



**Maharees Conservation Association**  
Protecting | Enhancing | Preserving

## Flora and Fauna of the Maharees and Castlegregory - Series 3

Welcome to the Maharees and Castlegregory area - home to many interesting and sometimes rare species of flora and fauna. Using these species spotter sheets, see how many different species you can find as you enjoy our beautiful area. Wild flowers are an important source of food for our pollinators and we appreciate your cooperation in allowing them to grow! Supported by Kerry County Council, the Community Environment Action Fund and the BSc in Wildlife Biology at MTU Kerry.



**MTU**  
Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta na Mumhan  
Munster Technological University



**Squincywort**  
*Asperula cynanchica*  
**Lus na haincise**

Squincywort has a very restricted distribution in Ireland and is predominantly found along the western seaboard, (Galway to Kerry), with few records from other parts of Ireland. The flowers are a delicate pink colour. Around the Maharees it can be found growing on dunes. Its name comes from its historical medicinal use to treat quinsy (infection of the tonsils).  
*Flowers from: June- September.*



**Dodder**  
*Cuscuta epithymum*  
**Clamhán**

Dodder is a fascinating plant. It lacks chlorophyll and obtains its nutrition solely from other plants, which it parasitizes. Dodder lacks leaves and is more easily recognized by its twine-like red stems, than its bell-shaped pink/white flowers. Overall, this is a very rare plant across all of Ireland. Around the Maharees it can be found growing on the dunes and slacks.  
*Flowers from: July- September.*



**Yellow Rattle**  
*Rhinanthus minor*  
**Glioghrán**

Yellow Rattle is a delightful wildflower that is semi-parasitic in nature, (obtains partial nutrition from other plants). When the seed capsule dries and is shaken, it gives a rattle-like sound due to the seeds held within it.  
*Flowers from: May- September.*



**Kidney Vetch**  
*Anthyllis vulneraria*  
**Méara Muire**

Historically, Kidney Vetch was thought to heal kidney ailments as the shape of the flower somewhat resembles that of a kidney. The usual colour form is yellow but red, pink and orange forms occur. An important plant for the Small Blue butterfly whose caterpillars feed exclusively on this species.  
*Flowers from: June- September.*



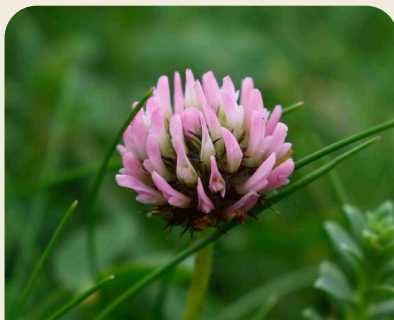
**Sand Pansy**  
*Viola tricolor subsp. curtisii*  
**Goirmín duimhche**

A delightfully striking species that grows happily on sand dunes, though never in large quantities. Bright yellow flowers are born on long stalks. Striping along the centre of the lower petals leads pollinating insects to the centre of the flower.  
*Flowers from: April- October.*



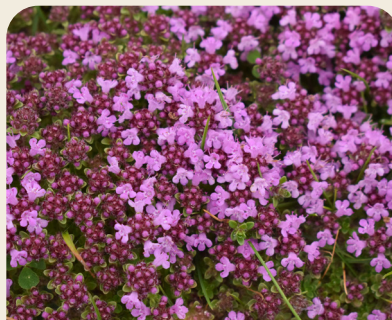
**Field Madder**  
*Sherardia arvensis*  
**Dearg faille**

An easily overlooked plant, the flowers of Field Madder are only 2-3mm in size and have 4 pale lilac petals. Around the Maharees, it can be found growing on the edge of dry trackways, dunes and waste ground.  
*Flowers from: May-September.*



**Strawberry Clover**  
*Trifolium fragiferum*  
**Seamair mhogallach**

At first glance, strawberry clover looks similar to other clover species with its trifoliate leaves and globular flower heads, composed of many pea flowers. However, seedpods are distinctive and are notably inflated and hairy. Strawberry Clover is a species of coastal grassland and around the edge of salt marshes.  
*Flowers from: July-September.*



**Wild Thyme**  
*Thymus polytrichus*  
**Tím chreige**

As its name suggests, Wild Thyme is a fragrant herb that has a distinctive aromatic smell when crushed and is still used in cooking today. Wild Thyme can be found growing on dunes and heaths and, when in full bloom, puts on an impressive display with its distinctive mauve-purple flowers.  
*Flowers from: June-October.*



**Hop Trefoil**  
*Trifolium campestre*  
**Seamair dhuimhche**

Identified by its globular yellow flower heads, which are composed of numerous small pea flowers, Hop Trefoil stands out distinctly against the dunes and dry grasslands. Leaves are trifoliate and lack tips.  
*Flowers from: June-September.*



**Petalwort (liverwort)**  
*Petalophyllum ralfsii*  
**Lus na bpeiteal**

Petalwort is a rare and protected species of liverwort which Ireland holds large populations of, making it a species of conservation importance. It can be found in certain areas of dune slack within the Maharees where suitable habitat occurs. The species is minute in size (1-10mm) and looks like a miniature lettuce.  
*Photo Credit: Dr Rory Hodd*