

A. Yellow Composites with stem leaves and no hooked hairs. ID Key Features

The basic structure of all species covered here is that they have stem(s) with leaves that decrease in size as you go up the stem. The leaf shape becomes simpler and the top stem leaves are often thin and bract-like. Basal leaves are also present. Damaged plants which have re-grown, can present problems being rule breakers. Some very rare species are not covered. This **reduced ID key** should be used with a standard field guide which will offer a complete description and distribution etc. As usual, identification should be based on a range of features but the primary features are highlighted in this key. A x10 or x15 magnifier is required. More details on blog at cambridgewildflowers.blogspot. See Composites tag.

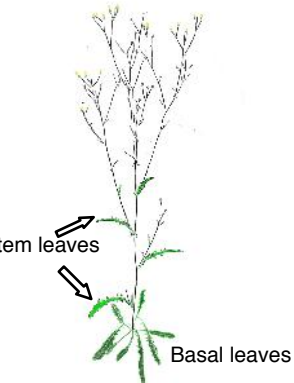
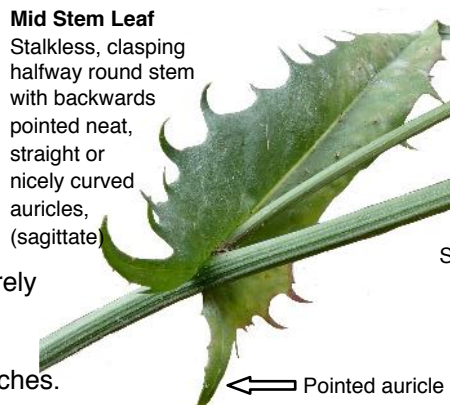
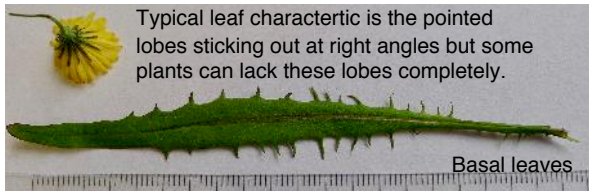
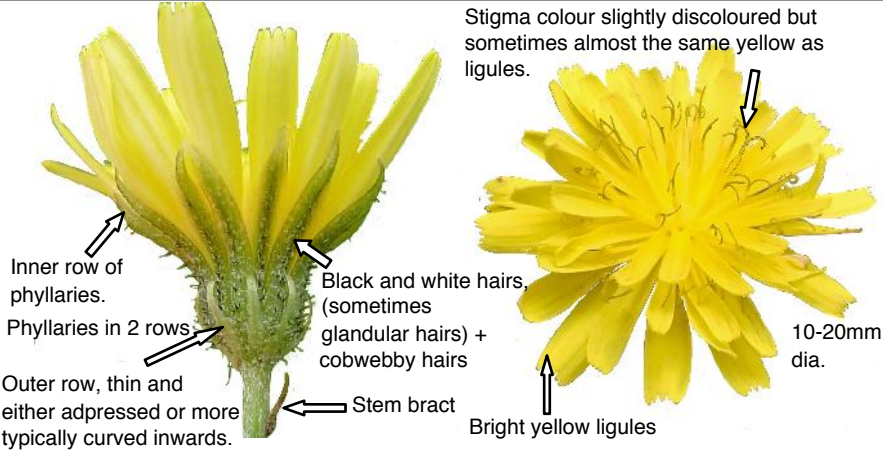
Terms.

Phyllaries = Involucral bracts (note these can become swollen as achenes mature and make the involucre onion shaped)

Ligules = petal like structures made up of five fused petals that start as a tube but flatten and then terminate in a five pointed ending. Outer ligules on underside often banded with stripes of red, grey or white in many yellow composites.

