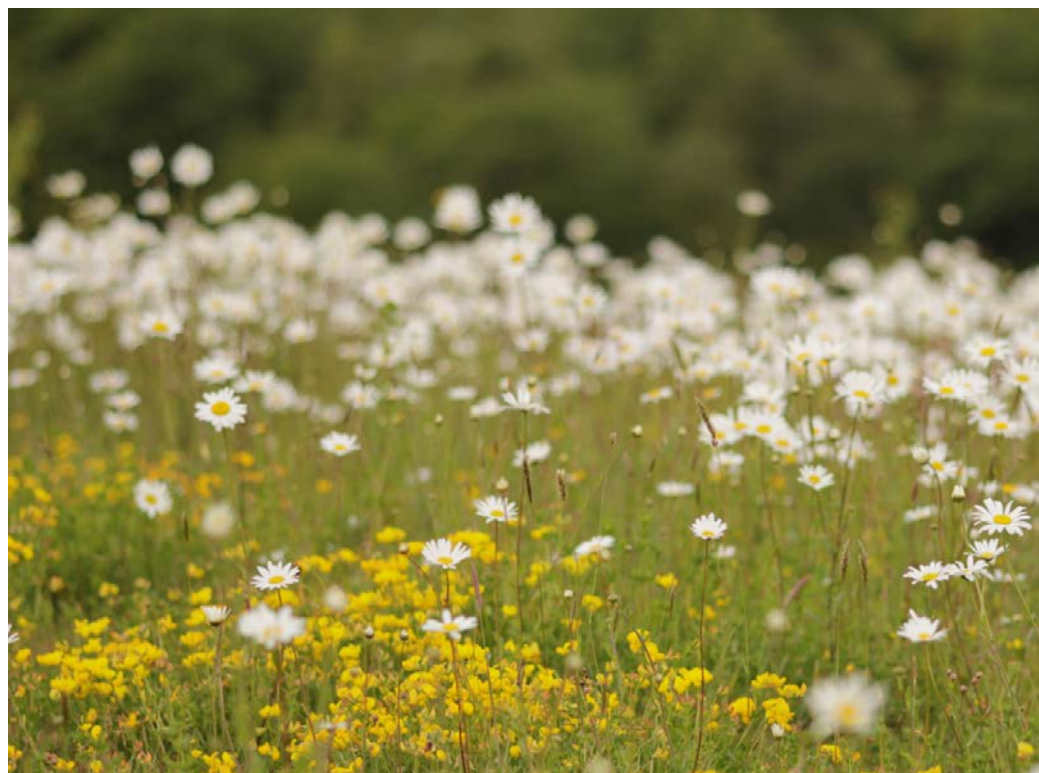




**GET
INVOLVED
TODAY!**

Creating Natural Connections Spring Wildflowers



CUMBERNAULD LIVING LANDSCAPE

Cumbernauld Living Landscape is improving Cumbernauld's greenspaces for both people and wildlife, while helping everyone in the community connect with the nature on their doorstep.

Cumbernauld is incredibly green and we believe that everyone should benefit from this. However, these green areas are often disconnected from one another and many are not as good for people – or wildlife – as they should be.

Without good quality, healthy places people and wildlife cannot flourish. Working closely with the local community, we need to ensure that healthy places are at the heart of the town's future. We will achieve this through a range of projects across the town, divided into four major workstreams.

Improving Habitats and Access – We're improving habitats for wildlife and making it easier for people to find and access these sites. We will also enable people to volunteer and take practical steps to conserve and improve these places.

Connecting Young People to Nature – We're providing opportunities for children to get involved in practical environmental projects and helping schools use the outdoors as part of their lessons.

Promoting Green Health and Wellbeing – It is now well established that access to the outdoors is vital for people's health. The Wild Ways Well project helps people, care practitioners and groups to use nature to manage their mental health.

Unlocking Community Capacity – We are unlocking and developing the skills of the community. By building relationships with groups and individuals and helping them to take action for nature we will ensure a legacy that will last beyond this project.

The lockdown is demonstrating just how important nature is to people's physical and mental health – but it is also making accessing greenspaces much more difficult. While our outdoor sessions are on hold we want to help people experience the benefits of nature on their own doorstep. This booklet contains ideas, inspiration, information and activities that anyone can try to help them connect with the outdoors. Perhaps they'll help you to see Cumbernauld's greenspaces in a new light. Remember to observe guidelines on social distancing and only access nature in your local area.

