



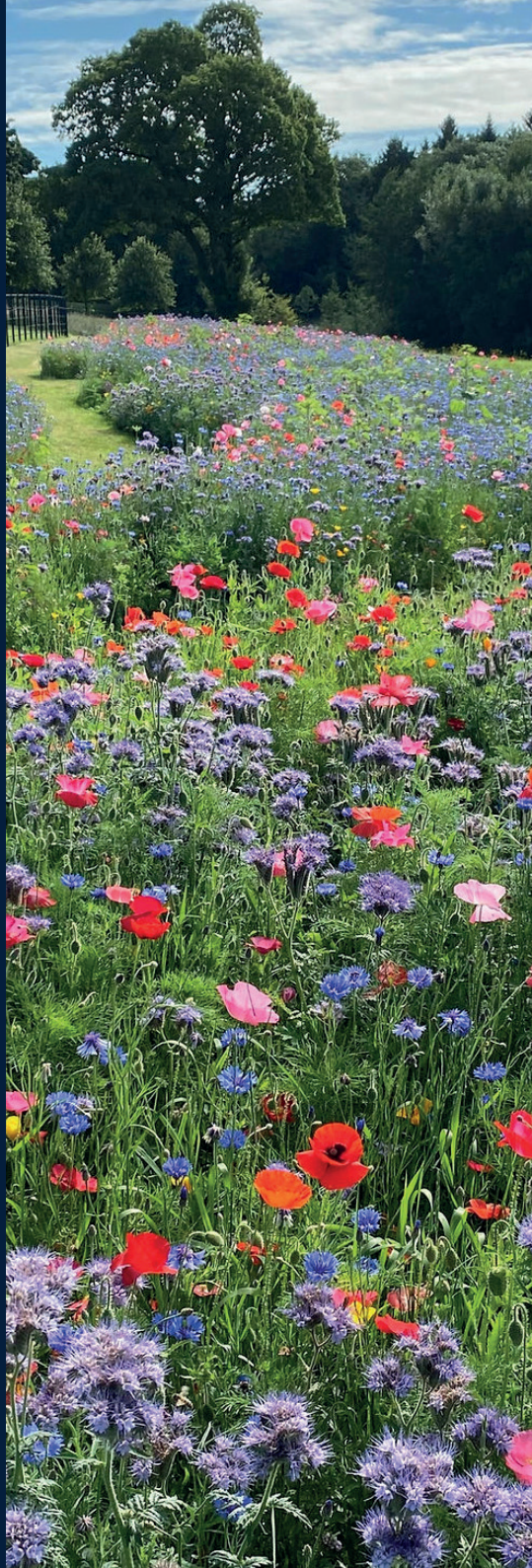
Growing Guide

How to sow your
Wildflowers

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How to sow your Wildflowers

Step 1:

Site preparation is key. First, you will need to remove all Nettles, Thistles, Docks and Grass and any other weeds. You can spray the weeds using a Glyphosate weed killer or you can pull/dig them up.

You are aiming to produce a weed free tilth in order to promote healthy germination and zero competition. Weeds and grasses grow much faster than wildflowers and so, will therefore out-compete and eventually take over the wildflowers.

Wildflowers do not like overly fertile soils, so there is no need to add compost. If the topsoil is already very fertile it may be worth removing and replacing with some subsoil.

Cultivate the site to a depth of around 10cm for free draining soil and 25cm for bad draining or compacted soil. This can be done with a fork, rotavator or on large areas, a plough.

Once you are ready to sow, measure the area so you can work out how much seed you will require. Typically this will be between 2g-5g/m².



Step 2:

Sowing is recommended through the Spring months of March and April and then again in August-September which is the natural seeding time. Although you can sow throughout the year, providing you have a good tilth prepared and way to keep the seed bed watered. Make sure to check what type of soil you have and check the PH if you can. Some wildflowers will only grow in certain soils and PH levels. For advice on what kind of soil you have give us a call to speak with one of our advisors.

When sowing your seed, for small areas where you are sowing by hand we suggest mixing the seed with some fine sand in a bucket and then spread the whole mix evenly over the area. This will ensure an even spread of the seed.

Once sown, rake or harrow the area to mix the seed in the soil to approx. 0.5cm in depth. Afterwards, it's best to roll the area to compact the soil slightly. If it's a small area, it can be carefully pressed in by standing on the area.



