

## Cathedral Field Wildflower Grassland Restoration – Plant Survey 2016

In 2015 yellow rattle seed was spread across 2 ha of Cathedral Field to help reduce the grass cover and facilitate the restoration of a wildflower meadow. 1.24 kg of wildflower seed, 0.54 kg of common knapweed and 0.23 kg of oxeye daisy seed was spread with 10 kg of yellow rattle seed. This report contains the details of a walk-over survey.

### Species present

Plant	Species	Growth	05-05-16	03-06-16
Meadow foxtail	<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>	G	Y	
Sweet vernal grass	<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	G	Y	
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>	P	Y	
Soft brome	<i>Bromus hordeaceus</i>	G	Y	Y
Wavy bitter-cress	<i>Cardamine flexuosa</i>	A	Y	
Cuckooflower	<i>Cardamine pratensis</i>	P	Y	
Common knapweed	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	P		Y
Common mouse-ear	<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>	P		Y
Sticky mouse-ear	<i>Cerastium glomerata</i>	A	Y	
Smooth hawk's-beard	<i>Crepis capillaris</i>	A	Y	
Crested dog's-tail	<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>	G		Y
Wild teasel	<i>Dipsacus pilosus</i>	B	Y	
Willowherb sp.	<i>Epilobium</i> sp.	N/A	Y	
Common ramping-fumitory	<i>Fumaria muralis</i>	A	Y	
Cut-leaved crane's-bill	<i>Geranium dissectum</i>	A	Y	Y
Yorkshire fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	G	Y	Y
Cat's-ear	<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	P	Y	Y
Soft rush	<i>Juncus effusus</i>	R	Y	
Red dead-nettle	<i>Lamium purpureum</i>	A	Y	
Perennial rye-grass	<i>Lolium perenne</i>	G	Y	Y
Black medick	<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	P		Y
Ribwort plantain	<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	P	Y	Y
Annual meadow-grass	<i>Poa annua</i>	G	Y	
Rough meadow-grass	<i>Poa pratensis</i>	G		Y
Smooth meadow-grass	<i>Poa trivialis</i>	P	Y	
Meadow buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	P	Y	Y
Bulbous buttercup	<i>Ranunculus bulbosus</i>	P	Y	Y
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	P		Y
Yellow rattle	<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>	A	Y	Y
Common sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	P		Y
Curled dock	<i>Rumex crispus</i>	P		Y
Broad-leaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	P	Y	Y
Common ragwort	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>	B	Y	
Common chickweed	<i>Stellaria media</i>	A	Y	
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum</i> agg.	P	Y	Y
Red clover	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	P	Y	Y
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>	P	Y	Y
Tufted vetch	<i>Vicia cracca</i>	P	Y	
Common vetch	<i>Vicia sativa</i>	P		Y

G = Grass  
R = Rush  
A = Annual  
B = Biennial  
P = Perennial

## **Results**

A large amount of yellow rattle was present throughout the field, indicating that the seed sowing undertaken in November 2015 was successful. A number of other annuals were also present including sticky mouse-ear, smooth hawk's-beard, common ramping-fumitory, cut-leaved crane's-bill, red dead-nettle and common chickweed. This is not surprising as the field was regularly cultivated prior to 2009, and these species were probably present in the soil seed bed. The field preparation creating bare ground will have triggered any seeds to germinate. It is likely that these species will decline over time as the vegetation sward becomes thicker and there is reduced soil disturbance.

There were some perennial wildflowers present, including tufted vetch, common vetch, red clover and white clover. Also present was a plant of common knapweed. All of these species were present prior to the restoration in 2015, and did not increase in cover in 2016.

## **Future management**

The field should be with tine- or chain-harrowed in the autumn to remove any dead leaf litter and create small bare patches. This will allow the yellow rattle to germinate and parasitise the grasses reducing the grass cover.

It was not expected to see flowers resulting from the wildflower seed, common knapweed and oxeye daisy seed in 2016, and the basal leaf rosettes may have been missed during the survey. Oxeye daisy is a short-lived perennial wildflower and should flower in the summer of 2017.

Common ragwort is a problem species present at Longrun Meadow. There were very few flowering plants in 2016, possibly as this species is biennial, forming a leaf rosette in the first year and flowering the second year. A fair number of rosettes were present across Cathedral Field and will probably flower in 2017. Pulling these plants to remove any contamination of the hay crop will be required to continue with suitable management of Cathedral Field.