

# Plants of Dumfries

A checklist of the plants recorded in and around Dumfries · 78 species

|                          |                                                                                     |                                                       |                                                                                                          |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Alder</b> <i>Alnus glutinosa</i>                   | The tree that holds the riverbank together — and the only broadleaf here with little woody cones.        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Ash</b> <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>                  | Sooty-black buds in winter — and a tree now facing a disease that may take most of them.                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Bird's-foot Trefoil</b> <i>Lotus corniculatus</i>  | Eggs and bacon — yellow flowers streaked red, and seed pods splayed like a bird's foot.                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Biting Stonecrop</b> <i>Sedum acre</i>             | A mat of gold on a wall top in June — and the leaves are peppery enough to sting the tongue.             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Blackthorn</b> <i>Prunus spinosa</i>               | Flowers on bare black twigs before any leaf — a cold snap during it is still called a blackthorn winter. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Bluebell</b> <i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>      | Britain holds around half the world's bluebells — and it is illegal to dig one up.                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |   | <b>Bracken</b> <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>             | Possibly the most widespread plant on earth, and a single clone can cover a hillside.                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Bramble</b> <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.           | Not one species but hundreds of near-identical microspecies — and the best free food there is.           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Broad Buckler-fern</b> <i>Dryopteris dilatata</i>  | Dark scales with a black stripe down the middle — the surest way to name it.                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Butterbur</b> <i>Petasites hybridus</i>            | Flowers first on bare pink spikes, then grows leaves big enough to have wrapped butter.                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Cladonia Cup Lichen</b> <i>Cladonia fimbriata</i>  | Tiny grey-green golf tees standing up out of the moss — miniature and easily missed.                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Common Butterfly Bush</b> <i>Buddleja davidii</i>  | Feeds butterflies magnificently and wrecks masonry thoroughly — both at once.                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Common Comfrey</b> <i>Symphytum officinale</i>     | Knitbone — and short-tongued bumblebees simply bite a hole in the back of the flower.                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Common Haircap Moss</b> <i>Polytrichum commune</i> | One of the tallest mosses in the world, and it has something close to plumbing.                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Common Knapweed</b> <i>Centaurea nigra</i>         | Hardhead — a thistle-like flower with no prickles at all, and the best nectar on the verge.              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Common Nettle</b> <i>Urtica dioica</i>             | The sting is a hypodermic needle made of glass — and four of our best butterflies depend on it.          |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> |     | <b>Common Orange Lichen</b> <i>Xanthoria parietina</i>   | The bright orange crust on a wall or gravestone — and it thrives on nitrogen pollution.                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Common Polypody</b> <i>Polypodium vulgare</i>         | Grows along the tops of walls and out of tree branches, with no soil to speak of.                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Common Ragwort</b> <i>Jacobaea vulgaris</i>           | Poisonous to horses, and indispensable to a great many insects — both things are true.                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Common Reed</b> <i>Phragmites australis</i>           | The tallest grass in Britain, and the plant that builds an entire habitat around itself.               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Common Valerian</b> <i>Valeriana officinalis</i>      | The root smells so strongly of old socks that cats react to it like catnip.                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Cow Parsley</b> <i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>          | Queen Anne's lace — the froth of white that fills every verge in May.                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Cuckooflower</b> <i>Cardamine pratensis</i>           | Lady's smock — it flowers when the cuckoo arrives, and feeds the orange-tip's caterpillars.            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Devil's-bit Scabious</b> <i>Succisa pratensis</i>     | Named for a root that looks bitten off — the devil, allegedly, being annoyed at how useful it was.     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |   | <b>Dog Rose</b> <i>Rosa canina</i>                       | Pale pink, faintly scented, and armed with hooked thorns that climb by hanging on.                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Dog's Mercury</b> <i>Mercurialis perennis</i>         | A dull green carpet with a rank smell — and thoroughly poisonous.                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Elder</b> <i>Sambucus nigra</i>                       | Grows anywhere the ground has been disturbed, and gives two harvests a year.                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Foxglove</b> <i>Digitalis purpurea</i>                | The source of the heart drug digoxin — and lethally poisonous straight off the plant.                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Giant Hogweed</b> <i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>     | Its sap causes severe burns that recur in sunlight for years. Do not touch it.                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Goat Willow</b> <i>Salix caprea</i>                   | The pussy willow — silver-grey buds that turn into the first real bee food of the year.                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Gorse</b> <i>Ulex europaeus</i>                       | 'When gorse is out of blossom, kissing's out of fashion' — because it is never entirely out of flower. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Great Willowherb</b> <i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>        | Codlins-and-cream — soft-hairy all over, with notched purple-pink petals and a white centre.           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Harebell</b> <i>Campanula rotundifolia</i>            | The bluebell of Scotland — and nothing at all to do with the woodland bluebell.                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Hart's-tongue Fern</b> <i>Asplenium scolopendrium</i> | The only common fern here with undivided strap-shaped fronds — no lacework at all.                     |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> |     | <b>Hawthorn</b> <i>Crataegus monogyna</i>                                    | The may tree — and the hedge that encloses most of the fields around Dumfries.                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Hazel</b> <i>Corylus avellana</i>                                         | Lambs' tails in January, and nuts in autumn that half the wood is waiting for.                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Hemlock Water-dropwort</b> <i>Oenanthe crocata</i>                        | Probably the most poisonous plant in Britain — and it looks like celery.                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Herb Robert</b> <i>Geranium robertianum</i>                               | Ferny leaves that turn bright red in poor ground, and a smell most people dislike.                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Himalayan Balsam</b> <i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>                        | Fires its seeds several metres when touched — which is exactly why it owns the riverbank.            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Hogweed</b> <i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>                                  | Coarser and later than cow parsley — and its sap can still blister you in sunshine.                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Holly</b> <i>Ilex aquifolium</i>                                          | Only the female trees carry berries — and the upper leaves often lose their prickles entirely.       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Honeysuckle</b> <i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>                              | Saves its scent for the evening, when the moths it needs are flying.                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |   | <b>Ivy</b> <i>Hedera helix</i>                                               | Flowers when almost nothing else does, and fruits when the birds most need it.                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Japanese Knotweed</b> <i>Reynoutria japonica</i>                          | Almost every plant in Britain is female, and genetically one single clone.                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Lady Fern</b> <i>Athyrium filix-femina</i>                                | Finer, softer and more delicate than male fern — and one of the first to collapse in autumn.         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Lesser Celandine</b> <i>Ficaria verna</i>                                 | Glossy yellow stars that open with the sun and shut tight the moment it goes in.                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Male Fern</b> <i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>                                 | The classic shuttlecock fern of a shady bank — and named only in contrast to the 'female' lady fern. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Marsh Marigold</b> <i>Caltha palustris</i>                                | Kingcups — big glossy gold flowers in the wet, and one of our oldest surviving natives.              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Meadow Buttercup</b> <i>Ranunculus acris</i>                              | The gloss on the petals is a mirror — which is why it really does shine under your chin.             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Meadowsweet</b> <i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>                                | The plant that gave aspirin both its chemistry and, indirectly, its name.                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Navelwort (Wall Pennywort)</b> <i>Umbilicus rupestris</i>                 | Round fleshy leaves dimpled in the middle like a navel — a succulent growing out of a wall.          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Opposite-leaved Golden-saxifrage</b> <i>Chrysosplenium oppositifolium</i> | A low golden-green mat on wet, shaded ground — and its flowers have no petals at all.                |

