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Wild flower Specification Manual

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Preface

The aim of this document is to provide the designer, ecologist and gardener with a detailed understanding of the most attractive of our native wild flowers so as to facilitate appropriate species selection and specification.

A standard format is applied to each of the 73 species covered in this publication.

A brief description is given of each species covering appearance, size and flowering to provide the reader with a thumb-nail sketch of the plant. The text then sets out our best understanding of the natural and semi-natural habitats where the individual species is found. This information is gleaned from various authoritative sources such as ‘Comparative Plant Ecology’ by J.P.Grime et al, ‘The Wildflower Handbook’ produced by the Department of Transport, Volumes 1,2 and 3 of ‘British Plant Communities’ by J.S. Rodwell, ‘Wild Flowers of Britain’ by Roger Phillips and ‘Flora Britannica’ by Richard Mabey allied with personal observations. This section aims to clarify the range of habitats in which the species are found and to present the best quantitative and qualitative data on their environmental requirements.

A diagrammatic table is used to set out the flowering season of each species and to provide the best information on soil pH, fertility and moisture status that the plant enjoys and its tolerance of shade.

The final section aims to provide suggestions for the species’ potential role in habitat reconstruction projects, in designed landscapes and in the garden. This covers where the plants could be established, typical micro-habitats and how the plants can be incorporated into the various environments within a garden. Wherever possible recommendations are given for species management in terms of cutting and timing. Finally, the role of the plant in attracting insects and butterflies is set out. This lists whether the plant is an important nectar source, specifies which butterflies have a preference for the plant’s nectar and notes which plants act as hosts for individual butterfly’s larva.

We would recommend that when designing a project using wild flowers that soil samples are taken and analysed for pH, available Phosphate (using Olsen’s extraction technique), Potassium and available and total Nitrogen. The results help build up a picture of the soils fertility and its acidity/alkalinity. A resource audit of the site’s micro-habitats helps define the size and range of environments that can be utilised. A rapid local survey of the native flora normally provides valuable clues as to which species thrive locally. We find that the county Naturalist Trusts are invaluable as a source of information as to appropriate local species of plants and the natural National Vegetation Classifications of the area. It is by combining the site specific information with the data in this book that the designer, ecologist or gardener can confidently recommend a range of wild flowers which will suit the site and match the objectives of the individual scheme.

Contents Page

Common and Latin names listed

Common name	Latin name	Page
1 Agrimony	<i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i>	1
2 Bell Heather	<i>Erica cinerea</i>	1
3 Betony	<i>Stachys officinalis</i>	2
4 Birds Foot Trefoil	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	2
5 Black Knapweed	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	3
6 Bladder Campion	<i>Silene vulgaris</i>	3
7 Bluebell	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	4
8 Bugle	<i>Ajuga reptans</i>	4
9 Cats Ear	<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	5
10 Chicory	<i>Cichorium intybus</i>	5
11 Clustered Bellflower	<i>Campanula glomerata</i>	6
12 Common Vetch	<i>Vicia sativa</i>	6
13 Common Spotted Orchid	<i>Dactylorhiza fuchsii</i>	6
14 Common Tormentil	<i>Potentilla erecta</i>	7
15 Common Dog Violet	<i>Viola riviniana</i>	7
16 Cow Parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	8
17 Cowslip	<i>Primula veris</i>	8
18 Cross-leaved or Bog heather	<i>Erica tetralix</i>	9
19 Cuckoo Flower or Lady's Smock	<i>Cardamine pratensis</i>	9
20 Devils Bit Scabious	<i>Succisa pratensis</i>	10
21 Early Purple Orchid	<i>Orchis mascula</i>	11
22 Field Scabious	<i>Knautia arvensis</i>	11
23 Germander Speedwell	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>	12
24 Greater Knapweed	<i>Centaurea scabiosa</i>	12
25 Greater Stitchwort	<i>Stellaria holostea</i>	13
26 Ground Ivy	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	13
27 Green Winged Orchid	<i>Orchis morio</i>	13
28 Harebell	<i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>	13
29 Heath Bedstraw	<i>Galium saxatile</i>	14
30 Heather	<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	15
31 Hedge Bedstraw	<i>Galium mullugo</i>	16
32 Herb Robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	16
33 Kidney Vetch	<i>Anthyllis vulneraria</i>	16
34 Lady's Bedstraw	<i>Galium verum</i>	17
35 Lesser Celandine	<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>	17
36 Marsh-marigold or Kingcup	<i>Caltha palustris</i>	18
37 Marsh Helleborine	<i>Epipactis palustris</i>	18
38 Meadow Buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	19
39 Meadow Cranesbill	<i>Geranium pratense</i>	19
40 Meadow Sweet	<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>	20
41 Musk Mallow	<i>Malva moschata</i>	20
42 Nettle Leaved Bellflower	<i>Campanula trachelium</i>	21
43 Ox-eye Daisy	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	21
44 Perforate St Johns Wort	<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>	22
45 Primrose	<i>Primula vulgaris</i>	22
46 Purple Loosestrife	<i>Lythrum salicaria</i>	23
47 Ramson or Wild Garlic	<i>Allium ursinum</i>	23

