










'Go Wild in Flaxton'

Flower name	Picture	Common names	Scientific name	Interesting information
Bird's-foot trefoil		Granny's toenails/ Eggs and bacon	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Its bright yellow flowers tinged with red gives rise to the common name 'eggs and bacon'. The leaves have five narrow oval leaflets and the lower two of them are bent back by the stem, so the leaves appear trefoil (three-lobed); hence the 'trefoil' bit in its name. The 'bird's foot' comes from the shape of seed pods. The Granny's toenails name comes from the appearance of the claw-like seed pods! (Some grannies must have strange toenails!) Fresh bird's-foot trefoil contains cyanogenic glycosides which release small amounts of hydrogen cyanide when chewed. It's probably not enough to poison you but chewing it is not recommended! Has been used as an infusion (to avoid the making of hydrogen cyanide) as a sedative.
Black Medic(k)		Nonesuch/ Hop clover/ Meadow trefoil/ Yellow trefoil	<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	With its trefoil leaves it belongs to the clover family, but usually has slightly pointed leaf tips compared with other clovers. Pom-pom flower head is a tiny version of familiar clovers with up to 50 tiny flowers in the ball shape. When seed pods form they are black, hence the name. <i>Medicago</i> comes from Latin <i>medica</i> . <i>Lupulina</i> , means wolf-like and refers to the hop or willow wolf which it is related to. It grows on poor soils and is a nitrogen fixer (leguminous). Flowers used to make honey, also a protein-rich fodder plant.
Bluebell (Native)		Wild hyacinth/ Granfer griggles/ Witches' thimbles	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	In native bluebells the flowers droop on one side of the stem. Their sticky sap was once used to bind pages of books and glue the feathers onto arrows. In Elizabethan times their bulbs were crushed to make starch for ruffs of collars and sleeves.




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Bluebell (Spanish)		Wild hyacinth/ Granfer griggles/ Wtches' thimbles	<i>Hyacinthoides hispanica</i>	Spanish bluebells grow upright, with flowers all around the stem - not drooping. Spanish may out-compete the native bluebell.
Bugle		Bugleherb/ Carpet bugleweed/ Carpenter's herb	<i>Ajuga reptans</i>	<p>Flower spike has small purplish-blue flowers (which have protruding stamens) between the small leaves. The flowers often have fine stripes and are shaped like skirted ladies. (The related Pyramidal Bugle has darker leaves with a reddish-purple tinge; it is classified as a priority species because it is declining.)</p> <p>Likes damp glades and meadows and spreads by runners. Often confused with Selfheal, with a similar flower colour but its little flowers are arranged on a dark clublike head with two leaves under it, not in with the flowers. The <i>reptans</i> in its Latin name comes from 'repto', meaning creeping/crawling.</p> <p>Used in herbal remedies for stopping bleeding. (This is origin of its common name – carpenter's herb; for when a carpenter cut themself!)</p> <p>Can be attractive ground cover in shady, damp places in gardens.</p>
Buttercup		Creeping crazy/ Old wife's threads/ Gold weed/ Soldier's buttons/ Kingcup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Have you held a buttercup under your chin to see if you like butter? Origins say it gave butter its name. However, buttercups are poisonous to cattle and they leave them uneaten! (Note there are several species of buttercup: Meadow, Goldilocks, Creeping and Bulbous.)




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Cleavers		Goosegrass/ Sticky Willies/ Sticky grass/ Claggy meggies	<i>Galium aparine</i>	<p>Who doesn't recognise this one or had the prank of having it stuck to their clothes? Its 6-8, thin hairy leaves grow in rosettes around the vertical stem. The tiny white, four-petalled flowers develop into small, round, hook-laden seeds that stick to any creature that touches it. Even its stem has tiny, Velcro-like hooks!</p> <p>It's still used as food for chickens and geese (hence called goosegrass). The stems were apparently used by shepherds to strain hair out of milk (not sure why there would be hair in milk?!). Also, reported to be used in making shampoo and deodorants and medicinally to treat urine infections, piles, scurvy, ulcers and skin disease. So, despite the fact gardeners find it a nuisance, it has its uses!</p>
Cow parsley		Queen Ann's Lace/ Mother die	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>	<p>Umbrella-like flowers called umbells (it's an umbelliferer), plus a member of the carrot family and related to celery and parsley. Leaves, when crushed, smell like aniseed! Folk tale – the flowers would bloom for Queen Anne and her ladies and reflect the delicate lace they wore! Has been used as a mosquito repellent!</p> <p>The name Mother die was to deter children from picking deadly hemlock – similar appearance!</p>
Cowslip		Golden drops/ Bunch of Keys	<i>Primula veris</i>	<p>County flower of Northamptonshire, Worcestershire and Surrey. Cowslip – means cowpat; they flower where a cow has 'slipped'! Mentioned in Shakespeare's 'The Tempest' and 'Henry V'.</p>




