

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.limestonelandscape.info/wildwatch

Email: limestonelandscape@durham.gov.uk

Tel: 03000 267155



The brilliant wildflowers of County Durham's limestone

A calendar guide to our crown jewels



- ✿ Trimdon Grange ✿ Kelloe
- ✿ Bishop Middleham ✿ Marsden
- ✿ Castle Eden Dene ✿ Wingate ✿ Thrislington
- ✿ Quarrington Hill ✿ Blackhall Rocks ✿ Cassop

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 County Durham.

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

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 but old quarries, railway cuttings and even some roadside verges provide an additional refuge.

All the flowers are protected and many consider them to be County Durham's crown jewels.

March

The flower year begins:



Gorse
(Whinny bushes)

You can find gorse in flower in every month of the year.



Colt's-foot

One old fashioned name for this flower is 'son before the father' because the flower appears before the large horse shoe shaped leaves.

April

Flower of the month

Early purple orchid

Orchids take many years to establish, their seed is as fine as pepper.



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



Herb robert



Ground ivy



Jack by the hedge



Wild strawberry



Bird's-foot trefoil



Cowslip



Dog violet

May

Flower of the month

Water avens

Prefers damper north facing shady parts. Sometimes this plant forms a hybrid with its related Wood Avens.



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



Wood avens



Speedwell



Horseshoe vetch



Bush vetch



Bird's-foot trefoil



Crosswort

June

June, six of the best

Flower of the month

Rock-rose

This is the food plant for the rare Durham Argus butterfly.



Also this month

Lady's mantle
Twayblade
Water avens
Tall melilot
Bladder campion

Milkwort
Germander speedwell
Red clover
White clover
Hawkbit
Ox-eye daisy
Spotted orchid
Bird's-foot trefoil
Hayrattle
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



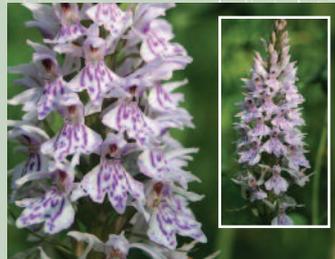
Hoary plantain



Betony



St John's wort



Spotted orchid



Woundwort

July

July, six of the best

Flower of the month

Fragrant orchid



Also this month

most of the June
flower list plus:

Viper's bugloss

Weld

Scabious

Pineapple weed

Self-heal

Agrimony

Basil thyme

Frog orchid

Carlina thistle

Rosebay willowherb

Ragwort

Greater knapweed

Lesser knapweed



Bee orchid



Hogweed



Hayrattle



Twayblade



Frog orchid



Wild thyme

August

Flower of the month

Rosebay willowherb

This became known as 'fireweed' because it was often the first plant to colonise bombed sites in World War II.



Also this month

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

Yellowwort
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



Agrimony



Autumn gentian



Wild carrot



Yellowwort



Viper's bugloss



Bladder campion

September/October

Sept/Oct, six of the best

Flower of the month

Harebell

The bluebell of Scotland



This calendar is based upon a year's recorded flowering at Trimdon Grange Quarry and Raisby Way walkway.

Recorded and Photographed by Jim McManners OBE with additional photographs from Andrew Skinner

Also this month

Hawkbit
Viper's bugloss
Scabious
Knapweed
Carline thistle
Ox-eye daisy
Centaury
Autumn gentian



British Ecological Society



Knapweed



Hawkbit



Carline thistle



Centaury



Ox-eye daisy



Scabious