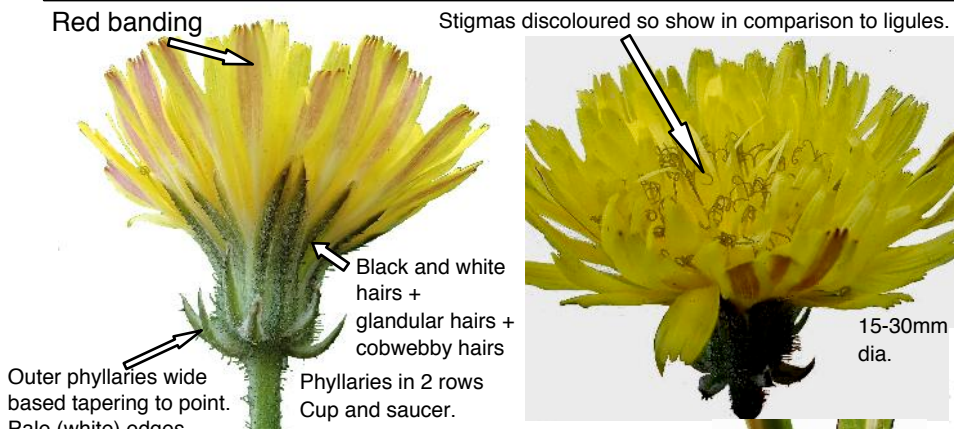


Smooth Hawk's-beard *Crepis capillaris*

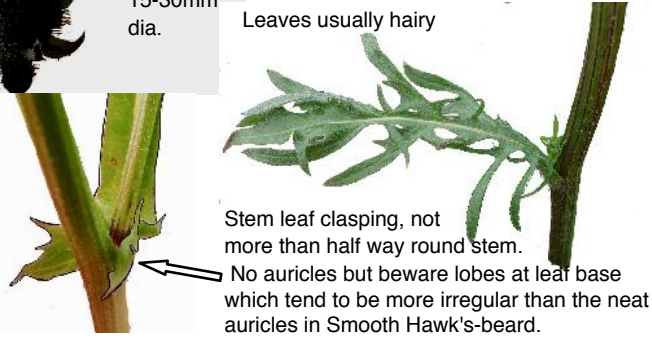


- 1) Size up to 1m high to tiny in lawns. A variable species which can be difficult to identify.
- 2) Outer ligules yellow, sometimes banded red, rarely white.
- 3) Outer phyllaries, narrow and only taper slightly, pale green. Often curved inwards to where tip touches.

Beaked Hawk's-beard *Crepis vesicaria ssp. taraxacifolia*



- 1) Nearly always some red banding (or tips) on outer ligules present but occasionally without or with white banding. Stigma normally discoloured.
- 2) A more robust plant than *C. capillaris*.
- 3) Leaf shape indescribably complex and variable, often hairy but not always.



Rough Hawk's-beard *Crepis biennis*

Bright yellow ligules without banding

Outer phyllaries wide based, tapering to a point. Pale green edges.

Phyllaries in 2 rows
Cup and saucer

Black and white hairs, + glandular hairs + cobwebby hairs

Yellow stigma same colour as ligules.

25-45mm dia

Narrow lobed stem leaf. Highly variable shape.

Basal leaf, Variable shape

Unbeaked achene 4-8mm long plus un-feathered pappus. 10-20 ribs

Stem leaf clasping, not more than half way round stem.
No auricles but beware backward-pointing lobes at leaf base which tend to be more irregular than the neat backward pointing auricles in Smooth Hawk's-beard.

1) Bright yellow ligules without any trace of banding plus yellow stigma.
2) Robust, up to 1.2m high. Large flower heads.
3) Leaves bristly-hairy.

Leaf shape too variable to be a useful feature.

Marsh Hawk's-beard *Crepis paludosa*

Edges highlighted

Not cup and saucer although the phyllaries start at the same level.

Outer phyllaries all different lengths with long glandular black hairs. Adpressed

Stamen

Stigma and style discoloured

12-25mm dia.

Un-beaked achene. Pale. 4-4.5mm + pappus un-feathered and off-white. 10 ribbed

Mid-stem leaf. Variation Sometimes almost no teeth.

Teeth on leaf margin

Mid Stem Leaf

Backward pointing auricle goes past stem by several stem thicknesses.

1) Yellow ligules without banding.
2) Basal leaves often gone by flowering time.
3) Mid-stem leaves have backward-pointing auricles which are basically rounded with superimposed margin teeth and go past the stem by more than a stem thickness.

Northern Hawk's-beard *Crepis mollis*

Rare Limited Distribution , Northern Pennines.

20-30mm dia.

Brilliant white pappus

Ligules unbanded. Stigma/style discoloured

Unbeaked Tapers both ends
3.0-4.5mm, 20 ribs

Addressed outer phyllaries.

Dark or yellow glandular hairs + cobwebby hairs

Not cup and saucer.

1) Single stemmed. Occasionally single flowered. Similar to some hawkweeds.
2) Has both hairy and rarely non-hairy forms (like most *Crepis*).

Basal leaf (with impressed veins) present at flowering time. The leaf tapers down to the base.

Winged petiole

Entire margin (no teeth except, at intervals, gland-tipped points)

Upper Stem Leaf

Variation. Occasionally very small teeth on margin.