What is a wildflower?

A weed by any other name is simply a plant out of place

Nancy Gift

Wildflower meadows contain a mixture of grasses (moths feed on these) flowers and herbs, they are essential for insect life, which are in turn essential for birds and mammals. Since the end of WWII we have lost 97% of our wildflower meadows across the UK through intensive agricultural changes, habitat loss and low awareness of their importance in our environment.

Nature provides us with a plethora of resources from grains for cereals to trees for furniture and food, in between there are plants, more specifically wildflowers. To us the wildflower is a dreaded foe, the invader of our gardens, "that weed" you just need to get rid of every year! The Victorians certainly did a good job to ensure generations would be tending gardens in neat straight lines, with specific plants set just so. But wildflowers are not like that and we lose a lot of nature when we try to keep gardens or even our local greenspaces sterile.

Wildflowers are not there to make our gardens pretty they, like everything in nature have a purpose. Wildflowers are food sources for insects, birds and some bats (not in Scotland though). Look at the Orange tip butterfly, it lays its egg on the Cuckoo flower which the caterpillar eats before becoming a chrysalis to overwinter emerging the following spring. It can't do this if the flowers are cut, not only do we lose the flower but also the butterfly. For some insects a specific wildflower is its only food source.

Wildflowers store carbon much better than the grasses which are cut monthly from spring to summer. Wildflowers also help to reduce flooding with their roots expanding out in the soil under our feet. Our gardens are full of plants that we have changed genetically over time to be pretty, or have bigger flowers. These modified plants are designed to only last a season, having to buy again and again unless you are clued up on perennial or biennial planting.

Cumbernauld Living Landscape volunteers the Nature Ninjas are helping restore some of the nectar networks around the town, you can do your bit to help too! Volunteer with us once the current crisis is over, write to your local councilor and ask for cutting to be reduced, go on an identification course and learn more about these wonderful, beautiful plants, you never know you might like it.

#MoreThanWeeds

Wildflower bingo

While you are out for a walk why not try to play a game of bingo and make your walk more challenging!



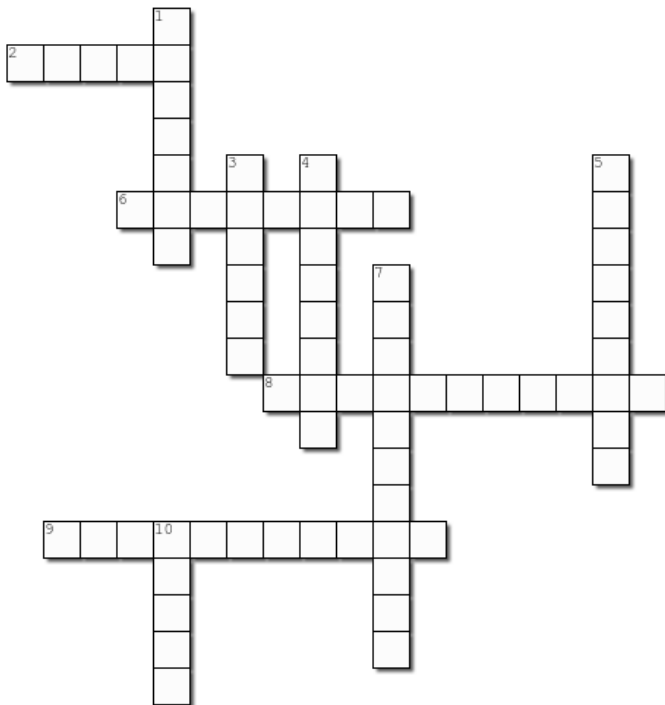
- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 1. Bedstraw | 9. Daisy |
| 2. Birds foot trefoil | 10. Greater stitchwort |
| 3. Cowslip | 11. Meadowsweet |
| 4. Hawkweed | 12. Sneezewort |
| 5. Field scabious | 13. Oxeye daisy |
| 6. Knapweed | 14. Bistort |
| 7. Tufted vetch | 15. Self heal – this one is really small! |
| 8. Common spotted orchid | 16. Common ragwort |

Can you find a line of bingo or even a full house!

Wildflower crossword puzzle

Wildflowers

Complete the crossword puzzle below, numbers in brackets represent letters in the each word.



Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Across

2. This flower has tufted, kidney and common varieties (5)
6. The smell of these flowers are like hyacinth and they are the colour of the sky (8)
8. This flower is named after a bedraggled bird (6,6)
9. These fluffy looking flowers smell sweet and can be used in a tea to settle the stomach (11)

Down

1. One of Scotland's national emblems (7)
3. Also known as a jaggie, great for butterflies though (6)
4. Used by Romans for their ability to heal wounds (4,4)
5. This flower is quite a dapper cat! (9)
7. This dainty blue flower is about remembering someone (6,2,3)
10. This happy little flower makes great chains (5)

We'll have the answers for you next month.

Bluebells

The common bluebell *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* is native to the UK—in fact the UK is home to half the world's population of them. It is only really here that we get the famous “Bluebell Woods”, like Cumbernauld Glen, with their carpet of flowers in late spring. They prefer shady habitats, often in concert with Oak trees. In damper areas they can be found growing in the open.

They are perennial bulbous herbs with flowering stems up to 50cm tall. The leaves are strap shaped, pointed at the tip, smooth and hairless. There are up to 20 sweet smelling flowers on each stalk, they are always on one side of the stalk, causing it to droop over to one side with their weight.

They are endangered as their habitat is disappearing due to human development and climate change. They are also threatened by the invasive non-native Spanish bluebell *Hyacinthoides hispanica*.

Bluebell Factoids

- From the Hyacinthoide family, there are 11 species in this family but only *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* is native to the UK
- They were first recorded in the UK in 1597 but have been here for thousands of years.
- It takes at least 5 years for a bluebell seed to grow into a bulb.
- They are endangered and are protected in the UK under the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act.
- They are almost always blue but there are very rare white variants.
- It is possible to make a type of glue from their petals which in past times was used to glue feathers to arrows and for bookbinding.
- All parts of a bluebell are poisonous to humans and animals, causing vomiting, diarrhoea and a lowered pulse.
- Research is ongoing into chemical compounds found in bluebells which can be used to treat cancer and HIV.
- They are an ancient woodland indicator, especially when found alongside Oak trees.



Bluebell folklore

In Scotland bluebells are symbolic of constancy and everlasting love. In the rest of the UK however they are more associated with death and grief and are often planted on graves.

The flowers are linked with fairies and it is believed that the ringing of bluebells will summon them. A human who heard a bluebell ring would soon die—In Scottish folklore fairies were often dangerous creatures and to be avoided. A field of bluebells is believed to be filled with fairy magic and fairies would try to lure people to wander into a ring of bluebells where they would fall under fairy enchantment and be trapped forever.

In parts of Scotland they are called ‘Aul Man’s (Devil’s) Bells’ and to pick them is regarded as very unlucky. In England it was believed that hanging a garland of bluebells around someone’s neck would force them to speak the truth.

When the world was being made all the flowers that were new on the Earth were proud of their colours. They loved to show them off, each secretly believing it was the most beautiful. They would tilt their heads to the sun to get the best effect and would ask the winds and the rain to complement them on their beauty.

The Sky looked down on these colours and was jealous of them. It didn’t yet have a colour of its own and so it asked all the flowers in turn if they would share. All of the flowers were too proud and vain however and one by one they all refused.

The sky was sad and angry about their selfishness so it resolved to cover the world in darkness and soon all the flowers, and their colours, would die without its light.

This was when the bluebell stepped forward. It appealed to the sky to spare the other flowers, if the sky would relent to light the world for just half the day and allow the other flowers to shine then the bluebell would share its own colour.

The sky was touched by this act of bravery and generosity from this little flower who expected nothing in return. It examined the bluebell’s colour and realised it was beautiful. It accepted the bluebell’s generous offer – and also thought to reward it for its bravery and kindness.

Thus the sky became blue and all the flowers basked in its light, but the bluebell was given a special gift. Only it would be allowed to carpet the earth, amongst the shade of the trees in Spring, reflecting the blue of the sky back to the heavens above.

Native or Invasive

The Spanish bluebell is native to Portugal and Spain but it was brought to the UK as a garden plant and has spread into the countryside. Spanish bluebells grow faster and spread quicker than common bluebells. The two species also readily interbreed producing highly fertile hybrids. Well meaning gardeners still buy and plant the Spanish variety, helping it to spread to new areas. Unfortunately once Spanish bluebells take hold in an area eventually all the native bluebells disappear.