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Crosswort		Smooth bedstraw/ maywort/ maiden's hair	<i>Cruciata laevipes</i>	Name derives from positions of the leaves around the stem, with each set of four forming the shape of a cross. Its flowers have a honey-like scent. Its tiny yellow flowers appear up the stem by the leaf crosses. This distinguishes it from the other member of the bedstraw family, Lady's bedstraw, which has its yellow flowers at the ends of the stems. Rarely used in medicine today but was once used as a remedy for headaches, rupture, rheumatism and dropsy!
Daisy			<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Name derives from 'day's eye'; it opens when sun rises and closes when sets! Famous for daisy-chain making. Down- to-earth – in language, e.g. 'daisy roots' is slang for 'boots' and 'kicking up the daisies' apparently describes someone who has given up gardening for good!
Dandelion		Lion's tooth/ Pee or piss-a-bed	<i>Taraxacum officinalis</i>	Lion's tooth– French - Dent de Lion – refer to leaf-edge teeth look alike. Can be used as a diuretic – the plant's roots apparently make you do this! French for dandelion is 'piss en lit', which translates to 'piss the bed'. Dandelion 'coffee' and 'wine' can be made from the flowers! There are, apparently, 10 health benefits from using aspects of this plant! https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/324083




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<p>Germander Speedwell</p>		<p>Bird's eye/ Cat's eye</p>	<p><i>Veronica chamaedrys</i></p>	<p>Good luck charm for travellers; speed you on your way! Once known for curing gout and its dried leaves were used to make tea. (There are several types of speedwell: wood, blue water, ivy-leaved, green field, etc. for now let's stick to Germander!)</p>
<p>Greater Stitchwort</p>		<p>Star of Bethlehem/ Wedding Cake/ Daddy's shirt buttons</p>	<p><i>Stellaria holstea</i></p>	<p>Beneficial to bees and orange-tip butterflies. It has an explosive seed dispersal; seed capsules can be heard popping like a noisy open fire! Some people call it 'popguns', others 'poppers'! Once used as herbal remedy for a 'stitch' (pain felt during exercise) – hence its name! Property of pixies in Cornwall and if you pick it you cause a thunderstorm!</p>
<p>Ground Ivy</p>		<p>Alehoof</p>	<p><i>Glechoma hederacea</i></p>	<p>Despite its name, it is a member of the dead-nettle family - not related to ivy. It does start off hugging the ground with its bright green kidney-shaped softly toothed leaves, then produces little purple flowers (a bit like tiny violets) around and at regular intervals up the stem. This all stretches to look a bit more like its dead-nettle relatives. Spreads by runners. It apparently smells of blackcurrants or tom-cats! What's more, the fragrant leaves once made it a bittering agent for beer, until hops replaced it. Also been used in cheese-making as a substitute for animal rennet.</p>