Common name	Latin name	Page
48 Red Campion	<i>Silene dioica</i>	24
49 Ragged Robin	<i>Lychnis flos-cuculi</i>	24
50 Rough Hawkbit	<i>Leontodon hispidus</i>	25
51 Sainfoin	<i>Onobrychis viciifolia</i>	25
52 Selfheal	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	26
53 Small Scabious	<i>Scabiosa columbaria</i>	26
54 Snowdrop	<i>Galanthus nivalis</i>	27
55 Sweet Woodruff	<i>Galium odoratum</i>	27
56 Tufted Vetch	<i>Vicia cracca</i>	28
57 Vipers Bugloss	<i>Echium vulgare</i>	28
58 Water Avens	<i>Geum rivale</i>	29
59 White Campion	<i>Silene alba</i>	29
60 Wild Daffodil	<i>Narcissus pseudonarcissus</i>	29
61 Wild Foxglove	<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	30
62 Wild Marjoram	<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	30
63 Wild Strawberry	<i>Farrago viscera</i>	31
64 Wild Thyme	<i>Thymus drucei (praecox)</i>	31
65 Wood Anemone	<i>Anemone nemorosa</i>	32
66 Wood Avens	<i>Geum urbanum</i>	32
67 Wood Sage	<i>Teucrium scorodonia</i>	33
68 Wood Sorrel	<i>Oxalis acetosella</i>	33
69 Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	34
70 Yellow Iris	<i>Iris pseudacorus</i>	34
71 Yellow Archangel	<i>Lamium galeobdolon</i>	35
72 Yellow Meadow Vetchling	<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	35
73 Yellow Toadflax	<i>Linaria vulgaris</i>	36

Key To Habitat Classifications:

All species except Chicory and Snowdrop include NVC (National Vegetation Classification) codes taken from J.S Rodwell’s British Plant Communities volumes 1 to 3. Habitat types are shown in three ways **CG1**, **CG1**, *CG1*. A normal type coding indicates a habitat where the species occurs, if a coding is in bold type it shows a habitat where the species is constant through the community, if in italics that coding indicates the species is common in sub-communities. The codings below set out the major classifications of the NVC.

Woodlands & Scrub	W
Mires	M
Heaths	H
Mesotrophic (neutral) Grasslands	MG
Calcicolous (alkaline) Grasslands	CG
Calcifugous (acidic) Grasslands	U

The tables showing the environmental requirements for the individual species have solid black blocks “**■**” indicate where it does best, while the “**■ ■ ■**” show where the plant will grow, but may not thrive.

The tables also set out when the plants are in full flower “**■**” and when flowering is more intermittent “**■ ■**”.

SPECIES DESCRIPTION

1 Agrimony (*Agrimonia eupatoria*)

Description and Habitat: This perennial plant has large arrow shaped leaves and produces yellow flowers on a tall erect stem (50cm to 80cm) from June to August with rust coloured hooked fruits. Agrimony is a common way-side perennial which thrives on dry, open, circum-neutral and calcareous grasslands, (MG1,5,9, CG2,3,6,7). The plant does very well on wastelands and chalk pastures. It is common throughout England, but not in Northern Scotland. The plant's height means that it grows above most grasses and requires very little management except cutting back in autumn.

Months	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	
Flowering	■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■									
		6.5>		6.5-5.0			5.0<			
pH	Alkali	■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■							Acidic	
Fertility	Low	■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■							High	
Moisture	Dry	■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■							Wet	
Shade	Sun	■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■							Shade	

Role: This is a late summer flowering plant of meadows, banks and pastures and once established requires little management. Planted against a dark background, like a hedge, sets off the tall yellow flower spikes. Often found alongside paths and roads. Agrimony is an important nectar source for butterflies, bees and hoverflies, while its leaves provide protection for many insects.

2 Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*)

Description and Habitat: Bell Heather is a low woody sub-shrub very common on dry heaths and in acidic soils of low fertility. It grows to 30cm and produces an abundance of delicate pink bell like flowers during July to September. As well as being found on heaths, bell heather grows in acidic grassland and acidic woodlands (M15,17,H1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,20,21,U3,5,16,19,20,21,W11,16,17,18). Bell heather is not tolerant of shade or damp areas and will not grow soils with any lime.

Months	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	
Flowering	■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■									
		6.5>		6.5-5.0			5.0<			
pH	Alkali	■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■							Acidic	
Fertility	Low	■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■							High	
Moisture	Dry	■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■							Wet	
Shade	Sun	■■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■■■■■■■■■■							Shade	

Role: This is an evergreen sub-shrub that provides very attractive flowers in the summer. On low fertility, acid soils it is possible to create a pure heather lawn which is mown in autumn after the majority of plants have flowered. Bell Heather's are frequently visited by bees and butterflies which are drawn by its nectar. The area of lowland Bell Heather's has been drastically reduced and are now mainly found on roadsides, railway banks and golf courses.

