Out this month — November

Plants to look for in and around Dumfries · 48 species

☐		**Alder** *Alnus glutinosa*	The tree that holds the riverbank together — and the only broadleaf here with little woody cones.
☐		**Ash** *Fraxinus excelsior*	Sooty-black buds in winter — and a tree now facing a disease that may take most of them.
☐		**Biting Stonecrop** *Sedum acre*	A mat of gold on a wall top in June — and the leaves are peppery enough to sting the tongue.
☐		**Blackthorn** *Prunus spinosa*	Flowers on bare black twigs before any leaf — a cold snap during it is still called a blackthorn winter.
☐		**Bramble** *Rubus fruticosus agg.*	Not one species but hundreds of near-identical microspecies — and the best free food there is.
☐		**Broad Buckler-fern** *Dryopteris dilatata*	Dark scales with a black stripe down the middle — the surest way to name it.
☐		**Cladonia Cup Lichen** *Cladonia fimbriata*	Tiny grey-green golf tees standing up out of the moss — miniature and easily missed.
☐		**Common Butterfly Bush** *Buddleja davidii*	Feeds butterflies magnificently and wrecks masonry thoroughly — both at once.
☐		**Common Haircap Moss** *Polytrichum commune*	One of the tallest mosses in the world, and it has something close to plumbing.
☐		**Common Knapweed** *Centaurea nigra*	Hardhead — a thistle-like flower with no prickles at all, and the best nectar on the verge.
☐		**Common Nettle** *Urtica dioica*	The sting is a hypodermic needle made of glass — and four of our best butterflies depend on it.
☐		**Common Orange Lichen** *Xanthoria parietina*	The bright orange crust on a wall or gravestone — and it thrives on nitrogen pollution.
☐		**Common Polypody** *Polypodium vulgare*	Grows along the tops of walls and out of tree branches, with no soil to speak of.
☐		**Common Ragwort** *Jacobaea vulgaris*	Poisonous to horses, and indispensable to a great many insects — both things are true.
☐		**Common Reed** *Phragmites australis*	The tallest grass in Britain, and the plant that builds an entire habitat around itself.
☐		**Devil's-bit Scabious** *Succisa pratensis*	Named for a root that looks bitten off — the devil, allegedly, being annoyed at how useful it was.

☐		**Dog Rose** *Rosa canina*	Pale pink, faintly scented, and armed with hooked thorns that climb by hanging on.
☐		**Elder** *Sambucus nigra*	Grows anywhere the ground has been disturbed, and gives two harvests a year.
☐		**Foxglove** *Digitalis purpurea*	The source of the heart drug digoxin — and lethally poisonous straight off the plant.
☐		**Goat Willow** *Salix caprea*	The pussy willow — silver-grey buds that turn into the first real bee food of the year.
☐		**Gorse** *Ulex europaeus*	'When gorse is out of blossom, kissing's out of fashion' — because it is never entirely out of flower.
☐		**Hart's-tongue Fern** *Asplenium scolopendrium*	The only common fern here with undivided strap-shaped fronds — no lacework at all.
☐		**Hawthorn** *Crataegus monogyna*	The may tree — and the hedge that encloses most of the fields around Dumfries.
☐		**Hazel** *Corylus avellana*	Lambs' tails in January, and nuts in autumn that half the wood is waiting for.
☐		**Herb Robert** *Geranium robertianum*	Ferny leaves that turn bright red in poor ground, and a smell most people dislike.
☐		**Holly** *Ilex aquifolium*	Only the female trees carry berries — and the upper leaves often lose their prickles entirely.
☐		**Honeysuckle** *Lonicera periclymenum*	Saves its scent for the evening, when the moths it needs are flying.
☐		**Ivy** *Hedera helix*	Flowers when almost nothing else does, and fruits when the birds most need it.
☐		**Japanese Knotweed** *Reynoutria japonica*	Almost every plant in Britain is female, and genetically one single clone.
☐		**Male Fern** *Dryopteris filix-mas*	The classic shuttlecock fern of a shady bank — and named only in contrast to the 'female' lady fern.
☐		**Navelwort (Wall Pennywort)** *Umbilicus rupestris*	Round fleshy leaves dimpled in the middle like a navel — a succulent growing out of a wall.
☐		**Opposite-leaved Golden-saxifrage** *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*	A low golden-green mat on wet, shaded ground — and its flowers have no petals at all.
☐		**Ox-eye Daisy** *Leucanthemum vulgare*	The moon daisy — a big white daisy that glows on a verge at dusk.
☐		**Oxford Ragwort** *Senecio squalidus*	Escaped from a botanic garden and rode the railway network across Britain.

☐		**Pedunculate Oak** *Quercus robur*	Acorns on long stalks, leaves on almost none — the mirror image of the sessile oak.
☐		**Primrose** *Primula vulgaris*	Comes in two forms — pin-eyed and thrum-eyed — so a flower can never pollinate itself.
☐		**Reed Canary-grass** *Phalaris arundinacea*	The tall grass that takes over a riverbank — greener, earlier and looser than common reed.
☐		**Rowan** *Sorbus aucuparia*	Planted by doorways for centuries to keep witches out — and stripped by thrushes every autumn.
☐		**Rustyback Fern** *Asplenium ceterach*	Turn a frond over and the underside is covered in rust-coloured scales.
☐		**Scots Pine** *Pinus sylvestris*	Britain's only native pine — orange bark in the crown, and needles in neat pairs.
☐		**Selfheal** *Prunella vulgaris*	Survives mowing by simply flowering lower — you will find it in the middle of a lawn.
☐		**Sessile Oak** *Quercus petraea*	The oak of the western hanging woods — acorns sit tight to the twig, leaves have long stalks.
☐		**Silver Birch** *Betula pendula*	White bark, weeping twigs, and the first tree back on any patch of bare ground.
☐		**White Clover** *Trifolium repens*	The clover in your lawn — and the one people search for a fourth leaf on.
☐		**Wild Teasel** *Dipsacus fullonum*	Its paired leaves hold a cup of rainwater — and goldfinches work the seedheads all winter.
☐		**Wood Avens** *Geum urbanum*	Also called herb bennet — and its burred seedheads are how it gets around.
☐		**Wych Elm** *Ulmus glabra*	Our only certainly native elm, and Scotland still holds mature trees that England largely lost.
☐		**Yarrow** *Achillea millefolium*	Feathery leaves and flat white flower heads — a battlefield wound herb since antiquity.

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