

Orobanche picridis F.W. Schultz

Oxtongue Broomrape

Error

GB & England: Vulnerable

Schedule 8

Section 41

GB Rare

VC5 Absent; VC6 Error

An annual or perennial found on chalk cliff tops and ledges, parasitic on *Picris hieracioides* and rarely other species of Asteraceae. Three records for Somerset are all considered to be errors. A specimen collected from Brislington in 1894 by D. Fry was later determined as this species by Prof. G. Beck von Mannagetta (White, 1928), but was subsequently considered to have been a misidentification (Sandwith & Sandwith, 1955). A second record was reported from sandhills at Berrow, but with some doubt, by J.E. Lousley (White, 1928). A specimen (now in **BM**) collected by Lousley at Berrow in 1923 is in fact *O. minor* subsp. *minor* var. *compositarum*, as suggested by Sandwith (1947). The third erroneous record for this species in VC6 was made in 1969, when P. Macpherson discovered a colony of 20 spikes on Brean Down (Willis, 1971). A specimen was identified by D.J. Hambler as this species and deposited in **TTN**, but was later redetermined by F.J. Rumsey as *O. hederæ* (Rumsey & Jury, 1991). *Orobanche picridis* is now restricted to East Kent and the Isle of Wight and is declining in the former area due to cliff erosion and scrub encroachment (Rumsey, 2008b).