

Hieracium schmidtii Tausch

Schmidt's Hawkweed

Native

GB: Least Concern

England: Endangered

GB Scarce

VC5 Absent; VC6 Rare

A perennial herb of rock faces, cliff ledges and scree on limestone and other basic rocks. In Somerset, known only from Cheddar Gorge, where it was first collected by Babington in 1839 (specimen in **CGE**). Murray (1896) wrote that this species was very local, abundant on Cheddar Cliffs, where it was found by E.F. Linton to be "Most plentiful on steep slopes facing south"; however it later transcribed that many of the Cheddar plants were in fact *H. cyathis*. In 1905, Rev. Augustin Ley stated that he was satisfied "that true *H. schmidtii* did exist at Cheddar, in fair abundance, but was not nearly so plentiful there as *H. cyathis*" White (1912); however White (1912) himself reported that "on account of the free and frequent gathering ... the quantity at Cheddar has sensibly diminished". The gathering continued, with specimens in many herbaria (eg <http://herbariaunited.org/specimen/350893/>).

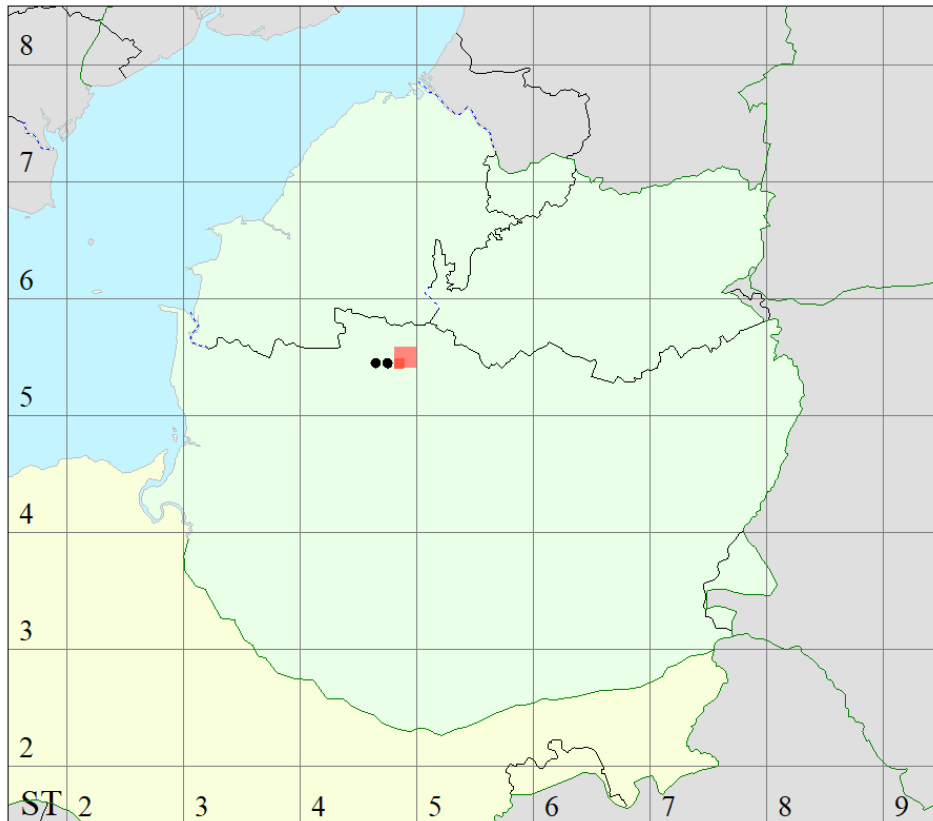
It is still to be found in Cheddar Gorge, although certainly not "in fair abundance": only 12 plants were found during the Cheddar Rare Plant Survey in 2016, with usually only a single tiny rosette at each location (Crouch, 2016). The species has clearly declined in Somerset and indeed does not occur anywhere in quantity (McCosh & Rich, 2011). It has a very scattered distribution and since 2000 has only been recorded in Somerset and the Outer Hebrides. Records at Cheddar Gorge are the only records for England since before 1960.



Hieracium schmidtii on S-facing side of Cheddar Gorge (2016). Photo: HJC

VC6

Cheddar Gorge, N side	SSSI	ST46915426	2016	HJC	1 plant on rocks, W of Landslip Quarry
Cheddar Gorge, S side	SSSI	ST46955421	2016	HJC, TCGR	1 plant in flower 4m up rock face
Cheddar Gorge, N side	SSSI	ST47165439	2016	HJC	1 plant on low cliff above climbing cliff
Cheddar Gorge, N side	SSSI	ST47185440	2016	HJC	1 plant with 2 tiny rosettes at top of cliff
Cheddar Gorge, N side	SSSI	ST47385451	2016	HJC	2 plants on rocks above layby
Cheddar Gorge, N side	SSSI	ST47395451	2016	HJC	2 rosettes on rock ledge above layby
Cheddar Gorge, N side	SSSI	ST47645458	2016	HJC, FJR	1 plant with 3 rosettes on E-facing cliff
Cheddar Gorge, N side	SSSI	ST47855460	2016	HJC, TCGR	1 plant on cliffs above road
Cheddar Gorge, N side	SSSI	ST47855460	2016	HJC	2 tiny plants on rocks above road
Cheddar Gorge	SSSI	ST480546	1987	EJMcD	Steep rocky slope



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



Hieracium schmidtii on S-facing side of Cheddar Gorge (2016). Photo: HJC