

# Wildflowers on Road Verges

*A series of ID guides to help you discover more of Leicestershire's wonderful wildlife*

These 47 wildflowers are the most frequently recorded species from NatureSpot's recent surveys of road verges in Leicestershire. They are grouped by flower families with a note of the features that are common to all species featured. The features described below the images should help you distinguish between the other species illustrated. However there may be other, less common, species that are not listed. A hand-lens is always useful to look at the small, but often important, details. To record these species on NatureSpot, please attach a photo. *When viewing online, simply click on the species name to find out more.*

## Buttercup family – *Ranunculaceae*

5 petals (not fused), many stamens, many carpels



**Creeping Buttercup**  
*Ranunculus repens*

Apical leaflet stalked  
Sepals not reflexed  
Stem grooved



**Bulbous Buttercup**  
*Ranunculus bulbosus*

Sepals reflexed  
Stem grooved



**Meadow Buttercup**  
*Ranunculus acris*

Single leaf deeply divided  
Sepals not reflexed  
Stem smooth

## Pea family – *Fabaceae*

Flowers with a standard and two wings, sepals fused into a calyx tube, leaves with leaflets



**Common Vetch**  
*Vicia sativa*

Flowers in groups of 1-3  
Leaf with terminal tendrill  
Leaflets widen slightly in the middle



**Bush Vetch**  
*Vicia sepium*

Flowers in groups of 2-6  
Leaf with terminal tendrill  
Leaflets widest near the base



**Lesser Trefoil**  
*Trifolium dubium*

3 leaflets – no point at tip



**White Clover**  
*Trifolium repens*

Leaflets not hairy



**Red Clover**  
*Trifolium pratense*

Leaflets hairy  
Uppermost leaf close to the flower



**Black Medick**  
*Medicago lupulina*

3 leaflets – sharp point at tip  
Black, clustered seeds



## Rose family – *Rosaceae*

Very varied. The three below all have an epicalyx (extra calyx of leaflets below the true calyx).



**Creeping Cinquefoil**

*Potentilla reptans*

5 palmate leaflets  
5 yellow notched petals  
Roots at the nodes



**Silver weed**

*Potentilla anserina*

Intercalary leaflets  
Silvery leaves



**Wood Avens**

*Geum urbanum*

Intercalary leaflets  
Seeds with hooked beaks

## Crane's-bill family – *Geraniaceae*

Long, pointed seed heads (like a crane's bill)



**Herb-Robert**

*Geranium robertianum*

Leaflets deeply lobed



**Cut-leaved Crane's-bill**

*Geranium dissectum*

Leaves divided to near the base  
Stem hairs all same length



**Dove's-foot Crane's-bill**

*Geranium molle*

Leaves divided to near half-way  
Stem hairs of different lengths

## Pink family – *Caryophyllaceae*

Opposite leaves



**Chickweed**

*Stellaria media*

Flower with 3 stigmas  
Stem with single line of hairs



**Common Mouse-ear**

*Cerastium fontanum*

5 stigmas  
Non-glandular hairs



**Sticky Mouse-ear**

*Cerastium glomeratum*

5 stigmas  
Glandular hairs (drumsticks)

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## Dock family – *Polygonaceae*

Has a sheath (ochrea) surrounding the stem above each leaf joint.



**Broad-leaved Dock**  
*Rumex obtusifolius*  
Cordate leaf base  
Tepals toothed



**Curled Dock**  
*Rumex crispus*  
Lower leaves undulate  
Tepals smooth edged



**Wood Dock**  
*Rumex sanguineus*  
Narrow leaves not cordate/undulate  
Narrow tepals, rounded tubercle

## Bedstraw family – *Galiaceae*

Leaves in whorls



**Cleavers**  
*Galium aparine*  
Stem + leaves with prickles  
White flowers



**Hedge Bedstraw**  
*Galium album*  
Stem smooth, leaves with prickles  
White flowers



**Lady's Bedstraw**  
*Galium verum*  
Stem + leaves smooth  
Leaf edges rolled over  
Yellow flowers

## Speedwell family – *Veronicaceae*

4 petals – lowest smaller, 2 stamens, seed capsule with 2 lobes



**Germander Speedwell**  
*Veronica chamaedrys*  
Lilac/blue flowers in auxiliary racemes  
Stems with 2 rows of hairs



**Common Field Speedwell**  
*Veronica persica*  
Single pale blue flowers in leaf axils  
Seed lobes divergent



**Wall Speedwell**  
*Veronica arvensis*  
Tiny blue flowers in terminal racemes  
Leaves narrow, triangular, hairy

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## Plantain family – *Plantaginaceae*

Leaves in a rosette. Tiny flowers on a cylindrical and leaflet stem.



**Ribwort Plantain**  
***Plantago lanceolata***

Long, thin leaves with long prominent veins



**Great Plantain**  
***Plantago major***

Rounded leaves with distinct petiole (leaf stalk)

## Dead-nettle family – *Lamiaceae*

Square stems, opposite leaves, corolla fused into a tube, upper and lower petal lips.



**Red Dead-nettle**  
***Lamium purpureum***

Pink-red flowers.  
Purple dots on lower lip.

Rounded leaves with blunt teeth



**White Dead-nettle**  
***Lamium album***

White flowers encircle stem  
Nettle-like leaves



**Ground Ivy**  
***Glechoma hederacea***

Leaves kidney-shaped, blunt teeth  
Upper lip short, upturned

## Carrot family – *Apiaceae*

Flowers in umbels, 5 petals



**Hogweed**  
***Heracleum sphondylium***

Large leaves, 1 pinnate, lobed



**Cow Parsley**  
***Anthriscus sylvestris***

Leaves 2-3 pinnate, deeply divided

## Ivy family – *Araliaceae*

Flowers in umbels, fruits as berries



**Ivy**  
***Hedera helix***

Flower a rounded umbel  
Black berries

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## Daisy family – Asteraceae

Many small flowers crowded together



**Dandelion**

*Taraxacum officinale agg.*

Basal leaves with triangular lobes  
1 flower per stem – without leaves



**Autumn Hawkbit**

*Scorzoneroides autumnalis*

Leaves with finger-like lobes  
No scales on flowering stalk



**Cat's-ear**

*Hypochaeris radicata*

Leaves with hairs + pimples  
Scales on flowering stalk



**Daisy**

*Bellis perennis*

Evergreen leaves in basal rosette  
Disc florets yellow, ray florets white



**Ox-eye Daisy**

*Leucanthemum vulgare*

Leaves on flowering stem



**Groundsel**

*Senecio vulgaris*

Only petal tips visible  
Leaves deeply lobed



**Common Ragwort**

*Jacobaea vulgaris*

Ray florets + Disc florets



**Spear Thistle**

*Cirsium vulgare*

Stem with spiny wings  
Terminal leaf spike very long



**Creeping Thistle**

*Cirsium arvense*

Stem without spiny wings



**Yarrow**

*Achillea millifolium*

Leaves 2-4 pinnate, very divided  
Many white flowers on each stem



**Smooth Sowthistle**

*Sonchus oleraceus*

Toothed leaves, pointed auricle



**Prickly Sowthistle**

*Sonchus asper*

Prickly leaves, rounded auricle

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