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South-African species *Senecio inaequidens* (Asteraceae) in southern Poland

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Among alien vascular plants that were reported from Poland, members of the Asteraceae family constitute the

most numerous group. Some of them are invasive species which pose a threat to biological diversity. *Senecio*

cio inaequidens belongs to this group. This is a taxon of South-African origin which has spread in some regions of Poland during recent years.

In southern part of Poland, *Senecio inaequidens* has been reported from the Nizina Śląska, Pogórze Sudetów, Brama Morawska and Carpathians. Altogether, its populations comprise over a thousand of individuals, majority of which form small groups of several to several dozen plants that flower and produce fruits. This taxon usually prefers dry and stony places related to railway transport and mining areas, where it belongs to ruderal plant communities from the *Artemisietea vulgaris* class (*Artemisio-Tanacetetum vulgaris*, *Echio-*

Melilotetum). Penetration of single individuals into other ecosystems (*Bidentetea tripartitae*, *Phragmitetea* classes) has also been reported.

Till recently, the taxon has been regarded as ephemero-phyte. However, because of long (>10 years) persistence in some of the investigated localities and its ability to colonize adjacent areas, it is now considered to be an anthropophyte, established and potentially invasive. Its invasiveness is facilitated by species biology, e.g. production of very large number of light diaspores. Moreover, air turbulences that occur along actively used railways help to spread its achenes.