PLANT FACT SHEET

Helminthotheca echioides (L.) Holub..

GENUS *Helminthotheca* **FAMILY** Asteraceae

COMMON NAMES Bristly Ox-Tongue

EDIBLE PARTS AND USES

Edible parts: Leaves, Stems, Root, Flowers

The root has been eaten as a famine food.
The young plant has been used as a potherb. They are added to soups. They are also eaten raw seasoned with oil and salt. The leaves are cooked and eaten.

DESCRIPTION

A herb which grows over 1 or 2 years. It has spreading stems and irregular branching. The plant is covered with bristly hairs. These are fattened at their bases. There are hooked prickles at the tips of the leaves. The lower leaves are sword shaped and can have a few teeth. They narrow into the leaf stalk. The upper leaves are smaller and do not have leaf stalks. They clasp the stem at the base. The flower heads often occur singly. The flowers are yellow.

HABITAT

It is a Mediterranean plant. It grows in grassy and waste places. It can grow in brackish marshes. It can grow in arid places.

NOTES

There are about 45 Picris species.

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