Stem Leaf

Stem

Backward-pointing auricles go just past the stem

sessile, no leaf stalk

Hawkweed Section *Vulgata*. Common Hawkweed *Hieracium vulgatum/triviale*

Northern Hawk's-beard often grows with 'Common Hawkweed' which is shown below. Identification of Hawkweeds is beyond the scope of this key. This example shows features which distinguish it from Northern Hawk's-beard. The *Vulgata* section of Hawkweeds have 2 to max. 8 stem leaves plus basal leaves present when flowering and are therefore similar in structure to the *Crepis* group. Hawkweed sections *Foliosa* and *Prenanthoidea* have clasping stem leaves (usually many) but basal leaves are absent at flowering time.

Ligules unbanded. Stigma/style slightly discoloured (Yellow at first).

Off white pappus

achene 2.5-3mm Unbeaked. Dark. Truncated end, no taper. Approx. 10 ribs

Addressed phyllaries, Outer different lengths highlighted

Not cup and saucer.

1) Stem leaves (typ. 2-4) not clasping stem with a few strong teeth on margin.
2) Basal leaves bristly hairy, flat lamina and acute tip + teeth on margin, **and have a clear stalk (petiole)**.
3) Phyllaries have white and black hairs, few glandular, plus stellate hairs which look similar to cobwebby hairs.

Teeth on leaf margin (usually). Often forward pointing

Basal leaf

Teeth on leaf margin

Petiole

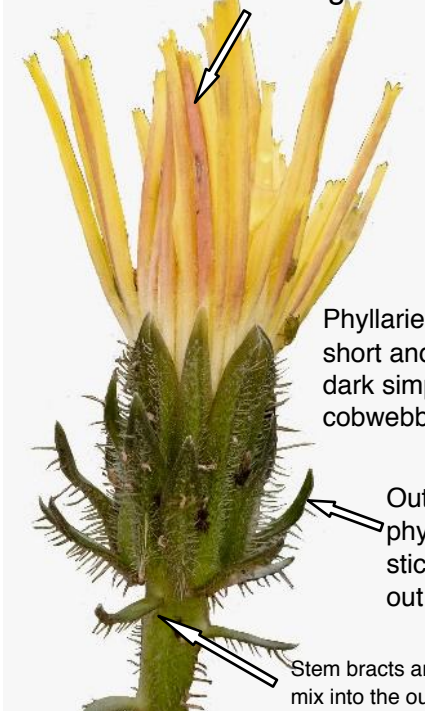
Mid-stem leaf

B. Yellow Composites with stem leaves and hooked hairs

ID Key Features

Hawkweed Oxtongue *Picris hieracioides*

Sometimes red banding



20-30mm dia.



Pappus hairs feathered.



Achene
3-5mm with fine interrupted transverse wrinkles, curved and tapered at pappus end.

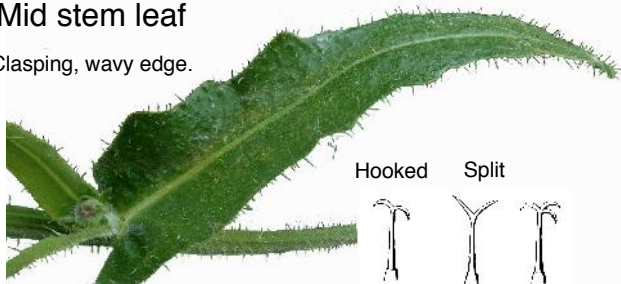
Phyllaries have short and long white and dark simple hairs + cobwebby hairs.

Outer phyllaries stick out.

Stem bracts are narrow & can mix into the outer phyllaries.

Mid stem leaf

Clasping, wavy edge.



Hooked Split



2-3 pronged grappling hooked tips to stem hairs (X10-X15 mag eyepiece)



Cobwebby hairs

1) Outer phyllaries stick out at different angles and heights, giving a special unique appearance. (*Hieracium* Hawkweeds do not do this.)

2) On stems, hairs are mainly hooked, but often just split like *Leontodon* species.

3) Stem leaves taper. Basal leaves with wavy lobes. Whole plant hairy with white, simple hairs in addition to hooked /split hairs.

Bristly Oxtongue *Helminthotheca echioides*

Sometimes red banding

Inner phyllaries have spike extension (awn) with simple white hairs.

Massive bracts surround capitulum.

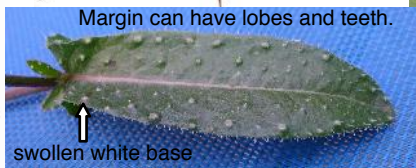
Outer Phyllaries are tiny and hard to see.

Hairs can be simple, bristle-like or hooked, plus cobwebby hairs.



Very dark stigma

20-25mm dia.



Margin can have lobes and teeth.

swollen white base



Pappus hairs feathered.

Beaked achene (2.5-3.5mm + beak), transversely wrinkled.



Hooked hairs

1) Massive bracts surround capitulum.

2) Lower leaves normally have white bristles with swollen white bases.

3) Very robust unlike *Crepis* species.