

Grow your own mini-meadow

Support local wildlife - grow your own wildflower meadow

You can help wildflowers and wildlife in your own back garden by creating a wildflower lawn or meadow. Your wildflower area will bring wildlife into your garden and provide colours, scents and sounds for you to enjoy throughout summer.

Planning your meadow

- Choose a quiet space away from areas of high use to ensure plants don't get trampled.
- Pick a sunny spot for your meadow. Most meadow species don't do well in the shade.
- Where possible buy local provenance seeds or plug plants. You can buy small packets of northern provenance wildflower seed from the YDMT online shop ydmtd.org/shop. Each packet contains enough seed for two square metres.

Wildflowers support a wide range of pollinating insects such as hoverflies and bumblebees which, together with seed heads, provide food for birds, voles, shrews, hedgehogs and other small mammals.



A step by step guide to creating your meadow area

1. Decide in early spring where your meadow will be located and mark it out.
2. Let the vegetation grow during spring and summer to see what plants come up naturally.
3. In late August/ September mow the area hard and rake off all the vegetation (which can be composted).
4. Rake the ground to create areas of bare soil.
5. Sow the seed at a rate of 1.5 grams per square metre. A flour shaker can be used to do this. For areas bigger than a few square metres you can mix the seed with sand, this helps to spread the seed evenly and you can see where seed has already been sown.

Top Tip Add Yellow rattle to produce a better display of flowers and ease the mowing required. It's semi-parasitic properties help to suppress the growth of vigorous grasses. Add it as seed in the autumn as it needs a period of prolonged cold to germinate.

6. Don't rake the seed into the soil - it needs to lie on the surface.
7. Now it's time to trample! Get family, friends or children to pretend to be sheep or cattle walking over the meadow! This will press the seed firmly onto the soil.
8. Water the area regularly during dry weather.

Yorkshire Dales meadow plants

Common hay meadow plants

- Meadow buttercup
- Ribwort plantain
- Common sorrel
- Selfheal
- Pignut
- Red clover

Less common hay meadow plants

- Rough hawkbit
- Meadow vetchling
- Common knapweed
- Ox-eye daisy
- Common bistort
- Devil's-bit scabious
- Eyebright
- Yellow rattle
- Bird's-foot trefoil
- Betony

Hay meadow grasses

- Sweet vernal grass
- Yellow oat grass
- Quaking grass
- Red fescue
- Common bent
- Crested dog's-tail



Managing your meadow

- Mow the meadow regularly to a height of 4cm from September until the grass stops growing, otherwise the seedlings will be shaded out.
- Start mowing again in early spring, stopping in mid-April to allow the wildflowers to grow.
- Mow your meadow once at any time between mid-July and mid-September to a height of 5cm. Leave the cuttings for a day or two to allow any wildflower seeds to be shed and then rake the cuttings off and compost them.

Good luck! We hope you and the wildlife enjoy your meadow area for many years to come...

Save our meadows

Our work to restore species-rich hay meadows and protect pollinators and other wildlife that depend on them is possible because of donations and support from people like you. Here's how you can help...

Living Bouquet

Give a Living Bouquet gift & help create an area of traditional hay meadow habitat, full of native wildflowers and wildlife. livingbouquet.co.uk

Wildflower gifts

Buy something from our range of beautiful wildflower inspired gifts, including wildflower seed and jigsaws. ydmtd.org/shop

Donate

Visit ydmtd.org/donate every penny counts towards saving our precious meadows.