

READ THE PASSAGE

As you read about the Snowdonia hawkweed, think of other rare plants and animals you know of, and think about how people treat rare things.

Rare and Beautiful Blooms

One of the rarest flowering plants in the world, the Snowdonia hawkweed, grows wild only in Snowdonia National Park in northern Wales. The region is rocky and mountainous, and the air is cool and damp. The Snowdonia hawkweed prefers this habitat. In fact, it grows nowhere else in the world. It is even picky about where it grows in the park.

Snowdonia hawkweed is about 11 inches (28 cm) tall. Its bright yellow blossoms have thin petals with ragged edges. The Snowdonia hawkweed may not be the most beautiful plant in the world, but it is a favorite snack of sheep.

In 1953, the Snowdonia hawkweed disappeared. People feared that the plant was gone forever. They believed that sheep grazing on the land had eaten the last few plants. So, the people who ran the park removed the sheep from the area, hoping that the hawkweed might return. Forty-nine years later, a group of plant scientists found the yellow flowers blooming in one spot in the park. The hawkweed had returned!

Scientists collected seeds from the plant in case it disappeared again. But since 2002, the rare plant has continued to bloom in the park.

STRATEGY PRACTICE

Describe something rare or special that you have seen and where you saw it.

SKILL PRACTICE

Read the item. Write your response.

1. Describe the climate in Snowdonia National Park.

2. Will Snowdonia hawkweed become common? Explain.

3. How did the plant scientists feel when they discovered Snowdonia hawkweed in 2002?