7 Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*)

Description and habitat: The common Bluebell is one of our best known wild flowers and when in bloom en masse creates a uniquely British floral experience. The flower stands between 30-40cm in height and produces a large head of up to 30 blue flowers. The Bluebell starts flowering in March and can continue until May when it eventually sheds its seeds. Even without flowers the bluebell plants produce a beautiful carpet of vivid green leaves. The Bluebell is a common broad-leaved woodland plant, although it can live in shaded and acid grasslands, coniferous plantations, scrub and bracken (W6,7,8,9, 10,11,12,14, 15,16,17,21,22,25, U17,18). Although most commonly a woodland plant the bulb can also be found growing in bracken covered pastures in the uplands, in lowland hedge banks and on cliffs in the North and West. The flower exploits the light phase before the development of full leaf canopy. Shade is important as it restricts competition from other species. The plant is characteristic of moist, freely drained sites. In wetter or more waterlogged locations Bluebells tends to be replaced by Ramsons (*Allium ursinum*).

Months		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Flowering		■ ■■■■■■■■ ■■								
		6.5>			6.5-5.0			5.0<		
pH	Alkali	■ ■ ■■■■■■■■ ■■								Acidic
Fertility	Low	■ ■ ■ ■■■■■■■■ ■■								
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■ ■■■■■■■■ ■■								
Shade	Sun	■ ■ ■■■■■■■■ ■■								

Role : Bluebells are a ubiquitous feature of most woodlands and especially deciduous woodlands. The species has poor dispersal mechanisms and even from established plants the rate of movement into new sites is only 6 to 15 m per 100 years. Bluebells need to be introduced under new plantations, and particularly once sufficient shade has been created under the canopy. Introductions can be made as bulbs, which are planted at a depth of 12.5 cm in the late summer and early autumn at approximately 9/m2, or sown as seed at 200 seeds/m2 in the winter. From seed it takes 4 - 5 years to produce a flowering plant. Bluebells are extremely easy to maintain and extremely long lived. Bluebells are preferred nectar sources for the Brimstone butterfly and the Pearl Bordered Fritillary. The plants never look untidy and can be just as at home under trees and shrubs in a garden as in a woodland.

8 Bugle (*Ajuga reptans*)

Description and Habitat: Bugle is a small plant of only 10-25 cm in height that produces a ring of generally blue flowers on top of each set of leaves. Bugle has a very dark stem and dark green leaves, often tinged with blackish violet. The plant has an extended flowering season from April to July and propagates vegetatively by rhizomes and stolons. Bugle can tolerate either direct sun or shade, but normally does best in semi-shaded moist conditions and it is most often found in woodlands, woodland clearings and in damp grasslands. (W2,3,5,7,8,9,10,11,12, MG3,M22,27).

Months		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Flowering		■ ■■■■■■■■ ■■								
		6.5>			6.5-5.0			5.0<		
pH	Alkali	■ ■ ■■■■■■■■ ■■								Acidic
Fertility	Low	■ ■ ■ ■■■■■■■■ ■■								
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■ ■■■■■■■■ ■■								
Shade	Sun	■ ■ ■ ■■■■■■■■ ■■								

Role: In the garden Bugle is ideal for damp partially shaded situations but can also feature in damp meadows. The flower is an important source of early source of nectar for butterflies, especially for the Duke of Burgundy, Marsh Fritillary and the Pearl-Bordered Fritillary. In the wild because of its liking for moist conditions it also does well near ponds, lakes or streams but is particularly suitable for damp woodlands. The plant spreads vegetatively.

11 Clustered Bellflower (*Campanula glomerata*)

Description and Habitat: This plant has an exceptionally beautiful deep blue-purple flowers and stands about 20-40cm height. The Clustered Bellflower only grows well on certain calcareous soils and is restricted to southern central Britain (CG2,3,4,5, U1). Typically its habitat are chalk and limestone grasslands but it is occasionally found on sea-cliffs. The plant requires soils of over pH 6.5 and with low fertility's .

Months		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Flowering					■	■■■■■■■■■■	■			
		6.5>		6.5-5.0			5.0<			
pH	Alkali	■	■■■■■■■■■■	■						Acidic
Fertility	Low	■■■■■■■■■■	■							High
Moisture	Dry		■	■	■■■■■■■■■■	■	■	■		Wet
Shade	Sun	■	■■■■■■■■■■	■						Shade

Role: The Clustered Bellflower is a must for calcareous gardens. Once established the plant should easily survive and will spread to open soil around it. During September the plant can be trimmed back. In grassland situations it requires grazing or regular mowing, free draining conditions, calcareous soils and is often found in association with Devils Bit Scabious and Oxeye Daisy in species rich sites.

12 Common Vetch (*Vicia sativa*)

Description and Habitat: Common Vetch is a quick growing annual plant that produces paired pink to purple flowers along the expanse of its 20-50cm length and flowers from May to September. It is a climbing/sprawling plant that tends to find any gaps that exist in the surrounding vegetation. It favours neutral or alkali unmanaged grasslands and also very open woodland (MG1,3,7, U1, W24). The Common Vetch does well in any pH above 4.5 and likes dry to soils.

Months		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Flowering					■	■■■■■■■■■■	■			
		6.5>		6.5-5.0			5.0<			
pH	Alkali		■	■	■■■■■■■■■■	■	■	■		Acidic
Fertility	Low			■	■	■■■■■■■■■■	■	■		High
Moisture	Dry		■	■	■■■■■■■■■■	■	■	■		Wet
Shade	Sun		■	■	■■■■■■■■■■	■	■	■		Shade

Role : The Common Vetch is a plant of unmanaged grassland and meadows, or situations where the grass is cut in the autumn. It is beneficial as a food source for insects.

