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*Helminthotheca echioides*

[Synonyms : *Crepis echioides*, *Helminthia echioides*, *Helminthia echioides* var. *echioides*, *Helminthia humifusa*, *Helminthia pratensis*, *Helminthia rigida*, *Helminthia spinosa*, *Helminthia tuberculata*, *Picris echioides*, *Picris echioides* var. *crepidiformis*, *Picris echioides* var. *echioides*, *Picris echioides* var. *humifusa*, *Picris echioides* var. *pratensis*, *Picris echioides* var. *tuberculata*, *Picris humifusa*, *Picris spinosa*]

**BRISTLY OXTONGUE** is an annual or biennial. Native to the Mediterranean it has dandelion-like yellow flowers.

It is also known as *Draslavec hadincovity* (Czech), *Gwylaeth Chwerw* (Welsh), *Lyktfibbla* (Swedish), *Natternkopf-Bitterkraut* (German), Ox-tongue, *Oxtungsfibbla* (Swedish), *Picride échioïde* (French), *Stekel Picris* (Afrikaans), and *Wurmlattich* (German).

*Echioides* is made up of the genus name *Echium* and Greek *-oides* (like) components meaning ‘like plants in that (viper’s bugloss) genus’.

The hooked prickles covering the plant have been known to catch unsuspecting insects eg. damselflies by their wings, beetles by their legs. The luckless insects if not freed remain trapped until they die.

The cooked leaves (boiling softens the bristles) used to be added as a flavouring to stews.