

Picris angustifolia subsp. angustifolia

COMMON NAMES

native oxtongue

BIOSTATUS

Native

CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp, DPR, DPS, DPT, EF, SO

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

CATEGORY

Vascular

STRUCTURAL CLASS

Herbs - Dicotyledonous composites

FLOWER COLOURS

Yellow

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Annual to perennial herb 0.4-1 m tall. Stem slender, base woody, usually branched at base or from upper half, dark green. Indumentum of 2-hooked, bristly hairs. Leaves yellow-green. Rosette leaves horizontal, petiolate, lamina 35-300 x 3-30 mm, narrowly ovate, oblanceolate to lanceolate, entire or deeply dentate; stem leaves similar, but fewer, horizontal to suberect, becoming smaller toward plant apex. Lower stem leaves 30-220 x 3-25 mm, upper 7-120 x 0.1-12 mm, terminal leaves bract or thread-like. Inflorescences in corymbose panicles. Capitula numerous, 9-16 mm long, 3-8 mm diam. Involucrum of 18-36 bracts in 2-3 irregular outer and 2 inner rows, at flowering inner bracts clearly longer than outer. Bracts usually with a single line of 2-hooked anchor or bifid hairs along midrib on outer surface. Capitula with 20-60 sulphur yellow flowers. Achenes 5-12.5 mm long, narrowly fusiform. Cuspis 1.2-7.4 mm long. Achene ribs 24-45. Pappus 5-10.5 mm long, pappus rays 45-70.

SIMILAR TAXA

For distinction from oxtongue (*Helminthotheca echioides* (L.) Holub) see under *Picris burbidgeae* S.Holzapfel. *Picris angustifolia* differs from *P. burbidgeae* chiefly by its involucre. In this species the bracts are arranged in 2-3 rows, with the longest outer bracts rarely longer than 2/3 length of the innermost bracts (usually much shorter). All the bracts are straight and usually upright. For distinctions between *P. angustifolia* subsp. *angustifolia* and subsp. *merxmülleri* see under Cultural Use

DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. North Island where known historically from the Bay of Islands, otherwise still present around the Whangaruru Harbour and on the Hen and Chicken Islands. Also in Australia

HABITAT

Open ground and amongst low shrubs and fern in coastal situations and on offshore islands.



Achenes with pappus removed. Photographer: Jeremy R. Rolfe, Date taken: 16/01/2007, Licence: CC BY.



A flowering specimen, Herbarium specimen AK 159407. Photographer: Peter J de Lange, Licence: CC BY-NC.

THREATS

Unclear. Like *P. burbridgeae* this plant is likely to have declined through the spread of more aggressive exotic weeds into the open disturbed habitats it requires. However, we have no direct evidence of this, beyond its apparent loss from the Bay of Islands (where it was first collected in New Zealand). Other than that *P. angustifolia* subsp. *angustifolia* seems to be holding its own in the Whangaruru area where it is quite common on some small islands and rocky headlands. Its exact status on the Hen and Chicken Islands is unclear. Whether it is present on the Mokohinau Islands needs confirmation, its presence there is hinted at by the presence of hybrids between it and *P. burbridgeae*.

GENUS

Picris

FAMILY

Asteraceae

AUTHORITY

Picris angustifolia DC. subsp. *angustifolia*

SYNONYMS

Picris attenuata A.Cunn., *P. hieracioides* var. *glabrata* Hook.f. In the most recent New Zealand flora treatment all indigenous *Picris* have been referred to *Picris hieracioides* L. as species collected here once as a naturalised weed, and to which none of our indigenous species are closely related.

TAXONOMIC NOTES

P. angustifolia subsp. *angustifolia* is distinguished from subsp. *merxmülleri* Lack et S.Holzapfel by its usually loose panicle. The indumentum of the involucre bracts is usually hispid, with hairs if present usually in more than a single line. Also it differs by the longer achenes and cusps. The cusp is from 1/5 – 1/2 of the total length. In *P. angustifolia* *angustifolia* the rosette leaves have usually withered off before flowering.

ENDEMIC TAXON

No

ENDEMIC GENUS

No

ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

FLOWERING

October - April

FRUITING

October - May

PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

Easy from fresh seed which usually germinates within one to two months. A somewhat unusual plant that is unlikely to prove popular in cultivation, and it can become invasive in some situations.

ETYMOLOGY

angustifolia: From the Latin *angustus* 'narrow, constricted' and *folius* 'leaf', meaning narrow-leaved

CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 10

PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, EF, SO, Sp

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: DP, EF, SO, Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: SO

2004 | Non-resident Native – Coloniser

Jump to current conservation status

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Holzapfel, S.; Lack, H. W. 1993: New species of *Picris* (Asteraceae, Lactuceae) from Australia. *Willdenowia* 23: 181-191.

ATTRIBUTION

Fact Sheet Prepared by P.J. de Lange (1 November 2009). Description based on Holzapfel & Lack (1993) and fresh specimens.

NZPCN FACT SHEET CITATION

Please cite as: de Lange, P.J. (Year at time of access): *Picris angustifolia* subsp. *angustifolia* Fact Sheet (content continuously updated). New Zealand Plant Conservation Network.

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/picris-angustifolia-subsp-angustifolia/> (Date website was queried)

MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/picris-angustifolia-subsp-angustifolia/>

PDF DATE

27 May 2026