13 Common Spotted Orchid (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*)

Description and Habitat: Orchids are often considered to be delicate, fragile and very rare flowers that need constant attention and an exact environment. This is not true of the Common Spotted Orchid which in practice is more robust and adaptable than normally credited. It grows to around 35cm and creates a pyramidal shape cluster of pink/purple flowers from June to August. Its leaves are dark green and speckled with dark purple spots. The Common Spotted Orchid is the most frequent British orchard and is found in a wide range of habitats through out England and Ireland. This orchid is most common on open chalk grassland but it also occurs on neutral and moderately acidic soils and can even be found in mires and woodland borders (MG3,9, CG 2,3, W3, M9, 10, 13, 22, 24). It is also found on former quarries, clay pits, railway embankments and roadside verges. As with all native orchids soil fertility levels need to be low.

Months		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Flowering						■	■■■■■■■■■■	■		

Fertility	Low	■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■	High
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■	Wet
Shade	Sun	■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■	Shade

Role: The Common Dog Violet is most often found on short, grazed calcareous turf and limestone scree. In lowland Britain it is more commonly a woodland species. It is also found on wasteland, river banks, waysides, mire and rock outcrops. In the garden it can be used in shaded areas, damp rock gardens and in the front of herbaceous border. The plant has a role as an early nectar source for butterflies and it is the larval host plant for a range of Fritillary Butterflies including the Small Pearl-bordered, the Pearl Bordered and the Silver Washed Fritillary

16 Cow Parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*)

Description and Habitat: Cow Parsley is a very common plant through out the UK. and some claim is the most important spring flower in the British landscape. Its a perennial that grows from 100-150cm with thick green stems and very luxuriant green leaves. In spring till early summer (April to June) it produces a cluster of creamy white flowers. Cow Parsley is common in hedgerows and woodlands, where it likes the semi-shade, and can also thrive in some mesotrophic grasslands and in alkaline soils, and particularly in moist conditions (W8,9,10,12,24,MG1,2,3). Cow Parsley is abundant on road verges, in hedgerows, in meadows and on river banks. It is also found with a range of tall herbaceous vegetation on waste ground and in woods. The plant is intolerant of drought, waterlogging , trampling and regular cutting.

Months	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Flowering	■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■								
	6.5>			6.5-5.0			5.0<		
pH	Alkali	■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■							Acidic
Fertility	Low	■ ■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■							High
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■							Wet
Shade	Sun	■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■							Shade

Role: Its height means that it easily co-exists with tall grasses such as *Arrhenatherum elatius* and so needs virtually no management and can sustain itself in uncut meadows and grasslands. Cow Parsley can become a feature of shaded drives and open woodland.

17 Cowslip (*Primula veris*)

Description and Habitat: The Cowslip is an extremely well known and popular wild flower whose numbers declined dramatically between the 1950's and the 1980's. The Cowslip grows to a height of 20-30 cm when in full flower, with leaves that go up to 10-15cm. It produces delicate yellow flowers 1-2cm, usually between March and May. Its preferred habitat is open grassland either slightly alkali or neutral in nature (MG1,3,4,5,9, CG2,3,4,5,6,8), it also requires a generous amount of light in order to flower and is not successful in woodland or under tall plants. Cowslips are found in both in dry and in continuously moist conditions and in short grasslands.

Months	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Flowering	■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■								
	6.5>			6.5-5.0			5.0<		
pH	Alkali	■ ■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■							Acidic
Fertility	Low	■ ■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■							High
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■							Wet
Shade	Sun	■ ■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■							Shade

31 Hedge Bedstraw (*Galium mullugo*)

Description and Habitat: Hedge Bedstraw can grow to a height of 100-150cm and produces clusters of white flowers on a main stem. The flowering season extends from June to September. The Hedge Bedstraw is found in hedges, woods and scrub as well as some calcareous grasslands. (W12,25, MG1,CG2,3,4,5,6).

Months		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	
Flowering		■ [June] [July] [August] [September]									
		6.5>			6.5-5.0			5.0<			
pH	Alkali	■ [March] [April] [May] [June] [July] [August] [September]									Acidic
Fertility	Low	■ [March] [April] [May] [June] [July] [August] [September]									High
Moisture	Dry	■ [March] [April] [May] [June] [July] [August] [September]									Wet
Shade	Sun	■ [March] [April] [May] [June] [July] [August] [September]									Shade

Role: Hedge Bedstraw does well in open woodland and some grassland, its height means its easily competes with the grass once established. It is an evergreen plant that does particularly well in hedges.

32 Herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*)

Description and Habitat: Herb Robert grows to about 50cm and produces small 5 petalled pink flowers April to September. The stem is a deep red colour, while the leaves are a purple/green and the plant has a characteristic smell. Herb Robert is a woodland plant that can occasionally be found in grasslands and mires (W2,5,6,7,8,9,10,11, 12,21,22,23,25, MG2, U19, M28). Herb Robert is mainly found on moist soils and on pHs of above 5.5, and low fertility. It is common throughout the UK.

