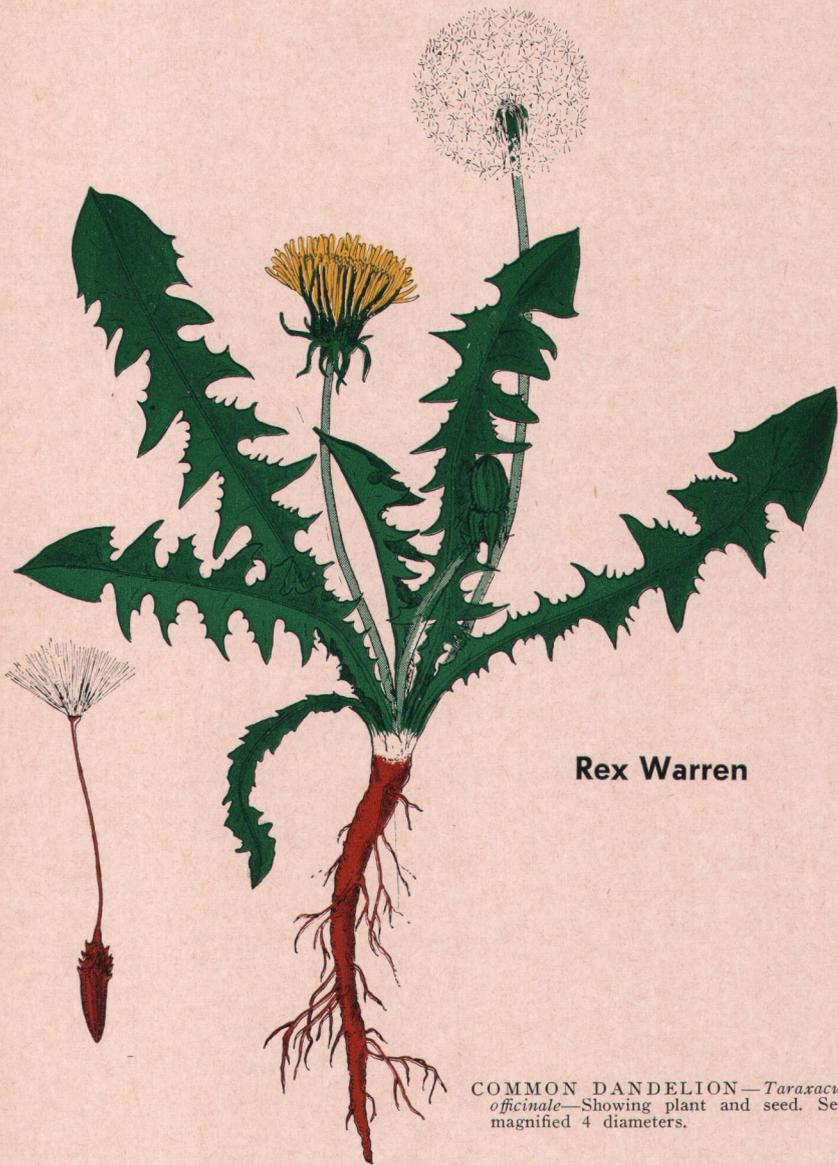


Common and False Dandelion



Rex Warren

COMMON DANDELION—*Taraxacum officinale*—Showing plant and seed. Seed magnified 4 diameters.

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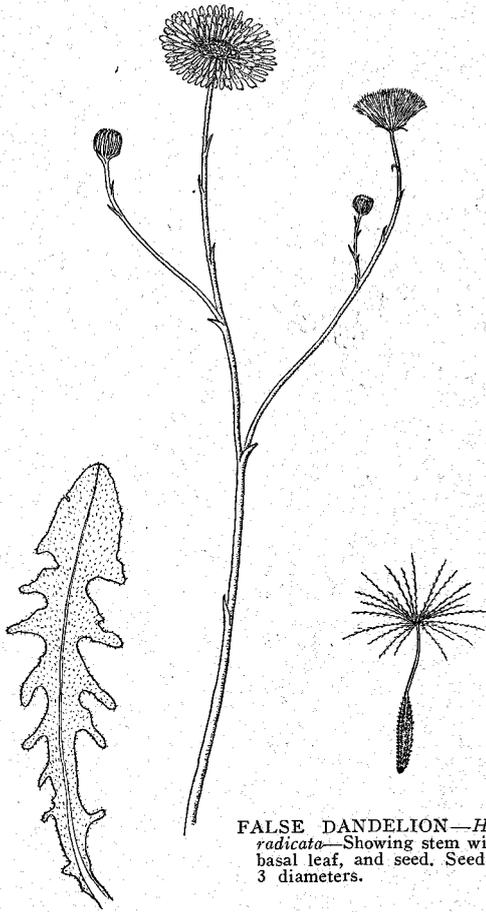
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FALSE DANDELION—*Hypochaeris radicata*—Showing stem with flowers, basal leaf, and seed. Seed magnified 3 diameters.

Common and False Dandelion

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Common Dandelion

Taraxacum officinale

COMMON DANDELION is a perennial plant found in lawns, pastures, old alfalfa fields, gardens, and waste places. It reproduces from seeds and sprouts and from the thick, fleshy root or root parts. The main stem never elongates but produces rosettes of leaves. The leaves are simple, variously lobed, are 3 to 10 inches long, and come directly from the plant crown at or slightly below the surface of the ground. The plant has a white, milk-like juice. The flower heads are yellow, from 1 to 2 inches in diameter. They are borne on long, bare, hollow stalks. The seed is tannish, about $\frac{3}{16}$ inch long with a slender tip bearing a tuft of hair. The tip is easily broken from the seed.

False Dandelion

Hypochaeris radicata

False dandelion is often called spotted cats-ear. It is more common in lawns and seed fields than is the common dandelion. The stems generally grow from $\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 feet tall. They often branch several times, and heads are produced at the tips of these branches. The branching is the easiest way of distinguishing false dandelion from common dandelion. The leaves are hairy and more irregular than dandelion leaves, with deeper lobes along the margin.

Control

Common and false dandelion are controlled readily with properly timed 2,4-D sprays. Common dandelion can be controlled with $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ pound of 2,4-D parent acid per acre. False dandelion is more effectively controlled with $\frac{3}{4}$ to 1 pound of 2,4-D parent acid per acre. Field spraying before the common and false dandelion blossoms gives best control.

In lawns, best kills are obtained if the common and false dandelion are sprayed in the early spring about blossom time. The plants

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should not be cut before spraying, and mowing should be delayed for 3 days after spraying. The amine formulation of 2,4-D volatilizes less than ester formulation, therefore is safer to use around the home. Follow the directions on the spray container. When directions are not available, the following table will be helpful.

Pounds of 2,4-D per gallon in concentrated spray	Teaspoons of concentrated solu- tion per 1,000 square feet of lawn
1	11 to 16
2	6 to 8
3	4 to 6
4	3 to 4

Apply 2 to 3 gallons of the spray per each 1,000 square feet of lawn, the rate depending on the operator's spraying experience and the kind of sprayer used.

After dandelions are once controlled, they can be prevented from re-invading the lawns by annual spring sprays. Fertilizing the turf makes grass grow vigorously, thus often preventing the invasion of dandelion and other weeds.

The most practical way of controlling dandelions growing in legume fields is to plow the field and plant to a row or cereal crop.