

Oxford Ragwort

Senecio squalidus

Plants · In flower May-Dec



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A branching annual or short-lived perennial with deeply cut, pointed-lobed leaves and bright yellow daisy flowers with clearly separated ray petals and black-tipped bracts beneath. Oxford ragwort grows on railway ballast, walls, pavement cracks, car parks and waste ground around Dumfries, flowering over an exceptionally long season.

BEHAVIOUR

Its ancestors came from the volcanic slopes of Mount Etna, were grown in the Oxford Botanic Garden in the eighteenth century, and escaped onto the city's walls. The railways then gave it something remarkably like its native habitat — dry, stony, well-drained ballast — and the draught of passing trains carried its plumed seed along the network and across the country.

WHEN TO SEE IT

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QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Daisies (Asteraceae)
HEIGHT	20-60 cm
STATUS	Introduced from Sicily; naturalised and spread by the railways

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