Months		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	
Flowering		■ [April] [May] [June] [July] [August] [September]									
		6.5>			6.5-5.0			5.0<			
pH	Alkali	■ [March] [April] [May] [June] [July] [August] [September]									Acidic
Fertility	Low	■ [March] [April] [May] [June] [July] [August] [September]									High
Moisture	Dry	■ [April] [May] [June] [July] [August] [September]									Wet
Shade	Sun	■ [April] [May] [June] [July] [August] [September]									Shade

Role: Herb Robert in lowland Britain is mainly confined moist shaded habitats but in upland Britain it can also be found in open habitats. The flower can be grown in shaded borders, under trees and shrubs and in hedgerows.

33 Kidney Vetch (*Anthyllis vulneraria*)

Description and Habitat: Kidney Vetch is a tall slender plant with very narrow leaves and a fragile stem. The flower is produced on top of the plant and comprise a round cluster of 30-40 yellow flower heads. It usually flowers between June and September and enjoys dry low fertile calcareous soils. It is one of the few plants that can survive on bare chalk soils and is common throughout southern England and parts of Yorkshire (H6,7,CG1,2,3,4,5,7,8,9,13,U1). It has the ability to fix nitrogen in the soil and cope with only small amounts of water.

Months		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	
Flowering		■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■									
		6.5>			6.5-5.0			5.0<			
pH	Alkali	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								Acidic	
Fertility	Low	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								High	
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								Wet	
Shade	Sun	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								Shade	

Role: The Kidney Vetch plays an important role for the Small Blue butterfly, which lays its eggs on the plant and also is a preferred nectar source for this butterfly. This is a plant that is recommended for any chalk gardens or open grasslands.

34 Lady's Bedstraw (*Galium verum*)

Description and Habitat: It is a long-lived perennial which grows up to 30cm. A slender stem with smaller stems at the top of the plant which produce clusters of yellow flowers from June to August. These frothy flowers smell strongly of honey. It has small narrow leaves and a large root system which enables it to find water in times of drought. Lady's Bedstraw can be found in dry sites such as on sandy soils and in sand dunes as well as calcareous and mesotrophic grasslands (CG1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,13, U1,4,20, MG1,2,4,5,9, W14,19, M24, H6,7,8,11). It is recorded on soils in the pH range of 4 to 8 but is mainly found in pHs of 5.5 to 6.5. Lady's Bedstraw mainly propagates vegetatively and is very hardy once established.

Months		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	
Flowering		■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■									
		6.5>			6.5-5.0			5.0<			
pH	Alkali	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								Acidic	
Fertility	Low	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								High	
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								Wet	
Shade	Sun	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								Shade	

Role: Lady's Bedstraw is a vital component of dry, low fertility alkaline grasslands. It is highly tolerant of cutting and can be included in flowering lawns, more frequently it is managed with either a spring or autumn cut. The flower attracts a wide range of butterflies.

35 Lesser Celandine (*Ranunculus ficaria*)

Description and Habitat: Lesser Celandine is one of the earliest flowering plants (February to May). The plant itself is small 10-15cm with dark leaves and the yellow flowers appear on small stalks. Lesser Celandine is largely restricted to shaded sites and is abundant in woodlands, river banks, road verges, hedgerows, meadows and pastures. (MG1,2,9,W6,7,8,9,10,12,24,25). Lesser Celandine is found on damp soils in the pH range of 4 to 8, but is more commonly found in pHs of 6 to 6.5.

Months		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	
Flowering		■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■									
		6.5>			6.5-5.0			5.0<			
pH	Alkali	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								Acidic	
Fertility	Low	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								High	
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								Wet	
Shade	Sun	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								Shade	

Role: Because of its very early spring flowering, Lesser Celandine can provide much needed colour early in the year, particularly on damp rockeries or under deciduous trees. This is an invasive plant but finishes its annual growth too early to compete with most other species. The plant can grow in flowering lawns, alongside paths, on stream banks, in ditches, under trees and shrubs, in shady gardens and in damp woodlands. Lesser Celandine is an important early nectar source.

36 Marsh-marigold or Kingcup (*Caltha palustris*)

Description and Habitat: As its name suggests Marsh-Marigold thrives near water and in wet soils. The plant grows to 30-40cm in height and produces buttercup like flowers on the end of long stalks in the spring. Marsh-marigold is not exclusively found in mires and marshes, it can also be found in some wet woodlands and occasionally on mesotrophic grasslands (W1,2,3,5,6,7,20,MG3,4,8,10,13, M5,8,9,10,11,12,13,22,23,26,27, 28,32,37,38). It is for example found in water meadows, cattle wallows and growing amongst Willows and Alders in wet woods. This is a plant most frequently found on soils of pH 6 to 7 and on moderately fertile soils.

Months		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Flowering		■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								
		6.5>			6.5-5.0			5.0<		
pH	Alkali	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								Acidic
Fertility	Low	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								High
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								Wet
Shade	Sun	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								Shade

Role: The Marsh-Marigold is one of the best suited plants for mires and marshes and in the wild can be found living in most of them it is also well suited to damp gardens, woodlands or around the banks of ponds and streams.

