

Yorkshire Hawkweeds by Vincent Jones

The main aim of this book is to share the knowledge of Yorkshire hawkweed taxonomy which I have acquired over the last thirty years, enabling, I hope, beginners to make a start and improvers to see the way forward towards an understanding of this difficult genus.



H. prominentidens

There are twenty pages of introduction which contain an account of hawkweed recording in Yorkshire; general advice on identification; definitions and explanation of characters illustrated by line diagrams and photographs; details of the layout of the book and how to use it; and a list in tabular form of the 117 species recorded in Yorkshire. This table assigns the species to section (and where necessary to aggregate or group within the section), indicates their frequency in Yorkshire and shows the vice-counties in which they occur.

There is no easy way to make dichotomous (giving two options at each step) **keys for hawkweeds**. I have tried to use **absolute** separating characters in each couplet and to avoid overlapping characters and those which require subjective decisions; where such couplets do occur explanatory notes have been added after the key to ease the way forward. In each couplet option there are often two and sometimes three characters to compare; when there is only one such character it should be absolute and therefore easy to use. Occasionally, in parts of a key which were particularly difficult to write, I have resorted to three options and in one case four.

There is an **initial key to the sections** into which the genus has been customarily divided. I believe that, for the beginner, being able to assign a hawkweed to section is an important first step. Each section then starts with a description of its characters and this is followed by the **section species key**. In some sections certain species have been brought together in **aggregates** or **groups**, so that the section species key will bring one to either a species, an aggregate or a group; in the latter two cases there are further keys to the species in each aggregate or group. In general, and in order to avoid duplication, the characters of the section are not repeated in any species, aggregate or group description and in turn the characters of the aggregate/group are not repeated in the species descriptions. A secondary reason for this avoidance of repetition is that I hope to encourage the reader to keep looking back to the section and where relevant the aggregate/group description – this will help to reinforce the characters common to the set of hawkweeds under consideration.



H. rubiginosum

The approach I have chosen means that the **species descriptions** are often brief but they do contain the most important characters for the purpose of identification. In addition to the description each **species account** contains an outline of any variation within the species and of its ecology, distribution and frequency. The provision of site details and grid references should enable readers to find most of the rare and scarce hawkweeds of Yorkshire.

At the end of each species account or after a small group of species accounts the **salient characters** which separate it or them from similar species are stressed – I view this as a crucially important part of this account.



H. apiculatidens

There are colour **photographs** of specimens from my herbarium of almost all the Yorkshire species, chosen because they show the diagnostic characters clearly. There are also comparative images of the leaves of similar species, especially in those cases where the leaf characters are paramount for diagnosis. In a few cases there are close-up photographs illustrating fine detail.

Apart from some of those which are extinct there are **tetrad distributional maps** of all species and these also show hectad lines and the boundaries of the five Yorkshire vice-counties. There is a core of common lowland species in Yorkshire which are found nationally (especially in England and Wales), and it is hoped that this account of the Yorkshire *Hieracium* will be of interest and use to hawkweed enthusiasts elsewhere in the country, particularly in neighbouring parts of northern England.