There are several notable differences between Spanish and native bluebells. Spanish Bluebells come in many different colours, although you may occasionally see a white native bluebell this is fairly unusual, Spanish bluebells can be pale blue, deep blue, pink or white. The pollen in the Spanish bluebell is blue tinged, whereas the native bluebell pollen is creamy white.

Spanish bluebells have little, or no, scent compared to the delicate sweet smell of the native bluebell. Spanish bluebells have flowers all around the upright stem, rather than to one side of a drooping stem. Spanish bluebells also have much broader leaves.

You can help conserve native bluebells by not planting Spanish bluebells in your garden and by not walking over or damaging native bluebells in woodlands.

Colour your Bluebells

One of these pictures is a native bluebell, the other an invasive Spanish bluebell. Can you see the difference? What colours should they be? You can be true to life or just get creative and have fun!



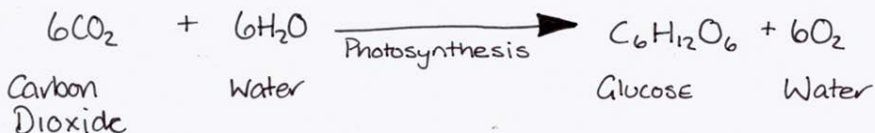
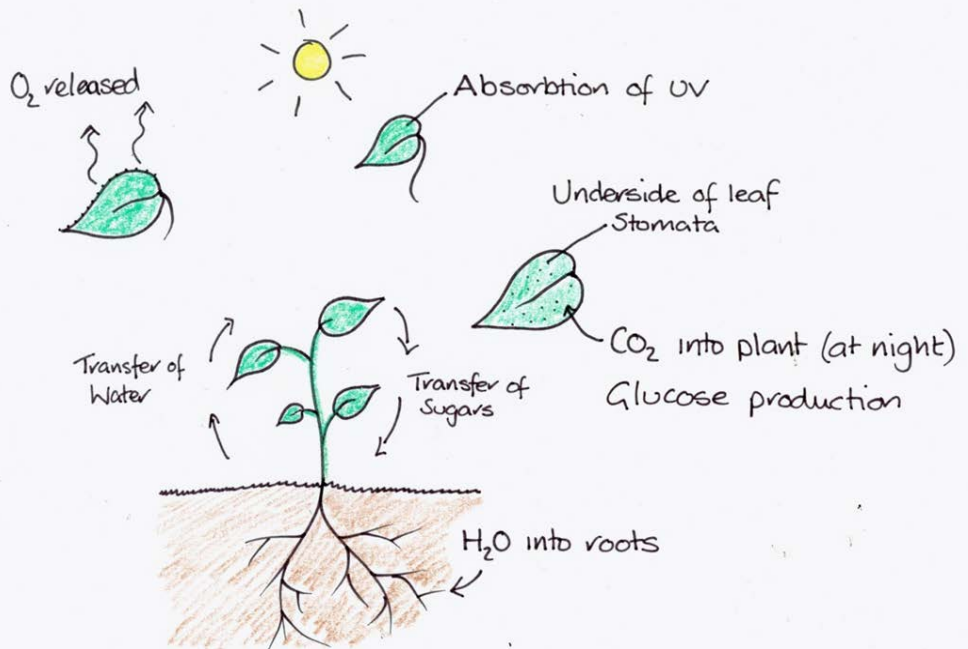
Photosynthesis

How do plants grow?

Plants are pretty cool, they are able to change light energy from the sun and turn it into chemical energy in the form of sugars, and to make it even cooler, the oxygen that is the waste product of this process supplies us with clean air to breathe!

Why are plants green?

Well there are reaction cells in the plants which contain chlorophyll pigments and the pigments are made from even smaller proteins called chloroplasts. It's the chlorophyll and chloroplast that cause the plant to be green and they also allow the plant to photosynthesise, creating energy for the plant and oxygen for us!



