Whilst you are out looking at the wonderful wildflowers. you could also make a note of what you see. You can help us to find out more about the wildlife of this area. We would like you to join us to record wildlife, view wildlife maps and receive free training in wildlife identification. To find out more or to register please see: www.limestonelandscapes.info/wildwatch

Email: limestonelandscapes@durham.gov.uk



The brilliant wildflowers of the Limestone Coast

A calendar guide to our crown jewels



of the Durham coast









The Leas
 Marsden
 Whitburn

Roker Hawthorn Seaham Horden

Easington Colliery Blackhall Rocks Crimdon

Why are Durham's flowers special?

Between 295 and 250 million years ago a tropical sea (The Zechstein Sea) covered the eastern part of what is now the Limestone Landscapes area.

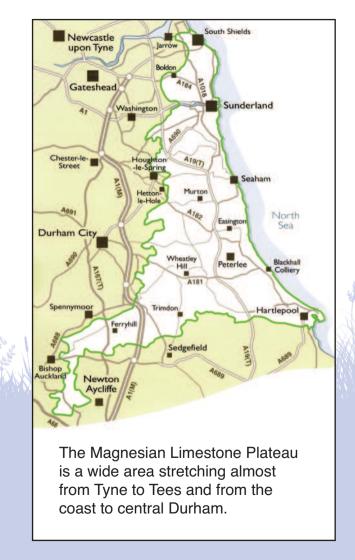
The evidence is in the rock it left behind, magnesian limestone. Below this, of course, is the coal that shaped the history of the area.

Magnesian Limestone weathers into an alkaline soil similar to that on the chalk downs of southern England.

A unique and quite spectacular array of wild flowers flourish on this type of soil.

Only fragments of this flower rich grassland remain on the coast, clinging to the cliff tops and often found in the fields and denes along the edge of the coast. Old quarries, railway cuttings and even some roadside verges provide an additional refuge for these flowers.

All the flowers are protected by law and many consider them to be the area's crown jewels.



April

Flower of the month

Blue moor grass

This attractive grass species is a northern speciality, virtually restricted to limestone areas.



Also this month

Dog violet
Herb robert
Ground ivy
Jack by the hedge
Wild strawberry
Cowslip
Water avens
Wood avens
Oxlip

Crosswort

Bird's-foot trefoil

April, six of the best



Sea spleenwort



Juniper



Primrose



Hart's tongue fern



Hairy violet



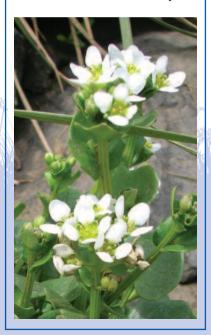
Bird's-foot trefoil

May

Flower of the month

Common scurvy grass

Part of the cabbage family with a strong and peppery taste, this plant was eaten by sailors as a cure for scurvy



Also this month

Speedwell

Bird's-foot trefoil

Crosswort

Horseshoe vetch

Cowslip

Wood avens

Wid strawberry

Herb robert

Early purple orchid

Ground ivy

Bush vetch

Forget-me-not

Lady's mantle

May, six of the best



Common butterwort



Buckshorn plantain



Birds eye primrose



Burnt orchid



Early Purple orchid



Cowslip

June

June, six of the best

Flower of the month

Thrift

Also known as Sea pink because of its colour, this plant can also produce purple, red or white flowers.



Also this month

Lady's mantle Twayblade Water avens Tall melilot Bladder campion Milkwort Germander speedwell Red clover White clover Hawkbit Ox-eve daisy Spotted orchid Bird's-foot trefoil Havrattle Wild thyme White campion Kidney vetch Knapweed Hoary plantain Salad burnett Creeping cinquefoil Sheep's sorrel Hop trefoil Eyebright White dead nettle Wood avens Hogweed Herb robert



Kidney vetch



Creeping willow



Grass of parnassus



Pyramidal orchid



Round-leaved wintergreen



Hoary plantain

July

Flower of the month

Bloody crane's bill

Look closely to see the Cranes bill, this is where the seeds are dispersed



Also this month

most of the June flower list plus:

Viper's bugloss

Weld

Scabious

Pineapple weed

Self-heal

Agrimony

Basil thyme

Frog orchid

Carline thistle

Rosebay willowherb

Ragwort

Greater knapweed

Lesser knapweed

July, six of the best

Purple milk vetch



Fragrant orchid



Sea plantain



Bee orchid



Common rockrose



Lesser meadow rue

August

Flower of the month

Sea rocket

A pioneer, one of the first plants to colonise barren sand banks



Also this month

most of the July flower list, Knapweed and Scabious come into their own, plus:

Yellowort
Wild carrot
Viper's bugloss
Harebell
Tufted vetch
Autumn gentian
Agrimony
Bladder campion

Also look for the delicate quaking grass, local name 'dothery ducks'.

August, six of the best



Autumn gentian



Yellow-wort



Carline thistle



Spiny restharrow



Sand leek



Wild privet

September

Flower of the month

Centaury

The herb, mainly prepared as tea, has been used since the Romans as a medicine to cure fevers



This calendar is based upon recorded flowering plants and ferns along the Coast.

Recorded and Photographed by Dr Dave Mitchell from Natural England

September six of the best

Also this month

Hawkbit

Viper's bugloss

Scabious

Knapweed

Carline thistle

Ox-eye daisy

Centaury

Autumn gentian



Small scabious



Greater knapweed



Hoary ragwort



Black knapweed



Common fleabane



Devil's-bit scabious