37 Marsh Helleborine (*Epipactis palustris*)

Description and Habitat: Marsh Helleborine has a slender stem that grows to 25-60cm and has soft leaves. The orchid produces extremely pretty white flowers, with yellow sepals veined with red on top of the stem from late June to September. The Marsh Helleborine thrives in damp or wet areas with no free lime in the water. It is a plant of sun although it establishes well under dappled shade.

Months		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Flowering		■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								
		6.5>			6.5-5.0			5.0<		
pH	Alkali	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								Acidic
Fertility	Low	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								High
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								Wet
Shade	Sun	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								Shade

Role: This is an orchid of damp short grassland. It thrives in short marshes of low fertility and is often found in association with the Common Reed (*Phragmites australis*). It is actually more adaptable than generally considered and the rhizomes can be successfully established in a range of sites but in particular in moist soils under light shade. The plant propagates vegetatively and can spread quite quickly given the right conditions.

42 Nettle Leaved Bellflower (*Campanula trachelium*)

Description and Habitat: Nettle Leaved Bellflower has nettle shaped leaves and is a tall plant of 50-100 cm with one main hairy stem. The top 10 or 20 cm of the stem is covered with blue/purple bell flowers during June to September. The Nettle Leaved Bellflower will quickly seed and multiply if left in an ideal site and will re-appear year after year. The most suitable habitats are in damp shaded woodland areas (W8,12). The plant is found in calcareous woods, riverbanks and sheltered paths, mainly in Southern Britain. To really thrive and produce their best colour they also need good fertility and little competition.

Months		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	
Flowering		■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■									
		6.5>			6.5-5.0			5.0<			
pH	Alkali	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								Acidic	
Fertility	Low	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■			■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■				High		
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■			■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■				Wet		
Shade	Sun	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■			■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■				Shade		

Role: An important, attractive and late flowering plant of alkali and neutral woodlands and hedgerows. The Nettle Leaved Bellflower is found in both deep and partial shade and can feature in shaded herbaceous borders.

43 Ox-eye Daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*)

Description and Habitat: The Ox-eye Daisy is a tall (20-70cm), very common species, and is extremely popular species of wild flower landscaping schemes. The flower head produced on the end of each stem is very akin to a common lawn daisy except around 5 or 10 times bigger. The plant needs full sunlight and grows mainly in calcareous or neutral grasslands, while occasionally appearing in some heaths (MG1,3,4,8,9, CG2,3,4,5,6, H6,7). The plant is very common on disturbed soils or banks, especially quarries and wastelands, in meadows and abandoned pastures. Ox-eye Daisy is found in pHs of 5 to 8 and in soils of low to moderate fertility. The plant is a short lived perennial and needs bare earth or disturbed sites for the population to sustain itself through second generation propagation.

Months		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	
Flowering		■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■									
		6.5>			6.5-5.0			5.0<			
pH	Alkali	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								Acidic	
Fertility	Low	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■			■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■				High		
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■			■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■				Wet		
Shade	Sun	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■			■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■				Shade		

Role: The Oxeye Daisy is a vital component of almost all wildflower seed mixes or planting projects. It is a very good plant for exposed banks or newly created grasslands or meadows. The Oxeye Daisy is highly tolerant of cutting which can be carried out in the spring or late summer. The population will decline unless the sward is very open with bare patches of earth or light harrowing is carried out with the final grass cut. Planting Oxeye Daisy in drifts will create dramatic and highly visible blocks of colour in grass or the herbaceous border. The Oxeye Daisy provides nectar for a range of butterflies and bees.

44 Perforate St Johns Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*)

Description and Habitat: A tall perennial flower which is mainly found in disturbed sites with relatively low fertility. Perforate St Johns Wort grows to 60-70cm in height and has green shrubby leaves and stems. The flowers are bright yellow with 5 petals and adds of colour from June to September. The St John's Wort is found on freely drained soils, low fertility and exposed earth. It is commonly observed in calcareous wasteland, sandy soils, woodland margins and rides and some lightly grazed pastures. Although St John's Wort is widespread it is generally found growing in groupings of relatively few plants. (W8, MG1, 9, CG7) The habitat normally has a soil pH of above 5, although frequencies increase in pHs above 7, in dry conditions and where there are significant amounts of bare earth between the vegetation.

Months		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Flowering		■■■■■								
		6.5>		6.5-5.0			5.0<			
pH	Alkali	■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■							Acidic	
Fertility	Low	■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■							High	
Moisture	Dry	■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■							Wet	
Shade	Sun	■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■							Shade	

Role: Perforate St Johns Wort is a useful plant to introduce in wasteland habitats, under light shade and in open grasslands of low fertility. The plant can withstand light mowing.

45 Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*)

Description and Habitat: The Primrose is an extremely popular flower which heralds the spring and the ending of winter. The Primrose grows to 15cm and will produce up to 20, yellow 5 petalled flowers from February up until May. Mainly a plant that enjoys woodland and woodland edge the Primrose can also be found in damp semi-shaded or open grasslands (W7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 19, 24, H10, MG2, CG10, 11, 13, U16, 17, 19). Typically the wetter the climate the less shade the plant requires. The Primrose is found in soils with a range of pH's but not in very acidic or very alkali sites. The plant is rarely found in direct sunlight and is more common under dappled shade or on north facing slopes.