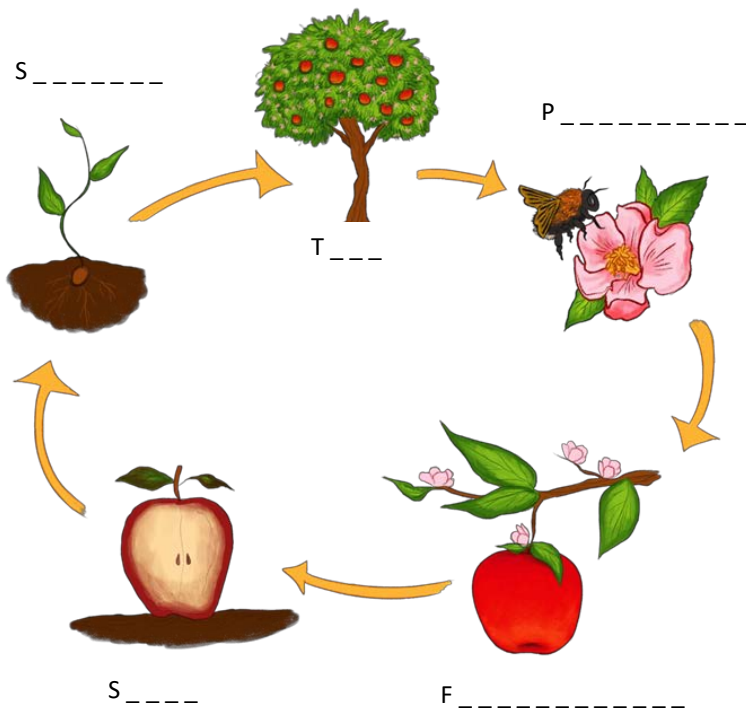
Pollination



Pollination is the transfer of pollen grains from the anther (male part of the plant) to the stigma (female part of plant) in order to make fertile seeds. This can be done through wind pollination, water pollination (for ferns), but mainly through vector pollination - that is to say, animals and in some cases us. Every living thing on the planet has the goal to create young. Plants (in the below example, a tree) are no different. After fertilisation by pollination they produce seeds containing all the genetic information from the parents and grandparents of the plants, that will grow as seedlings into the next generation.

Plants have learned how to attract pollinators too, they have evolved brightly coloured petals that act as a runway for an insect, such as a bee, to find its quickest way to the pollen grains and it gives the insect a reward of nectar for doing it too! Many insects see colours differently from how we do and if you look at a flower under a black light you will see different patterns and catch a glimpse of how a bee or butterflies sees the flower, pretty cool!

Can you fill in the pollination cycle below from the clues above?



The Humble Daisy

Everyone can recognize a daisy! All the little white daisies you see carpeting grasslands in spring and summer are the same species, their scientific name is *Bellis perennis* – which means ‘Always Beautiful’. The name ‘Daisy’ comes from ‘Day’s Eye’ which references the fact that the flowers all close at night and open only during the day.

They were an important flower to our ancestors, another old name for them is ‘Woundwort’ or ‘Bruisewort’ possibly because Roman doctors used them to treat battlefield injuries. If a plant has ‘wort’ in its name, this tends to mean it was once regarded as being good for healing.

Usually known as ‘Gowans’ in Scotland, another Scottish name for daisies was ‘Bairnswort’ which comes from the idea that a crying or upset children could be distracted and amused by making daisy chains or pulling off petals and reciting rhymes ... “He loves me, he loves me not”...

Daisies were Queen Victoria’s favourite flower and right up until the 1950’s schools used to close on her birthday, when people would pin daisies to their clothes.

When you really think about it daisies surround us all the time – have you ever woken up ‘fresh as a daisy’? Seen a cricketer hit a ‘daisycutter’? Shouted ‘ups a daisy’ to a fallen child?

What other daisy sayings or traditions can you think of?



Crochet a daisy

Bring a little sunshine into your home by creating a simple daisy, suitable for a beginner to intermediate and is great to use up those odd ends of yarn, here's what you'll need:

- 4mm crochet hook
- 2 colours of yarn are needed we are going to use yellow and white

Crochet terms

ch – chain stitch

dc – double crochet

ss – slip stitch

rep – repeat



Round 1. Begin with yellow yarn , ch2 begin a magic circle, (dc into first chain)*rep 6 (6 stitches)



Round 2. Place a stitch marker into your last stitch (safety pin or piece of yarn), 2dc into each stitch, finish off with ss to first stitch of current round. Leave a 5cm tail for threading or knotting later (12 stitches)



Round 3. Change to white yarn. Ch 10, (ss into same stitch, dc next stitch, ch 10) *rep 11,ss and finish off keep 5cm tails for tying later (144 stitches)

You can make a smaller daisy by removing Round 2 and making chains for each of the 6 stitches



To finish - Find a twig, tie the ends together and attach your daisy to the twig.



