

# *Cichorium intybus* L.

**Standardized Common Name:** Chicory

**Other Common Names:** Blue Sailor, Radicchio, Succory, Witloof

**Family:** Asteraceae (Compositae)

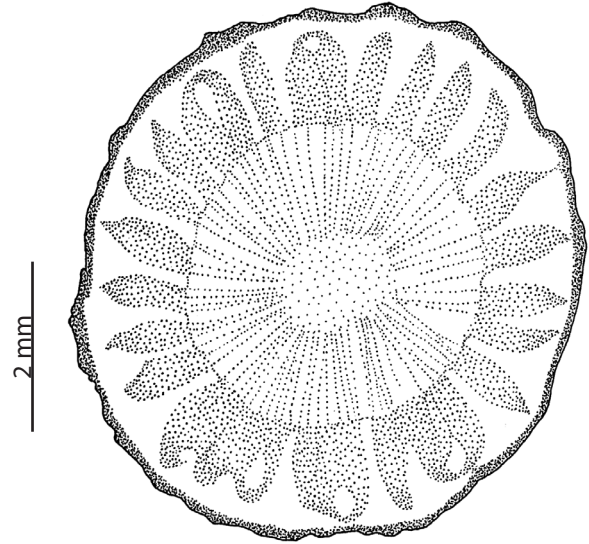
**Parts in Commerce:** Root

## Identification:

- Taproot long, cylindrical, carrot-shaped, seldom branching, occasionally very thick (up to ca. 10 cm at the top)
- Outer surface brown, somewhat peeling, with occasional small rootlets; pale inside
- In cross-section, epidermis and cortex slough off in older roots, leaving periderm a few cells thick as the outer layer; most of root occupied by secondary phloem with parenchyma and laticifers; central portion of xylem, with primary xylem at center
- Secondary phloem, especially inner portion, with wide rays of parenchyma and narrow rays including phloem tissue and darker latex vessels, radiating outward from center; rays also visible in

secondary xylem as alternating vessels and parenchyma, the whole giving a spoked appearance

- Outer part of secondary phloem in larger roots becoming spongy
- Taste bitter



**Figure 19:** *Cichorium intybus* root cross-section.

**Taxonomy:** *Cichorium* includes seven Old World species, of which three, including *C. intybus*, are found in Europe. This species is widely cultivated and often naturalized as a weed.

**Description:** Perennial herb with long taproot. Stem erect, branching, to 1.7 m high; leaves in basal rosette and cauline. Rosette leaves oblanceolate, 10–35 cm long; base tapering to petiole; apex acute or obtuse; margins deeply incised with outward-pointing or reverse-pointing teeth, sinuate, or nearly entire; pubescent below at least on the midrib. Cauline leaves lanceolate to oblong or oblanceolate; base auriculate, somewhat clasping; apex acute; uppermost leaves tiny, entire. Heads numerous, more or less sessile, borne in clusters of 1–3 widely spaced on stiff branching inflorescences; involucre of 2(–3) whorls of phyllaries; outer whorl (or 2) short, spreading; inner whorl cylindrical, narrow, 9–15 mm long. Florets all ligulate,

perfect; ligule to 2.5 cm long, 5-lobed at apex, usually bright blue, rarely pink or white. Achenes 2–2.6 mm long, brown to nearly black; pappus a crown of short scales.

## References:

Fernald ML. *Gray's Manual of Botany*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: American Book Company; 1950:1547.

Knobloch IW. 1954. Developmental anatomy of chicory – the root. *Phytomorphology*. 1954;4:47–54.

Sell PD. *Cichorium*. In: Tutin TG, Heywood VH, Burges NA, et al., eds. *Flora Europaea*. Vol. 4. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 1976:304–305.