Months		Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Flowering		■■■■■■■■■■								
		6.5>		6.5-5.0			5.0<			
pH	Alkali	■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■							Acidic	
Fertility	Low	■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■							High	
Moisture	Dry	■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■							Wet	
Shade	Sun	■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■							Shade	

Role: Primroses are often found in lawns, on north facing grassy banks and lightly shaded graveyards. In grassland, unless the soil is infertile, the maintenance programme involves taking a cut after flowering or seed set has finished and a second cut in the autumn. Primroses can be planted as part of a flowering lawn under dappled shade. After flowering the grass is mown regularly. Primroses thrive in hedgerows and in partial shade. They are pollinated at night by a wide variety of moths which are attracted by its petal colours. The plant is a larval host plant for the Duke of Burgundy butterfly as well as a nectar source.

50 Rough Hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus*)

Description and Habitat: Rough Hawkbit has low growing rosette and produces its flowers on the end of a stem some 10 cm to 40 cm tall. The golden yellow flowers are produced between June and September and are similar to the Dandelion, except its has smaller and has more distinctive, well spaced petals. Rough Hawkbit is a plant of calcareous, low fertility and dry grasslands in full sun (M26, MG1,2,3 ,4,5,8, CG1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9, U1). The Rough Hawkbit thrives best in pHs above 7, in relatively disturbed sites and un-productive grasslands.

Months	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Flowering	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								
	6.5>			6.5-5.0			5.0<		
pH	Alkali	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■						Acidic	
Fertility	Low	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■						High	
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■						Wet	
Shade	Sun	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■						Shade	

Role: The Rough Hawkbit is plant of managed grassland and thrives under grazing and cutting. In the garden it can feature in a wildflower lawn, with cutting being only being withheld when in flower or has its grey fluffy seeds still attached. This plant is a key ingredient of chalk grasslands. Rough Hawkbit is an important source of nectar and pollen for insects and is a preferred nectar source for the Grizzled Skipper and Marsh Fritillary.

51 Sainfoin (*Onobrychis viciifolia*)

Description and Habitat: Sainfoin is a tall attractive plant possibly native on chalk grasslands in the Southern part of Britain, and now found in southern and central Britain. The plant is some 30-60cm tall. The flower head is a spire of pink/red blooms which usually appear between June and September. Sainfoin is found on calcareous and chalk grasslands (CG2,3) The plant prefers a south facing slope and dry conditions.

Months	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Flowering	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								
	6.5>			6.5-5.0			5.0<		
pH	Alkali	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■						Acidic	
Fertility	Low	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■						High	
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■						Wet	
Shade	Sun	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■						Shade	

Role: Sainfoin is successful on dry, chalk banks and in calcareous grassland. It normally responds well to an autumn cut, but can tolerate no management given dry, infertile conditions. Densely planted the flowers can create a dramatic effect of pink flowers in the early summer on a road cutting or on waste land. Sainfoin can also play a role at the back of a herbaceous wild flower border. The flower is an important nectar source for many chalk butterflies and bees.

56 Tufted Vetch (*Vicia cracca*)

Description and Habitat: Tufted Vetch is a long-lived perennial plant which scrambles and grows around other vegetation. It can grow up to 130cm tall and has a number of stems coming off the main stem either with a dozen pairs of leaves or a very beautiful row of flowers. The plant sprawls and clambers over the surrounding vegetation. The colour of the flowers range from blue/purple to pink/red and are usually observed between July and September. Tufted Vetch is mainly found in mesotrophic (neutral) and calcareous grasslands but is also recorded in marshes, banks, hedgerows and wastelands. (M9,13,22,24,27,28,MG1,4,5,7,9,10,12,CG2,3,4,5,6,7,8). The Tufted Vetch mainly grows on relatively fertile, dry to moist soils. It is absent from acidic soils below pH 4.5 and is intolerant of grazing and multiple cutting.

Months	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Flowering	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								
		6.5>		6.5-5.0		5.0<			
pH	Alkali	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■							Acidic
Fertility	Low	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■							High
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■							Wet
Shade	Sun	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■							Shade

Role: Tufted Vetch is beautiful plant for tall unmanaged grassland and hedgerows. In the garden it makes a highly attractive climbing plant and is useful for growing over hedges and fences. The plant should only be cut at the end of the season.

57 Vipers Bugloss (*Echium vulgare*)

Description and Habitat: The name Vipers Bugloss is taken from its use for counteracting the venom of the spotted viper. Vipers Bugloss is very beautiful biennial plant, growing to a height of 50-120cm it produces 30-40 flowers on each head from June to September. The flowers are violet/blue in colour flecked with dark pink and long red stamens and can create spectacular shows of colour. The plant only thrives in southern south east England on chalk soils (CG1). The plant is associated with dry, alkaline soils of low fertility.

Months	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Flowering	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								
		6.5>		6.5-5.0		5.0<			
pH	Alkali	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■							Acidic
Fertility	Low	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■							High
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■							Wet
Shade	Sun	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■							Shade

Role: Vipers Bugloss is a highly attractive flower and should feature in dry, sandy and chalky sites. It is also suitable for introduction into open and wasteland sites. It is often able to colonise polluted soils and contaminated sites. The Vipers Bugloss should not be cut down until after seed set in the late summer. The plant has such an attractive flower that it warrants inclusion in dry herbaceous borders. Once established it is happy to be left on its own to self propagate. It is a larval host plant of the Wood White Butterfly.

