

### HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE:

Fold in half and then in 3. Plants are listed in date order of when they are most likely to be in flower during the year.

Plants produce flowers for reproduction. Bright and colourful flowers are designed to attract insects which feed off nectar. The insects get covered in pollen which they then transfer to another plant when they move on for more nectar. Thus insects are vital in fertilising many plants. Other plants use the wind to help pollination. These flowers are often dull and drab as they do not need to attract any insects.

One of the best ways to find out more about wildflowers is to attend a guided walk provided by the land managers on the Sefton Coast.

We would like to acknowledge the content and financial contribution made by English Nature, a member of the Sefton Coast Partnership, to the production of this guide.

Check out the Sefton Coast Partnership website: [www.seftoncoast.org.uk](http://www.seftoncoast.org.uk)

Further reading:

**Collins Pocket Guide**, Wildflowers of Britain and Northern Europe - Fitter, Fitter and Blamey

**The Wildflower Key British Isles-N.W. Europe**, Francis Rose, Warne.

### IMPORTANT NOTE

We have included many traditional and novel uses for these plants. We do not advise you to try any of these, they are for information only. The Sefton Coast Partnership and its members take no responsibility if you do.



When visiting the coast please follow the Coastal Code:

- Check tide times and the weather forecast
- Dispose of litter correctly
- Wear appropriate clothing and suitable footwear
- Protect yourself in the sun
- Keep dogs under control and clean up after them
- Leave flowers and wildlife for everyone to enjoy

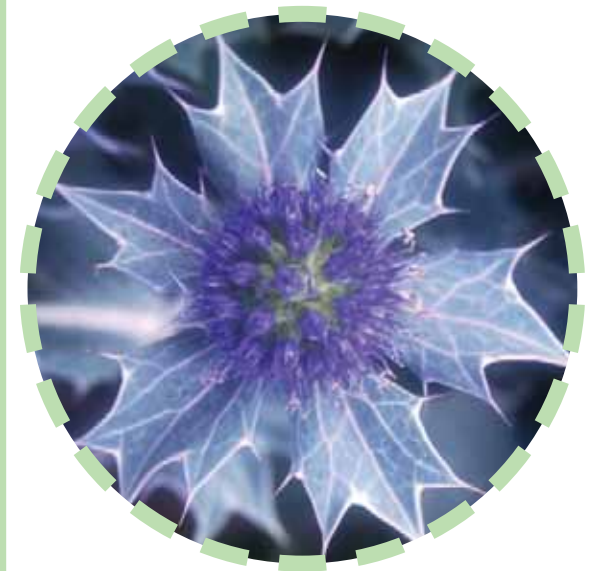
Photographs copyright; Lynne Collins, English Nature; Robert Wolstenholme, English Nature; Dan Wrench; Paul Wisse and Dr Phil Smith.



This leaflet is produced on behalf of the Sefton Coast Partnership by and with funding from English Nature and Sefton Council.

# Nature & Wildlife Wildflowers

## Coastlines Guide



SEA HOLLY

This guide introduces some of the commonly encountered wildflowers found on the Sefton Coast.

The Sefton Coast:  
a dynamic coastline

## Nature & Wildlife

# Wildflowers

### COMMON DOG-VIOLET

(*Viola riviniana*)  
March-May and August-October

This violets flowers are scentless. The heart shaped leaves form a rosette at the base of the plant.



### HEATH DOG VIOLET

(*Viola canina*)  
April-June

Identified by the cream coloured spur at the back of the flower. Caterpillars of Dark green fritillary butterflies will be feeding on violet leaves in springtime.



### WILD STRAWBERRY

(*Fragaria vesca*)  
April-July

Found throughout Britain especially on chalky soils. They have delicate small delicious fruit.



### WILD PANSY

(*Viola tricolor*)  
April-September

Symbols of remembrance and love. Common names include 'heartsease', 'love-in-idleness' and 'kiss me quick'. Tricolor refers to the fact that the flowers could be yellow, violet or pink. Often violet and yellow flowers are found.



### EARLY MARSH-ORCHID

(*Dactylorhiza incarnata*)  
May-July

Could have white, pink or lilac flowers and readily hybridizes with closely related species. There are a number of subspecies, one, *Dactylorhiza incarnata coccinea*, is found in damp sand-dune slacks and has crimson-red flowers.