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Herb Robert		Red Robin/ Death-come-quickly/ Stinking Bob/ Squinter pip/ Bachelor's buttons/ Pink pinafore/ Storksbill	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	<p>It is a member of the crane's-bill plant family. Name thought to come from English folklore – Robin Goodfellow, a house goblin, also known as Puck. He was supposedly hairy, red featured, sometimes wearing a red suit and carrying a candlestick. The plant has some of these features: red sepals and red, hairy stems (leaves turn red at end of season) plus the flower buds look a bit like candle flames or storks' bills. Hence, its last common name?</p> <p>However, some think it is named after an 11th century monk (presumably called Robert) who used the plant to cure people!</p> <p>Was used as an antiseptic and for treating stomach upsets and nose bleeds! Leaves have been crushed (they then smell of burning tyres) and rubbed on skin as an insect repellent, especially for mosquitoes.</p> <p>Traditionally carried to bring good luck for fertility! Some very disparate uses!</p>
Jack by the hedge		Hedge garlic/ Poor man's mustard/ Penny Hedge	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>	<p>Name may stem from 'jacks' by the hedge – toilet – due to its smell, or Jack may be 'Devil' by the hedge – the smell is more noticeable late in the day when parents wanted children home before nightfall.</p> <p>Apparently, all plant parts are edible – roots taste like horseradish!</p>
Lady's smock		Cuckooflower/ Milkmaid/ Fairy flower	<i>Dardamin pratensis</i>	<p>Its annual appearance coincides with cuckoo call! County flower of Cheshire.</p> <p>Lady's smock derives from the cupped shape of the flowers (like a type of dress or an artist's smock). However, 'smock' was once a slang term for a woman; the internet says this name may allude to springtime activities in meadows!</p> <p>Important food for caterpillar of orange-tip butterfly.</p>




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Lesser celandine		Pilewort	<i>Ficaria Verna</i>	<p>Floral equivalent of the swallow denoting the coming of spring. (The word 'celandine' comes from Greek meaning 'swallow'.) Thought to predict weather, as they close their petals before rain. Leaves high in vitamin C – have been used to prevent scurvy. Wordsworth wrote about it in three of his poems! Mentioned in 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe', when Aslan returned in spring and the ground was covered 'with yellow celandine flowers'! Name pilewort comes from its use as a treatment for haemorrhoids (based on doctrine the knobbly tubers of the plant resembled piles)!</p>
Lesser Stitchwort		Common starwort	<i>Stellaria graminea</i>	<p>Smaller flowers than Greater and flowers are open for three days, then keeps re-flowering! Checkout how many petals: it looks like 10 but there are only 5, as they are joined in pairs at the base! Etymology: <i>Stellaria</i> means star-like, <i>graminea</i> means 'like grass'.</p>
Ox-eye Daisy		Moon daisy/ Moon Penny/ Dog daisy/ Marguerite	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	<p>Its old botanical name was <i>Chrysanthem leucanthemum</i> (Its stem and leaf structure look very like those of a chrysanthemum (before the daisy flower opens). References to the moon - apparently its bright flower can be seen to glow in the midsummer evenings! Reference to 'dog' – my Mum told me not to pick it as its aroma is a little like dog poo!?! The Latin name <i>Leucanthemum</i> is said to originate from the Greek word 'leucos', meaning white. The unopen flower buds can be marinated and used as capers. If cattle eat it, this can affect the taste of the milk! It is widely cultivated as an ornamental plant, too. Used medicinally to treat coughs and asthma. Flower heads have also been used to make tea.</p>




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Flower name	Picture	Common names	Scientific name	Interesting information
Primrose		Butter rose/ Early rose/ Easter rose	<i>Primula vulgaris</i>	<p>Name comes from Latin <i>prima rosa</i> – first rose of the year (yet not a member of the rose family)!</p> <p>April 19th is 'Primrose Day' – Anniversary of the death of Benjamin Disraeli – his favourite flower. (Queen Victoria supposedly sent him bunches regularly and they are laid on his statue in Westminster Abbey on this date annually.) County flower of Devon.</p>
Red Clover		Bee-bread/ Honeystalks/ Suckbottles	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	<p>Not as common as white clover. Its leaves are recognisably cloverleaf (trefoil) shaped but larger than white's and marked with a white V. The flowers are loved by bumble bees for their nectar.</p> <p>Can be used as a fodder crop and is valued for its nitrogen fixing; it is a legume.</p> <p>Red clover contains isoflavones which are changed inside the body to compounds similar to the hormone oestrogen. It is therefore used by some women for help with premenstrual tension and symptoms of the menopause, e.g. hot flushes.</p> <p>It is a flower emblem of Denmark and the state flower of Vermont.</p>
Red/Pink Campion		Red Catchfly	<i>Silene diocica/latifolia</i>	<p>Silene probably derives from Greek 'sialon', meaning saliva – a gummy substance that it secretes from its stems. Folklore: guards bees' honey stores and protects fairies from being discovered!</p>



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Flower name	Picture	Common names	Scientific name	Interesting information
Ribwort plantain			<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Children can use the flower heads like conkers and battle things out! Tea made from the leaves was used as cough medicine. It's apparently an antihistamine (in nettle stings or insect bites), antioxidant and even antibiotic. Roots are supposed to be good treatment for rattlesnake bites!
Vetch (common)		Garden Vetch/ Winter Tares/ Twaddgers (Yorkshire), Gipsy Peas (Ireland), Wild Fitch (Cumbria).	<i>Vicia sativa</i>	A member of the pea family and its roots have nodules that can take nitrogen from the air to make nitrates – special nutrient for plant growth. So, it is nitrogen fixing (leguminous) and therefore a soil-fertilising plant. It has long twining stems with curly tendrils on the end (to help it climb). Flowers are pinky/purple (with upper petal often darker than the others); they look like flowers of pea plants. The seed pods are like peas and beans and are edible. Like other legumes it's high in protein. Archaeologists have found evidence that it was part of the human diet in Neolithic times. Also, grown for centuries as livestock fodder. It's been used medicinally to treat eczema and skin irritations.
White dead nettle		White archangel/ Helmet flower/ Adam-and-Eve- in- the-Bower	<i>Lamium album</i>	Latter common name: as you can turn the plant upside down and under the white upper lid of the corolla black and gold stamens lie side by side like two human figures! Plant used to be used as a uterine tonic.

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Flower name	Picture	Common names	Scientific name	Interesting information
Wild garlic		Ramsons	<i>Allium ursinum</i>	Garlicky smell! Ancient woodland indicator. Popular forage ingredient – leaves can be used to make pesto and flowers are edible, too.
Wild geranium /Hedgerow cranesbill			<i>Geranium maculatum possibly Geranium pyrenaicum</i>	Member of the cranesbill/wild geranium family and this one is possibly Hedgerow cranesbill. The leaf style of this wild geranium is so characteristic of some cultivated geraniums, but the flowers are only 1.5cm in diameter and very delicate.
Wood anemone		Windflower	<i>Anemone nemorosa</i>	<p>Low growing, usually in woodland but not far from one tree in Flaxton! Its flowers usually have 6 or 7 white or purple streaked petals (which are actually its sepals)! Rarely 8-10 'petals', so one of Flaxton's blooms is a rare one! There is a cluster of yellow anthers and its leaves have three deep lobes.</p> <p>Named after the Greek god of wind, Anemos, who sent his namesakes, the anemones, to herald his coming in early spring. The legend gives the flower its common name, too.</p> <p>It is the county flower of Middlesex. It symbolises forlornness and expectation.</p> <p>Its name has been misheard as 'wooden enemies'.</p> <p>The Chinese call it the 'Flower of Death' due to its pale, ghostly appearance.</p>

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Flower name	Picture	Common names	Scientific name	Interesting information
Wood avens		Herb Bennet/ St Benedict's herb	<i>Geum urbanum</i>	<p>Common in hedgerows and as a garden weed, it has three-lobed leaves with toothed edges and tiny yellow flowers which are replaced by small, spiky, ball-shaped seed-heads with red hooks that stick to passing animals.</p> <p>The common name, Herb Bennet, may have come from medieval Latin, '<i>herba benedicta</i>', meaning 'the blessed herb' because the plant was used in herbal medicine then.</p> <p>Its shallow roots smell of cloves due to containing the compound eugenol, present in cloves.</p> <p>Herbalists used to use it as a treatment for poisoning, dog bites and liver disease, but they now use it for treating gout, diarrhoea, heart disease and ulcers. It was also used to mask the smell of clothes when people didn't bathe and for deterring moths!</p>
Yellow rocket(cress)		Herb Barbara,/ Bittercress/ Wound Rocket/ Common Witch	<i>Barbarea vulgaris</i>	<p>From the brassica/mustard family. <i>Barbarea</i> derives from Saint Barbara, the patron saint of artillerymen and miners, as its leaves are vulnerary - were used as a poultice, in the past, to soothe the wounds caused by explosions. (A drug or plant used in the healing of wounds is a vulnerary.) The Latin <i>vulgaris</i> means 'common'.</p> <p>The bright yellow flowers have four tiny petals arranged in the shape of a cross. They have six stamens – 4 long and 2 short. The flower clusters elongate as the plant grows.</p>

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Garden escapees go wild, too, or are they simply the wild ones?