Months	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct		
Flowering	■ ■■■■■■■■ ■										
	6.5>			6.5-5.0			5.0<				
pH	Alkali	■ ■ ■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■ ■								Acidic	
Fertility	Low	■ ■ ■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■ ■ ■ ■									High
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■ ■									Wet
Shade	Sun	■ ■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■ ■									Shade

Role: The Wild Daffodil can be planted in Oak and Beech woodlands and in shaded, damp meadows. Grass should not be cut back until after the daffodils have died back. In the garden situation the Wild Daffodil is much more delicate and smaller than the typical garden daffodil. It is ideal for smaller borders or for adding colour in the more shaded areas of a garden as well as in woodlands and damp meadows. Daffodils are an important nectar source.

61 Wild Foxglove (*Digitalis purpurea*)

Description and Habitat: The Foxglove is one of our most stunning and easily recognised wild flowers growing up to 1.5 m. tall. The flowers are downward facing bells with speckled insides and petals which are pink/white/purple shaded. The foxglove has 20-80 flowers which usually show from June to September. The normal habitat for this plant is woodland environments and, more occasionally, acidic grasslands and heaths (W6,7,8,9,10,11,14,16,17,22,23,24,25, H8, U16,20,21). Foxgloves are generally associated with lightly shaded areas, in disturbed acidic soils (mainly of pH 5 and under) of moderate fertility. The Foxglove is found on river banks, in hedgerows, open roadsides and disturbed wasteland, amongst bracken, on steep banks and in glades in acid woods.

Months	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct		
Flowering	■ ■ ■■■■■■■■ ■ ■ ■ ■										
	6.5>			6.5-5.0			5.0<				
pH	Alkali	■ ■ ■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■ ■								Acidic	
Fertility	Low	■ ■ ■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■ ■ ■ ■									High
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■ ■									Wet
Shade	Sun	■ ■ ■■■■■■■■■■ ■ ■									Shade

Role: Foxgloves are important species for introduction into acidic woodlands, hedgerows, open grasslands and wasteland. Little management is required and the plant should self seed readily given sufficient open soil.

62 Wild Marjoram (*Origanum vulgare*)

Description and Habitat Marjoram is a perennial plant with a bushy appearance which grows to 30-60cm and produces strongly scented leaves. Marjoram flowers profusely from July to September producing clusters of pink petalled flowers (the 'Oregano' of Mediterranean cooking). This plant is normally associated with dry, infertile calcareous soils. It is found on rocky limestone habitats, roadsides and some pastures as well on some woodland edges. (MG1,2,CG3,4,W21). It is found throughout Britain but is rare in northern Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Months	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Flowering	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								
	6.5>			6.5-5.0			5.0<		
pH	Alkali	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■						Acidic	
Fertility	Low	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■						High	
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■						Wet	
Shade	Sun	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■						Shade	

Role: Marjoram is suitable for infertile calcareous grasslands which receive little or no management. The plant can be cut back in the autumn. The flowers are very attractive to a wide range of bees and insects. Marjoram is the preferred nectar source of a number of butterflies including the Lulworth Skipper, Small Copper, Common Blue, Chalkhill, Wall Brown, Marbled White, Gatekeeper and Meadow Brown.

63 Wild Strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*)

Description and Habitat: The Wild Strawberry is a smaller plant than the cultivated variety but has similar shaped leaves and flowers and produces runners. The brown or green stems lead up to a white 5 petalled flower with a yellow centre. Flowering extends from April until June. Once pollinated the plant produces a very small red strawberry with its yellow pips. The strawberry is usually found in partial shade such as woodland edges, and in calcareous rocky soils. It is also found in open turf with shallow soils but in habitats not exposed to drought. (W7,8,9,10,12,13,19,21,24,CG2,6,7). The plant likes dry, infertile, well drained soils that are generally in the range of pH 6.5 to 8.

Months	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Flowering	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■								
	6.5>			6.5-5.0			5.0<		
pH	Alkali	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■						Acidic	
Fertility	Low	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■						High	
Moisture	Dry	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■						Wet	
Shade	Sun	■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■						Shade	

Role: The Wild Strawberry can have a role in shaded rock gardens and will colonise between paving stones. The runners can be highly invasive. The flower can feature in scrub and hedgerows. The Wild Strawberry is a larval host plant of the Grizzled Skipper butterfly.

64 Wild Thyme (*Thymus drucei (praecox)*)

Description and Habitat: Wild Thyme is a runner spreading plant, with small leaves and with a pretty purple coloured flower. It grows between 2 to 5cm tall and usually flowers between May and August. The plant is rapidly submerged by taller plants and is consequently found in dry, infertile open calcareous grasslands and rocky sites. It tends to occupy wastelands, spoils and skeletal habitats like scree slopes. (M10,11,38, MG1,3, CG1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14, U4,7,10,13,14,15,17, H4,5,6,7,8,9,10, 14,15,18,20, W20). Thyme is confined to chalk in South east England but is found elsewhere in a range of habitats including short, acidic pastures, on ant hills in meadows, on cliffs, walls and in rocky places.