Congratulations you have made your first daisy, why not try other colours and create your own daisy garden.

Wildflower Writing

Poets, writers and artists have always found inspiration in wildflowers – the same wildflowers that you can see all around you now! There’s an artist inside everyone but sometimes it takes a lot of courage to let it out. Every artist started as an amateur, you don’t need to be the next Robert Burns or Liz Lochhead to have a go.

Taking part in creative activities can be very good for our mental health. Expressing yourself can be relaxing and inspiring and can allow you to express emotions and process complex feelings. Studies show that taking part in artistic activities can be very valuable in treating issues like depression and anxiety.

A fine and subtle spirit dwells
In every little flower,
Each one its own sweet feeling
breathes
With more or less of power.
There is a silent eloquence
In every wild bluebell
That fills my softened heart with bliss
That words could never tell.

Anne Bronte

The Bluebell is the sweetest flower
That waves in summer air:
Its blossoms have the mightiest power
To soothe my spirit's care.

Emily Bronte

Wee, modest, crimson-tippèd flow’r,
Thou’s met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush among the stoure
Thy slender stem:
To spare thee now is past my pow’r,
Thou bonnie gem.

Robert Burns (to a daisy)

I hope you are blessed with a heart
like a wildflower
Strong enough to rise again after
being trampled upon,
Tough enough to weather the worst
of the summer storms,
And able to grow and flourish even
broken in places.

Nikita Gill

“Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature -- the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter.”

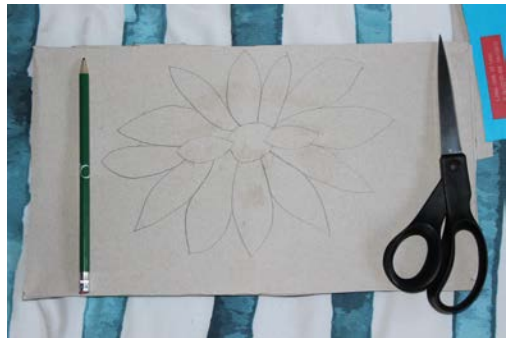
Rachel Carson

Why not have a go at writing some poetry, a description of a wildflower, or even a song? You don’t have to show anyone, it can be only for yourself, but if you want to share there are many people who would like to hear what you write.

Daisy Mask



1. What you need



2. Draw out your shape



3. Cut out the shape and eyes



4. Colour in your own style



5. Small holes for string and adjust to head



6. What a pretty flower!

Draw your daisy and create a fun wildflower mask

Other Wildflowers to Spot



Forget Me Not (*Myosotis sp.*)– Clusters of tiny, delicate blue flowers with bright yellow centres on long, sprawling stalks. Sometimes called ‘Mouse Ears’ or ‘Scorpion Grass’. They are associated with love, fidelity and memory. They grow in damp, shady places and there are actually more than 80 species worldwide. In other parts of the world they are used as a remembrance symbol, much like the Poppy is in the UK. In Britain they are often used as a symbol for dementia care.



Cowslip (*Primula veris*)– Groups of cup shaped yellow flowers with red highlights on a tall stalk which often seems to ‘nod’ in the wind. Sometimes known as Milk Maidens, Golden Drops or Freckled Faces. The name Cowslip might come from their tendency to grow in pastures where cow’s feet have broken the earth. They symbolise grace and beauty and were often scattered in front of wedding processions. They have a delicate scent which some people liken to the smell of apricots.



Cuckooflower (*Cardamine pratensis*)– Beautiful pale pink flowers on tall stalks. Loves damp grassy places and roadside verges. Its name came from its tendency to flower just as the cuckoo bird arrives back from migration. Other names include Lady’s Smock (which was quite a rude thing to say once upon a time!). It is the favoured food plant for caterpillars of Orange-Tip Butterflies and you can sometimes spot the tiny orange dots of eggs on the underside of the leaves.

