

DANDELIONS







dandelion - одуванчик

['dændɪlaɪən]



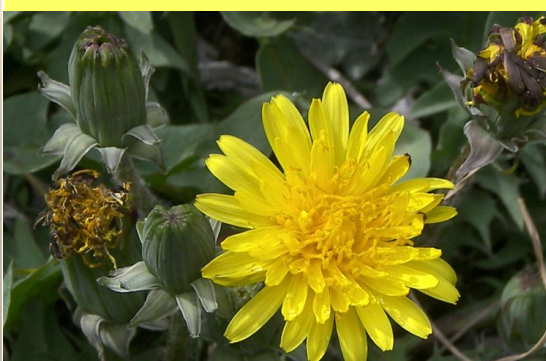
**white-flowered
dandelion** - одуванчик
белоязычковый

[waɪt-'flaʊəd 'dændɪlaɪən]



common dandelion -
одуванчик
обыкновенный

['kɒmən 'dændɪlaɪən]



red-seeded dandelion -
одуванчик
красносемянный

[red-seeded 'dændɪlaɪən]



St Kilda dandelion -
одуванчик святой
Килды

[stri:t kɪlda 'dændɪlaɪən]

Dandelion



Taraxacum is a large genus of flowering plants in the family Asteraceae, which consists of species commonly known as **dandelions**. The scientific and hobby study of the genus is known as taraxacology. The genus is native to Eurasia and North America, but the two most commonplace species worldwide, the common dandelion and the red-seeded dandelion, were introduced into North America from Europe and now propagate as wildflowers. Both species are edible in their entirety. The common name dandelion, from French dent-de-lion, meaning 'lion's tooth') is also given to specific members of the genus.

Like other members of the family Asteraceae, they have very small flowers collected together into a composite flower head. Each single flower in a head is called a floret. In part due to their abundance, along with being a generalist species, dandelions are one of the most vital early spring nectar sources for a wide host of pollinators. Many *Taraxacum* species produce seeds asexually by apomixis, where the seeds are produced without pollination, resulting in offspring that are genetically identical to the parent plant.

In general, the leaves are 50–250 millimetres long or longer, simple, lobed, and form a basal rosette above the central taproot. The flower heads are yellow to orange coloured, and are open in the daytime, but closed at night. The heads are borne singly on a hollow stem (scape) that is usually leafless and rises 10–100 millimetres or more above the leaves.

Stems and leaves exude a white, milky latex when broken. A rosette may produce several flowering stems at a time. The flower heads are 20–50 millimetres in diameter and consist entirely of ray florets. The flower heads mature into spherical seed heads sometimes called blowballs or clocks containing many single-seeded fruits called achenes. Each achene is attached to a pappus of fine hair-like material which enables wind-aided dispersal over long distances.

The flower head is surrounded by bracts (sometimes mistakenly called sepals) in two series. The inner bracts are erect until the seeds mature, then flex downward to allow the seeds to disperse. The outer bracts are often reflexed downward, but remain appressed in plants of the sections *Palustria* and *Spectabilia*. Some species drop the "parachute" from the achenes; the hair-like parachutes are called pappus, and they are modified sepals. Between the pappus and the achene is a stalk called a beak, which elongates as the fruit matures. The beak breaks off from the achene quite easily, separating the seed from the parachute.

The species of *Taraxacum* are tap-rooted, perennial, herbaceous plants, native to temperate areas of the Northern Hemisphere. The genus contains many species, which usually (or in the case of triploids, obligately) reproduce by apomixis, resulting in many local populations and endemism. In the British Isles alone, 234 microspecies are recognised in nine loosely defined sections, of which 40 are "probably endemic".

A number of species of *Taraxacum* are seed-dispersed ruderals that rapidly colonize disturbed soil, especially the common dandelion, which has been introduced over much of the temperate world. After flowering is finished, the dandelion flower head dries out for a day or two. The dried petals and stamens drop off, the bracts reflex (curve backwards), and the parachute ball opens into a full sphere. When development is complete, the mature seeds are attached to white, fluffy "parachutes" which easily detach from the seedhead and glide by wind, dispersing.

The seeds are able to cover large distances when dispersed due to the unique morphology of the pappus which works to create a unique type of vortex ring that stays attached to the seed rather than being sent downstream. In addition to the creation of this vortex ring, the pappus can adjust its morphology depending on the moisture in the air. This allows the plume of seeds to close up and reduce the chance to separate from the stem, waiting for optimal conditions that will maximize dispersal and germination.

White-flowered dandelion



Taraxacum albidum is a species of dandelion that grows in eastern Eurasia. A member of the Asteraceae, it is a perennial herbaceous plant native to southern Japan.

