

How to encourage native wildflowers

- 1 Select a patch of grass:** It could be large or small, or even a strip around the edge of your lawn.
- 2 Reduce mowing:** Mow once a month, or less, instead of every week or fortnight.
- 3 Remove grass clippings when you mow:** Wildflowers prefer nutrient-poor soil, so this is a crucial step to help reduce soil fertility.
- 4 Watch and wait:** Results will not be instant. At first you might see grass and not much else, but these grasses provide food for many butterflies. As soil fertility decreases, local wildflowers will appear - the best food source for our threatened pollinators. It may take a few years, but it will be worth the wait!

Create a 'long flowering meadow'

Choose some areas to mow just once a year. As well as providing food in the form of native wildflowers, long-flowering meadows also provide shelter for biodiversity in the winter months.



Naturally grown meadows

- ✓ Contain native wildflowers that are perfectly adapted to your local biodiversity
- ✓ Support a wide range of species above and below ground
- ✓ Help store carbon
- ✓ Grasslands help prevent flooding, contribute to urban cooling, and support butterflies
- ✓ Cost nothing, other than management

Wildflower seed mixes

- ✗ Are designed to be attractive to humans, rather than support native wildlife
- ✗ Often contain non-native species, despite what the packet says
- ✗ Can accidentally introduce invasive species
- ✗ Usually contain annuals so require sowing every year, leaving exposed bare ground in winter where unwanted plants can take over
- ✗ Can be expensive

Celebrating Native Wildflowers



Allowing native wildflowers to grow is one of the best ways you can help biodiversity. These precious plants have evolved on our island for many thousands of years and are perfectly adapted to support other native species, especially pollinators.

In recent years, wildflower seed mixes have become popular, but they can damage biodiversity. Real native wildflowers don't need to come from a packet.

The problem with wildflower seed mixes

Bright, colourful wildflower seed mixes are easy to buy in shops or online. Many claim to be 'native', 'Irish', or 'bee friendly'. But there is no regulation over their content, and studies have shown they often contain non-native species or seeds that have been sourced outside of

Ireland which are not adapted to our soil and climate. They can also accidentally introduce invasive species, such as Black-grass.

Real native wildflowers cost nothing. Their seeds are in the soil beneath our feet, waiting for a chance to emerge. All you need to do is select an existing patch of grass, and mow less.



Real wildflowers grow wild

Celebrate these native species that appear when you reduce mowing



Bee Orchid



Dandelion



Field Forget-me-not



Germander Speedwell



Bird's-foot-trefoil



Black Medick



Bush Vetch



Lesser Celandine



Meadow Buttercup



Meadow Vetchling



Cat's-ear/Hawk-bit



Common Dog-violet



Common Knapweed



Oxeye Daisy



Primrose



Red Clover



Common Mouse-ear



Common Spotted-Orchid



Cowslip



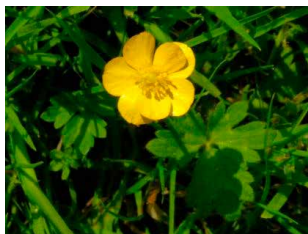
Ribwort Plantain



Selfheal



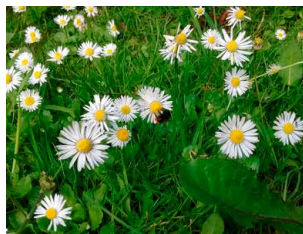
Tufted Vetch



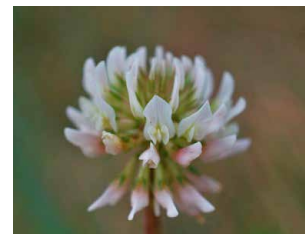
Creeping Buttercup



Cuckooflower



Daisy



White Clover



Yarrow



Yellow Rattle