

***Hieracium stenolepiforme* (Pugsley) P.D. Sell & C. West**
Cheddar Hawkweed

Native

GB & England: Endangered

GB Rare

VC5 Absent; VC6 Rare

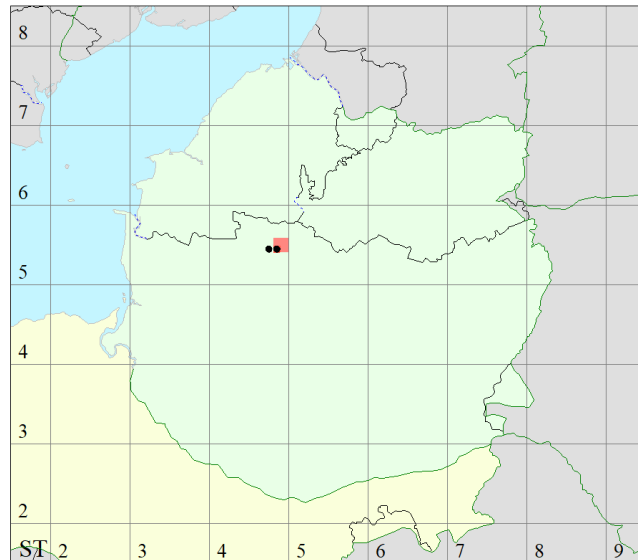
A very rare perennial herb of limestone cliffs and ledges, endemic to England and now confined to Cheddar Gorge. First collected at Cheddar by C.C. Babington in 1839 (**CGE**). Murray (1896) described it as very fine, but not plentiful, on the steep slopes under cliffs in the gorge of Cheddar, preferring a north aspect; however White (1912) wrote that it was “now scarce” at Cheddar Gorge. Within the gorge, *H. stenolepiforme* was collected by E.S. Marshall in 1914 (**NMW**), H. W. Pugsley in 1946 (**BM**), and P. D. Sell in 1952 and 1969 (**CGE**), but was not recorded again until 2000, when 52 plants were counted on the N-facing side of the gorge between Bone Hole and the covered reservoirs (Rich & McDonnell, 2001). During a subsequent survey of the gorge in 2016, 58 flowering plants and 1 immature plant were found between Sow’s Hole and the Horseshoe Bend (Crouch *et al.*, in press). White (1912) also included a record for “Rocks south of the Long Wood on Mendip, over a small area”. There were no further records corresponding to this site until 1985, when 100 plants were found on ledges of the disused quarry at Black Rock reserve, which is south of Long Wood (FitzGerald, 1986). Only 6 plants were reported at Black Rock by FitzGerald & McDonnell (1997). A few plants were seen by members of Somerset Rare Plants Group in 2002, but this species was last recorded at Black Rock in 2003 by S.J. Parker, although the grid reference of this record is considered incorrect; it has not been found again despite several searches. The existing 59 plants are confined to the steep NW-facing cliffs of Cheddar Gorge, many of the plants visible only through binoculars. The small population, restriction to one site and recent loss from Black Rock mean that this species is now considered to be Critically Endangered (McCosh & Rich, 2018).



Hieracium stenolepiforme east of Pig’s Hole, Cheddar Gorge (2016). Photo: HJC

VC6

Cheddar Gorge	SSSI	ST47225434	2016	HJC, TCGR	1 pl on NE side of nose of Horseshoe Bend
Cheddar Gorge	SSSI	ST47235431	2016	HJC, TCGR	4 pl above rockfall sign at Horseshoe Bend
Cheddar Gorge	SSSI	ST47245430	2016	HJC, TCGR	1 pl below massive rock face at bend
Cheddar Gorge	SSSI	ST47315439	2016	HJC, TCGR	1 pl high on rock face E of Horseshoe Bend
Cheddar Gorge	SSSI	ST47325439	2016	HJC, TCGR	1 pl high on cliffs E of Horseshoe Bend
Cheddar Gorge	SSSI	ST47565449	2016	HJC, TCGR	5 pl high on cliff in cove E of reservoir
Cheddar Gorge	SSSI	ST47585451	2016	HJC, TCGR	3 pl high on cliffs above wall E of reservoir
Cheddar Gorge	SSSI	ST47665456	2016	HJC, TCGR	2 pl high on rock face W of Pig's Hole
Cheddar Gorge	SSSI	ST47665457	2016	HJC, TCGR	4 pl on cliff in middle of cove W of Pig's Hole
Cheddar Gorge	SSSI	ST47685456	2016	HJC, TCGR	1 pl near top of rock face W of Pig's Hole
Cheddar Gorge	SSSI	ST47705457	2016	HJC, TCGR	1 pl below <i>Ulmus glabra</i> on cliff W of Pig's Hole
Cheddar Gorge	SSSI	ST47715456	2016	HJC, TCGR	6 pl on rock face immediately above Pig's Hole
Cheddar Gorge	SSSI	ST47735457	2016	HJC, TCGR	2 pl on cliff E of Pig's Hole
Cheddar Gorge	SSSI	ST47745454	2016	HJC, TCGR	11 pl on rocks E of Pig's Hole
Cheddar Gorge	SSSI	ST47825455	2016	HJC, TCGR	1 pl on cliffs on E side of gully W of Sow's Hole
Cheddar Gorge	SSSI	ST47825456	2016	HJC, TCGR	1 pl in centre of bay W of Sow's Hole
Black Rock	SSSI	ST486547	2002	SRPG	In crevices of NW-facing vertical rock face



Distribution of *Hieracium stenolepiforme* in Somerset (VC6), mapped using MapMate. Black dots are post-2000 records; red square is 1987-1999



Hieracium stenolepiforme east of Pig's Hole, Cheddar Gorge (2016). Photo: HJC