Step 3:

Future Maintenance of your Wildflowers will ensure a happy and healthy bed. Whilst they are low maintenance it is worthwhile putting some time into looking after your wildflower seed bed for best results.

In the first year after sowing, weed control is a priority. If weeds are present they can be controlled by pulling the weeds out by hand or using a hoe, we would not recommend using any weed killer sprays as these will kill the wildflowers too.

You will only see the Annual wildflowers in the 1st year. Unless re-sown.

In the 2nd year after sowing, the companion grass and wildflowers will be established and annual weeds will be out-competed, meaning less maintenance.

Perennial & Biennial plants will be seen flowering in the second year. The Perennials will then flower every year after. The Annual/Biennial plants will be seen if the seeds are distributed after cutting and before removing the cuttings.

Wildflowers should be cut twice a year, once in the spring which should be a very light cut to even out the growing for the flowering season. They should then be cut again in late autumn after all of the plants have produced a seed head. The late autumn cut will help distribute seeds produced by the wildflowers this cut should be done with a topper or strimmer so the seed heads are not mulched as this will defeat the purpose of the cut. The clippings should then be removed from the site and shaken out as best as possible to ensure all of the seeds have dropped onto the ground. This will keep the annual and biennial flowers coming back year after year.

Sowing rates for Wildflowers:

5g/m² - Mixtures containing Grass (80% Grass 20% wildflower)

2g/m² - Pure 100% wildflower Mixtures



Companion Grass

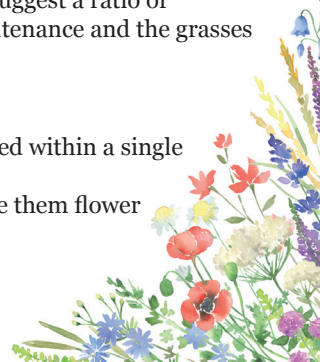
Mixtures can come ready mixed with wildflower seed for sowing. We suggest a ratio of 80:20 grass to wildflowers. The grasses are slow growing and low maintenance and the grasses will not out compete the wildflowers.

Different Types of Wildflowers

Annual- these perform their entire life cycle from seed to flower to seed within a single growing season (mainly Cornfield Wildflowers are annual).

Perennial- they persist for many growing seasons but you will not see them flower in the first season (most Wildflowers are Perennial).

Biennial- they require two years to complete their life cycle, they flower in the second year only. For example Foxglove.



Glossary of



Corn Flower



Corn Marigold



Corn Poppy



Corn Chamomile



Corn Cockle



Common Sorrel



Betony



Tufted Vetch



Red Campion



Lady's Bedstraw



Ragged Robin



Devil's-Bit Scabious



Oxeye Daisy



Foxglove



Yarrow



Red Clover



White Clover



Phacelia



Yellow Rattle



Self Heal

Wildflowers

Sheeps/Salad Burnet

Deep rooting prevents soil erosion.
Helps with health and liveweight gain in ruminants.
Anti-oxidising, helping with indigestion in horses.
Prefers light soils and is drought resistant.



Sainfoin

Perennial legume suiting limestone, chalk and stony soils.
Doesn't perform well on heavy soils or anything with a pH less than 6.2.



Common Vetch

Nitrogen fixing and improves soil structure.
Winter Hardy and high protein content.
Early and rapid establishment.
High nutritional value.



Birdsfoot Trefoil

Nitrogen fixing legume which won't bloat animals and is Methane suppressing.
Produces more Nitrogen than White Clover, but only lasts 3-4 years.
Do not overgraze or mow too low (between 5-10cm) – it requires six weeks to recover.



Ribgrass/Plantain

Suits most soils types.
High in minerals, especially Copper and Selenium.
Increases milk and meat production in sheep and cattle.
Reduces effects of internal parasites, increases daily liveweight gain and is very palatable.



Lucerne/ Alfalfa

Renowned for its slow establishment.
High yielding protein forage with low energy levels.
Nitrogen fixing with long tap roots. Up to 4 cuts a year over 5 years. Can cause bloat in grazing stock.
Suited to sandy/free draining soils as it searches out moisture.



Chicory

High in minerals including Zinc, Potassium and Copper.
Helps reduce effects of internal parasites.
Good tolerance to drought, acidic soils and major pests.
Do not allow crown to be taken out (mowing or grazing).
Don't let it go to flower, it will become toxic and sour.



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