It is sometimes mistaken for *Taraxacum coreanum*, but *T. coreanum* grows wild chiefly in the Korean Peninsula and some parts of China.

The deeply lobed leaves of this tap-rooted perennial plant form a basal rosette from which the long, slightly downy, unbranched hollow scapes (flower stalks) rise to around 40 cm. It blooms once a year, usually in spring (March to May) but sometimes in late autumn. Each scape bears a single flower head consisting of many small, white ray florets, opening from a rounded bud consisting of narrow green bracts.

It is pentaploid (having five sets of chromosomes) and produces seeds asexually, like many other *Taraxacum* species. Namely, most of the florets make seeds without pollination; however, a few of them require pollination. For this reason, it can be hybridized with other species. After the flower closes, it later opens as the familiar spherical seedhead or "clock", as in other dandelions. The seedhead consists of many single-seeded fruits or achenes, each attached to a pappus of fine hairs that acts as a parachute to enable wind dispersal of the seeds, sometimes over long distances. The seeds remain dormant until autumn. The leaves wither to avoid heat damage for several months of the summer. In autumn, new leaves emerge and continue photosynthesizing until the next summer.

Common dandelion



Taraxacum officinale, the **dandelion** or **common dandelion**, is a flowering herbaceous perennial plant of the dandelion genus in the family Asteraceae. The common dandelion is well known for its yellow flower heads that turn into round balls of many silver-tufted fruits that disperse in the wind. These balls are usually called "clocks" in both British and American English. The name "blowball" is also used.

The common dandelion grows in temperate regions of the world in lawns, and on roadsides, disturbed banks, shores of waterways, and other areas with moist soils.

Taraxacum officinale grows from (generally unbranched) taproots and produces one to ten stems (or more) that are typically 5–40 cm tall, but sometimes up to 70 cm tall. The stems can be tinted purplish, they are upright or lax, and produce flower heads that are held as tall or taller than the foliage. The foliage may be upright-growing or horizontally spreading; the leaves have petioles that are either unwinged or narrowly winged. The stems can be glabrous or sparsely covered with short hairs. Plants have milky latex and the leaves are all basal; each flowering stem lacks bracts and has one single flower head. The yellow flower heads lack receptacle bracts and all the flowers, which are called florets, are ligulate and bisexual. In many lineages, fruits are mostly produced by apomixis, notwithstanding the flowers are visited by many types of insects.

The leaves are 5–45 cm long and 1–10 cm wide, and are oblanceolate, oblong, or obovate in shape, with the bases gradually narrowing to the petiole. The leaf margins are typically shallowly lobed to deeply lobed and often lacerate or toothed with sharp or dull teeth.

The calyculi (the cuplike bracts that hold the florets) are composed of 12 to 18 segments: each segment is reflexed and sometimes glaucous. The lanceolate shaped bractlets are in two series, with the apices acuminate in shape. The 14–25 mm wide involucre is green to dark green or brownish-green, with the tips dark gray or purplish. The florets number 40 to over 100 per head, having corollas that are yellow or orange-yellow in color.

The fruits, called cypselae, range in color from olive-green or olive-brown to straw-colored to grayish, they are oblanceoloid in shape and 2–3 mm long with slender beaks. The fruits have 4 to 12 ribs that have sharp edges. The silky pappi, which form the parachutes, are white to silver-white in color and around 6 mm wide. Plants typically have 24 or 40 pairs of chromosomes, while some have 16 or 32 pairs.

Red-seeded dandelion



Taraxacum erythrospermum, known by the common name **red-seeded dandelion**, is a species of dandelion introduced to much of North America, but most commonly in the north. It is often considered as a variety of *Taraxacum laevigatum*. In many characteristics, it is similar to the common dandelion, *Taraxacum officinale*.

This species is very similar to, and often mistaken for, the common dandelion, *Taraxacum officinale*. It most readily differs by its reddish-brown seed bases, unlike the more olive colored seeds of *T. officinale*. The red-seeded dandelion can also be identified by its leaves, which have consistently triangular lobes throughout, whereas *T. officinale* tends to have erratic lobing with minimal or no triangular form. The leaves of *T. erythrospermum* thus bear a closer resemblance to the basal leaves of sow thistles.

St Kilda dandelion



Taraxacum pankhurstianum, also known as the **St Kilda dandelion**, is a species of dandelion that was identified as new in 2012 after being cultivated at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh from seeds collected two years previously on the island of Hirta, the largest island in the St Kilda archipelago, on the western edge of Scotland.

The species was named for Richard Pankhurst, a retired staff member at the garden who suggested that the seeds be collected.

It is the presence of unique hairy exterior bracts on the flower bud that led botanists to believe it is a new species of Asteraceae, the largest family of flowering plants. The St Kilda dandelion is also much smaller than the common dandelion.