtica*

- mostly good quality species of banks and grassland

Characterised by:

- Medium-sized.
- Usually have rather flat, smooth, simply lobed, unspotted leaves.
- Midribs often interwoven red and green.
- Involucres are often pruinose and bluish-green and exterior bracts do not exceed 12 mm in length.
- **Innermost** exterior bracts are usually patent to erect (not arcuate).
- Many lack pollen and have stigmas which dry yellow.



Section *Hamata*

- common, amongst first to flower

Characterised by:

- Leaf dark bottle-green ('Great Western Railway green'), unspotted.
- Lateral leaf-lobes 'hamate' (recurved with a \pm convex distal margin).
- Midrib above with interwoven red and green strands
- Exterior bracts rather blue-green and pruinose, usually <12 mm long, spreading-arcuate (except *T. hamatum*)
- Pollen always present, stigmas never drying pure yellow



Section *Ruderalia*

- Largest section, very difficult group

Characterised by:

- Slender to robust plants
- Leaves often complexly folded and lobed in three dimensions
- Leaves usually not spotted, though blotches may be present at internodes
- Midribs usually uniformly green or red (no interwoven red and green stripes)
- Bracts often recurved to reflexed and more than 10 mm long
- Pollen present (except 3 species)
- Achene body short and stubby 2.5-3.5 mm, cone 0.3-0.8(-1) mm



Section *Taraxacum*

- Rare arctic-alpines in Scotland, very exciting

Characterised by:

- Leaf bright green, usually unspotted (one spotted).
- Petioles green
- Midribs pale to flushed
- Bracts 7-14 mm, erect to recurved
- Heads said to be golden yellow (I don't find this convincing)
- Pollen present or absent