Flower name	Picture	Common names	Scientific name	Interesting info
Columbine		Granny's bonnet	<i>Aquilegia vulgaris</i>	The name <i>Aquilegia</i> derives from the Latin word for eagle (aquila) because the shape of the flower petals is said to resemble an eagle's claw. Columbine comes from the Latin for dove, due to the inverted flower apparently resembles five doves clustered together! Granny's bonnet – because it looks like an old-fashioned bonnet that grannies wore! It does grow wild in meadows and woodland but the blooms in Flaxton seem to have escaped from gardens! Best avoid for consumption or medical use due to high toxicity. It is a relative of the buttercup.
Forget-me-not (common)			<i>Myosotis arvensis</i>	Not sure if the ones in Flaxton are wild 'Wood forget-me-not' or Common/field/weed forget-me-not or other escapees from folk's gardens! Stands for true love and memories. French call it ne m'oubliez pas, aimez moi, plus je vous vois or plus je vous aime. The seeds attach to clothing when brushed against and fall off to germinate elsewhere. It can be prolific! <i>Arvensis</i> means growing in cultivated fields or land.
Honesty		Moneywort/ Moneyplant/ Coins of Judas	<i>Lunaria biennis</i>	Red/purple flowers in spring. Latin <i>lunaria</i> means moon-like. The dried seeds are like 'moons'/silver coins (hence name moneywort) and are used in flower arranging. Known in Netherlands as Judaspenning (meaning coins of Judas – alluding to the 30 pieces of silver paid to Judas Iscariot to betray Jesus). Also, fatty acid obtained from the seed has been used to treat multiple sclerosis.

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Flower name	Picture	Common names	Scientific name	Interesting info
Periwinkle		Blue periwinkle/ Greater periwinkle	<i>Vinca major</i>	Common ornamental plant grown for its evergreen foliage, spring flowers and groundcover; it can escape and go wild, though! The genus name <i>Vinca</i> probably derives from Latin <i>vincire</i> , meaning 'bind', as the long creeping vines were used to prepare garlands. The species name ' <i>major</i> ' refers to the fact that its flower is bigger than the minor version!
Pulmonaria		Lungwort/ Jerusalem Cowslip/ Soldiers and Sailors	<i>Pulmonaria officinalis</i>	From Latin – <i>pulmo</i> – lung. In early times the spotted leaves were thought to symbolise diseased or ulcerated lungs – hence early use for treating ailments of the lungs. Jerusalem cowslip derives from growing in meadows at similar time to <i>Primula veris</i> (cowslip)). Soldiers and sailors name associated with the blue for sailors' uniforms and the pink (red) for soldiers' uniforms. Also, an excellent early nectar source for insects.
Star of Bethlehem			<i>Ornithogalum umbellatum</i>	A bulb belonging to the lily family, which produces attractive star-shaped flowers in late spring, early summer. After chatting to folk in the village it appears that some bulbs were planted on the Kell years ago, with daffodils, etc., as it looks so pretty. However, it can out-perform other traditional bulbs and threaten native plant life. It is recommended online that it is planted in containers to 'contain' it! Even though the flowers are very pretty, advice is don't plant it at all, as it is hard to get rid of, especially from lawns. The sap is a skin irritant. <i>Ornithogalum</i> translates from Greek as 'bird's milk' – 'ornis' the root word for ornithology and 'gala' -milk (whose principle sugar is galactose). The origin of bird's milk name is not clearly explained online.

I would like to thank Helen and Brian Gillie for their help in identifying some of the new additions to the Guide and also thank other village members, who have stopped me on my walks (correct social distancing at all times), and chatted positively about the online material!

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I hope you enjoy spotting all the flowers, whether it be in the photos of the village or when you are out and about for your exercise.

Your feedback would be much appreciated! Suggestions for improvement of layout, font size/style would be gratefully received. If anyone finds any errors in the information in the tables, has any additional comments about the 'wild' flowers or indeed new flowers' details, for when the tables are next updated, please let me know at: johnandgillramsdens@yahoo.co.uk