Wildflower wordsearch

How many can you find



H	C	C	E	T	F	L	W	T	F	C	D	L	O
W	A	H	D	E	T	I	B	K	W	A	H	F	Y
A	H	E	M	A	Y	W	E	E	D	T	U	Y	E
V	C	W	L	F	N	E	A	W	T	S	R	A	L
Y	T	I	E	W	W	D	B	O	C	E	S	R	L
H	E	N	A	T	I	A	E	R	E	A	A	R	O
A	V	G	L	P	O	L	S	L	I	R	R	O	W
I	D	S	C	I	O	O	D	H	I	G	W	W	R
R	E	F	B	L	S	R	F	C	E	O	H	L	A
G	T	E	U	S	R	T	C	S	A	I	N	T	T
R	F	S	G	W	T	W	I	H	T	R	Y	R	T
A	F	C	L	O	R	D	T	I	I	L	R	F	L
S	U	U	E	C	O	V	T	R	O	D	O	O	E
S	T	E	S	E	F	L	H	E	A	L	S	C	T

MAYWEED
CHEWINGS FESCUE
DANDELION
WAVY HAIR GRASS
HAWKBIT
TUFTED VETCH
YELLOW RATTLE
BUGLE
EYEBRIGHT
CATS EAR
YARROW
WILD CARROT
ORCHIDS
SEFLHEAL
COLTSFOOT
COWSLIP

Wild Ways Well and Wildflowers

Wild Ways Well is built around the Five Ways to Wellbeing, a mental health framework that is used by the NHS and the major mental health charities. The Five Ways to Wellbeing are **Be Active**, **Connect**, **Keep Learning**, **Take Notice** and **Give**. It has been proven that building these actions into our daily lives helps people to be happier and healthier.

This month's pack is based around wildflowers, paying particular attention to Bluebells. By reading through it and trying out some of the activities you'll get a chance to see how easy it is to build Wild Ways Well into your life.

We'll **Be Active** by carefully walking outdoors (observing social distancing) keeping our minds busy and occupying our time looking for the amazing array of flowers that are springing up in our greenspaces. You can find a lot of these in streets or gardens but a short walk will open up many more possibilities.

We can **Connect** with flowers by opening up our senses. Take in the colours, the smells, even the textures of the petals and leaves. Perhaps the plants you see are in an area where they have been deliberately planted or tended by people, either now or in the past. Think about these people and their lives. You can also connect with the wider community by posting online, chatting to your family and friends and coming out with us on future sessions.

We can **Keep Learning**, there are a huge number of web pages, books and television programmes devoted to wildflowers. This pack will tell you a little about folklore and how plants live their lives, but you can find out more just by looking out of your window. Why not investigate further and see what else you can learn?

Plants and flowers are all around us, and are vital to the planet we all share but we rarely **Take Notice** and look very closely at them. It's amazing how much we miss out in nature when we just walk through without paying attention to what is all around us. Focus on the flowers next time you look outside and see if you can spot a rainbow of colours, or look for the animals and insects that rely on wildflowers to live. Suddenly a whole new world can open up in front of your eyes.

We can **Give** by giving ourselves a break from the drama of the current events and focusing on the little things around us that give us pleasure. We can also help others by sharing what we've found, in person or online. We can give back by learning to value wildflowers and to care for greenspaces. In the future you might be able to take direct action by volunteering with us, or by encouraging others to care for nature.

Wildflower quiz

All answers are wildflowers!

1. What is Scotland's national flower?.....
2. Who's is Donald's girlfriend?..... Duck
3. What small mammal might use this flower to keep its hands clean?.....
4. Which flower would be the best but they missed out an "H"?.....
5. What flower shows Beast that his time is running out? Dog
6. Which flower is also an instrument that is famous for " The Last Post"?.....
7. Finish this song. "Why do you build me up....."
8. What would a ship do in harbour?.....
9. Which flower could be Batman's sidekick? Ragged
10. This flower could also be a farmyard animal using these to kiss!.....
11. Where would a lady who looks after sheep keep her money?.....
12. A big machine on a building site has not been paid for, what flower is this?.....
13. These flowers grow only in the kingdom of Freezenburg.
14. This flower could be named after the rear-end of "Bullseye".....
15. Which flower which could be a large rabbit making a phone call.....

We'll have the answers for you next month.





Cumbernauld Living Landscape is a partnership between the Scottish Wildlife Trust, North Lanarkshire Council, Sanctuary Scotland, the James Hutton Institute and TCV – The Conservation Volunteers.

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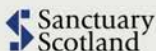
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Partners



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