

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](http://www.limestonelandscape.info/wildwatch)

Email: [limestonelandscape@durham.gov.uk](mailto: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



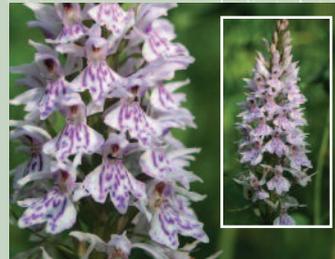
Hoary plantain



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



Carline thistle



Ox-eye daisy



Hawkbit



Centaury



Scabious