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| <input type="checkbox"/> |     | <b>Ox-eye Daisy</b> <i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>          | The moon daisy — a big white daisy that glows on a verge at dusk.                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Oxford Ragwort</b> <i>Senecio squalidus</i>           | Escaped from a botanic garden and rode the railway network across Britain.                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Pedunculate Oak</b> <i>Quercus robur</i>              | Acorns on long stalks, leaves on almost none — the mirror image of the sessile oak.            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Primrose</b> <i>Primula vulgaris</i>                  | Comes in two forms — pin-eyed and thrum-eyed — so a flower can never pollinate itself.         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Purple Loosestrife</b> <i>Lythrum salicaria</i>       | Tall magenta spikes along the water's edge — and three different flower forms in one species.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Ramsons (Wild Garlic)</b> <i>Allium ursinum</i>       | You smell a ramsons wood well before you reach it.                                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Red Campion</b> <i>Silene dioica</i>                  | Male and female flowers on separate plants — and only the females make seed.                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |    | <b>Red Clover</b> <i>Trifolium pratense</i>              | Only long-tongued bumblebees can reach the nectar — which is why they matter to farming.       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |   | <b>Reed Canary-grass</b> <i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>     | The tall grass that takes over a riverbank — greener, earlier and looser than common reed.     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Rosebay Willowherb</b> <i>Chamerion angustifolium</i> | Fireweed — it swept across bombed cities and burnt ground within a single generation.          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Rowan</b> <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>                     | Planted by doorways for centuries to keep witches out — and stripped by thrushes every autumn. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Rustyback Fern</b> <i>Asplenium ceterach</i>          | Turn a frond over and the underside is covered in rust-coloured scales.                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Scots Pine</b> <i>Pinus sylvestris</i>                | Britain's only native pine — orange bark in the crown, and needles in neat pairs.              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Selfheal</b> <i>Prunella vulgaris</i>                 | Survives mowing by simply flowering lower — you will find it in the middle of a lawn.          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Sessile Oak</b> <i>Quercus petraea</i>                | The oak of the western hanging woods — acorns sit tight to the twig, leaves have long stalks.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Silver Birch</b> <i>Betula pendula</i>                | White bark, weeping twigs, and the first tree back on any patch of bare ground.                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Water Forget-me-not</b> <i>Myosotis scorpioides</i>   | The flower spike uncoils as it opens, like a scorpion's tail — hence the name.                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Water Mint</b> <i>Mentha aquatica</i>                 | Walk along a wet ditch in August and you will smell it before you see it.                      |

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|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> |   | <b>White Clover</b> <i>Trifolium repens</i>     | The clover in your lawn — and the one people search for a fourth leaf on.                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Wild Teasel</b> <i>Dipsacus fullonum</i>     | Its paired leaves hold a cup of rainwater — and goldfinches work the seedheads all winter.      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Wood Anemone</b> <i>Anemone nemorosa</i>     | Spreads about two metres a century — so a good carpet of it is genuinely ancient.               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Wood Avens</b> <i>Geum urbanum</i>           | Also called herb bennet — and its burred seedheads are how it gets around.                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Wood Sorrel</b> <i>Oxalis acetosella</i>     | Shamrock-shaped leaves that fold down flat at night and in bright sun.                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Wych Elm</b> <i>Ulmus glabra</i>             | Our only certainly native elm, and Scotland still holds mature trees that England largely lost. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Yarrow</b> <i>Achillea millefolium</i>       | Feathery leaves and flat white flower heads — a battlefield wound herb since antiquity.         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> |  | <b>Yellow Flag Iris</b> <i>Iris pseudacorus</i> | Almost certainly the flower behind the fleur-de-lis.                                            |

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