

## New Wildflowers Count survey - Plantlife asks the public to take a walk and keep track of Scottish wildflowers

Plantlife is today launching a new survey - Wildflowers Count - encouraging people across the UK to monitor wildflowers near where they live. Wildflowers Count will incorporate Plantlife's Common Plants Survey which has been running since 2000, and will extend this to encourage even more people to be involved. The most simple survey asks people to take a local walk and record the common wildflowers they see.

"Wildflowers and other plants are the fundamental building blocks of our natural environment, sustaining us as well as the birds, mammals and other wildlife that we cherish," says Davie Black, Plantlife Scotland's Volunteer Coordinator. "The wildflowers we see around us help show the health of our environment and factors such as improved rural management, changes in woodland management, pollution or climate change may all affect the wildflowers seen in positive or negative ways. When members of the public keep a watch and record what they see, particularly if they take part each year, their records help to show what is happening."

For the new Wildflowers Count survey, there are three ways to get involved - so that people can choose one that suits their level of interest and the time they have available:

**Wildflower Path** asks people to walk along a route within an area close to home and record the presence of easy to identify wildflowers found in different habitats, using Plantlife's Wildflowers Count ID Guide to help them. No specialist knowledge is needed, and it's a good way of getting to know more wildflower names.

**Wildflower Plots** involves recording the abundance of common wildflowers within fixed small areas near to home, using the Wildflowers Count ID guide.

**Super Surveyors** is for more skilled botanists who would like to record extra species of plants in their plots.

Wildflowers Count (with its predecessor the Common Plants Survey) is the only annual UK-wide survey of wildflowers, their abundance and distribution. Since 2000, more than 1000 volunteers have been involved in the Common Plants Survey, monitoring common wildflowers in selected plots near their homes across the UK. The wildflowers in the new ID Guide are chosen to be easy to identify and many of them are 'indicator species' which help tell us something about the environment in a particular area, eg. Wood Anemone is an indicator of long-established woodlands and Reedmace is a wetland plant which tolerates high nutrient conditions.

In Scotland, the Wildflowers Count survey is part of Plantlife's **Places for People and Plants Project**, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Scottish Natural Heritage, which aims to enable people to engage with and learn about their local wild plant heritage, and become actively involved in its conservation.

To take part in Wildflowers Count in Scotland, phone 01786 479382 or email [scotland@plantlife.org.uk](mailto:scotland@plantlife.org.uk).