### DOVE'S-FOOT CRANE'S-BILL

(*Geranium molle*)  
May-August

Tiny geranium with pink flowers. Mix a cupful with 9 oven dried slugs and hoggs lard and spread on a bald head to bring hair back....



### YELLOW-RATTLE

(*Rhinanthus minor*)  
May-August

Particularly recognisable when in seed as the pods 'rattle' in the seed heads. Its scientific name *Rhinanthus* arose from two Greek words for 'nose' and 'flower'.



### PORTLAND SPURGE

(*Euphorbia portlandica*)  
May-September

In flower throughout most of the year.





### YELLOW-WORT

(*Blackstonia perfoliata*)

June-October

Easy to identify as the stem appears through the leaves. If you put one under the armpit of a grump it eases their temperament, allegedly!



### BITING STONECROP

(*Sedum acre*)

June-July

This tiny fleshy leaved plant has beautiful starry yellow flowers. Chewing the leaves gives a very peppery flavour.



### DUNE HELLEBORINE

(*Epipactis leptochila* var *dunensis*)

June-July

A scarce member of the orchid family. Although it lives in dune-slacks it's one of the few dune species which is also found under pine trees. It is sensitive to over and under-grazing. More recently regarded as a variety of the narrow-lipped helleborine.



### HOUND'S-TONGUE

(*Cynoglossum officinale*)

June-August

The shape and texture of this plants leaves led to its name. By distilling water of the roots it was drunk as a remedy for ulcers.



### BOG PIMPERNEL

(*Anagallis tenella*)

June-August

As the name suggests it will be found in very damp places. It has striking small bell shaped flowers.

### PYRAMIDAL ORCHID

(*Anacamptis pyramidalis*)

June-August

Found throughout most of Europe this delicate orchid is easily identified by its pyramidal shaped flower head, hence its name.



### COMMON RESTHARROW

(*Ononis repens*)

June-September

Before tractors this plant slowed the horsedrawn ploughs or harrow. Restharrow

meaning

to stop the harrow. Also known as wild liquorice.



### COMMON BIRD'S-FOOT-TREFOIL

(*Lotus corniculatus*)

June-September

Its seed head looks like the toes of a birds foot and it has a 3 lobed leaf (tre-foil). Eggs and bacon is one of its common names due to the yellow and orangey flowers.



### COMMON CENTAURY

(*Centaurium erythraea*)

June-October

Found throughout England. Bizarrely it is supposed to remove freckles and facial blemishes.





**MARSH  
HELLEBORINE**  
(*Epipactis palustris*)  
July-August

Usually found in colonies in damp sand-dune slacks. It's also found in marshes and wet moorlands. This pretty member of the orchid family can easily be overlooked as the flowers hang over so you need to get your eye in before you suddenly realise your standing amongst hundreds of them!



**SEASIDE CENTAURY**  
(*Centaurium littorale*)  
July-August

Confined to coastal dunes and other coastal areas. Differs from common centaury by having deeper pink flowers and leaves which are more or less parallel sided.



**ROSEBAY WILLOWHERB**  
(*Chamaenerion angustifolium*)  
July-September

Willowherbs are one of the food plants of elephant hawk-moth caterpillars. It is an effective coloniser thriving on disturbed ground.



**SEA HOLLY**  
(*Eryngium maritimum*)  
July-September

Sea holly has recently been voted Merseyside's County Flower. In previous centuries the roots were candied and eaten like sweets and thought to be an aphrodisiac. Adapted to life on the coast with a thick cuticle outer skin on the leaves and stalks preventing water loss and protecting from saltwater.



**GRASS OF PARNASSUS**  
(*Parnassia palustris*)  
July-October

One of the most beautiful flowers found on the Sefton Coast Sand Dunes. From a mass of leaves it produces a fine stem topped by a distinctive white five-petaled flower. Its name is a reference to Mount Parnassus in Greece, which it was once said to cover like grass.



**CARLINE THISTLE**  
(*Carlina vulgaris*)  
July-October

A member of the daisy family, this beautiful yellow thistle is found in well-grazed areas. Its flowers already appear to be dried and so are sought after by flower arrangers.



**FIELD GENTIAN**  
(*Gentiana campestris*)  
July-October

It has disappeared from many sites in Cumbria and the Sefton Coast is the only other area it is found in the North West.



**SEA SPURGE**  
(*Euphorbia paralias*)  
July-October

Found across open dunes. The sap is supposed to cure warts.

