

What to look out for in May Wildflowers

Shetland Amenity Trust

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Cuckoo Flower or Lady's Smock as its name suggest is a springtime flower blooming at about the time the Cuckoo arrives in spring. It favours damper grassland.

Download sheet from Paul Harvey's Blog at:

<https://www.shetlandamenity.org/what-to-look-for-this-week-wildflowers>



Marsh Marigold, also known as kingcup, is a plant of damp marshy or fen habitats and ditches. It has been flowering for a week or two now.



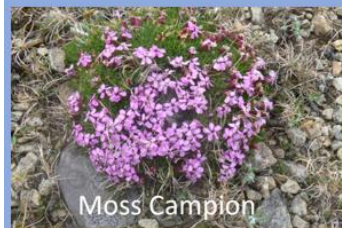
Spring Squill thrives where there is plenty of salt spray and in a good year can turn our cliff-tops a hazy blue, only to be replaced later by a wash of pink as Thrift or Sea Pinks take over. The fact that it occurs so far inland in Shetland is testament to the stormy nature of the islands – showing just how far inland salty air can reach



Kidney Vetch is just beginning to flower along stony roadside verges. It's a paler yellow than Bird's-foot Trefoil, with a different leaf shape. In parts of Britain this plant was used for medicinal purposes – as a treatment for chilblains, leg ulcers, and as a tea for mouth and throat infections.



Bird's-foot Trefoil, a common plant of verges and unimproved dry grassland. It is starting to flower just now.



Moss Campion is a plant found only at high altitude on the Scottish mainland but here in Shetland it occurs down to sea level. The hedgehog-like cushions create their own microclimate, flowering first on the warmer south facing side of the cushion, and then a week or two later on the cooler north side of the cushion.



The first flowering **Red Campion** are now appearing on roadside verges. In Shetland the colour is so intense that some botanists think it should be a local subspecies.



Scurvy Grass is another plant that has been in flower for a couple of weeks or more. It likes a bit of nutrient enrichment so favours the coast – and can be incredibly lush where it is fertilised by seabird guano. It is co-called as it rich in vitamin C and kept the dreaded scurvy at bay in sailors.