

FLOWERS GROWING WILD IN BROADWAY

Introduction

Welcome to the flowers that can be seen growing wild in the Broadway area!

One of the great pleasures of walking in or following the footpaths around this lovely village is seeing plants re-emerging and returning to life in the spring, brightening a walk with little gems or carpets of colour that change as the year progresses.

This is a photographic record of plants *in flower* around the village each month. The title 'FLOWERS GROWING WILD' is a deliberate choice because here you will find not only flowers that most people will recognise as 'traditional' wild flowers (or even refer to as weeds), for example: celandine, dandelion and cow parsley, but also some garden escapees or deliberate 'natural' plantings, such as many of the anemones, Spanish bluebells or the numerous varieties of daffodils. Also included are photographs of the blossom of trees and shrubs that may be seen alongside roads and paths, in hedgerows or peeping out of the confines of a garden to overhang walls and fences. (These flowers are included because they are so pretty and are signs of the changing seasons). So, in effect, if flowers are not completely contained within a private garden, they are candidates for a photograph! Thus, this is an idiosyncratic document and is not a definitive record of every wildflower species growing in Broadway and its environs. It is the photographic log of the plants in flower that *I notice* – whether growing out of cracks in walls, in verges, in hedgerows, in fields, in the churchyard, by the pond etc. and, of course, only in places which are accessible and in which *I happened to be walking at that time of year*.

Organisation

The record is organised by month, starting with March 2017 (which is when I began noticing some beautiful spring displays and had the idea of making this record). Photographs of a flower are listed in the month during which it was seen. Consequently, many flowering plants will appear more than once as the year progresses, changing as they mature or perhaps blooming again. Primroses, for example, are featured in March, April and May and daisies and gorse are listed in many months. I have tried to include a close-up photograph and one showing a little more of the plant's near environment. Apologies for the quality of the photos; they are just digital camera snaps taken mainly whilst walking my dog and sometimes in breezy conditions. I hope I may improve with practice!

Within each month, flowers are listed alphabetically by the common name –as (or if) I know it, followed by the botanical name wherever possible. At the end of a year, alphabetical indices of the plants seen in flower during the year are planned.

When I began this little project, I thought I had a reasonable knowledge of common plants and flowers, however the number and variety found, even early in the year, has surprised and delighted me AND entailed hours of comparing my pictures to those in reference resources (listed below) in order to put a name to many of the plants. Inevitably, I will have made misidentifications, for which I apologise. I found the bitter cress, mustard and cow parsley types (and trees) particularly difficult to distinguish so I have used the cover-all terms of species 'sp' or variety 'var' in the naming of some plants. (Photos of any 'still a

mystery-to-me' flowers will be included at the end of each month in the hope that I will be able to put a name to them eventually!)

I have not given the locations at which pictures were taken; I'm sure many are well-known, and I hope some enjoyment will result from detecting others, if anyone is so inclined, and in the process, discovering yet more '*Flowers Growing Wild*' in Broadway.

1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act and the Protection of Wild Flowers

Rare or endangered plants are protected under the *1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act* and the uprooting of any wild plant is forbidden.

On a practical note, it has surprised me just how many of our fairly common native species are poisonous to a greater or lesser extent. So perhaps the old adage '*look but don't touch*' is a good rule to follow. Enjoy and admire the flowers in situ. When taking photographs, care must be taken not to disturb habitats or damage the plant or those nearby.

Bibliography:

Paul Sterry, [2006] '*Collins Complete Guide to British Wild Flowers*', Collins. ISBN: 9780007236848

Christopher Brickell ed. [1996] '*The RHS A-Z Encyclopedia of Garden Plants*', Dorling Kindersley. ISBN: 9780751303032

Pamela Forey, [1984] '*Wild Flowers Learning to Identify*', Macdonald. ISBN: 035609720X

Websites:

<http://www.wildflowerfinder.org.uk/>

<http://www.ukwildflowers.com/index.htm>

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/plants>

http://www.gardenwithoutdoors.org.uk/weed_guide

<http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/>

<http://www.thewildflowersociety.com>

<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk>