

Hay meadow grasses

Sweet vernal grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*

Flowering time:
April-July

Characteristic sweet,
'freshly mown hay' smell
when stem base crushed.

Tufts of hairs where
leaf meets stem.
Spike-like flower head.



Size: 10-100cm

Red fescue *Festuca rubra*

Flowering time:
May-July

Variable grass
that generally has fine,
needle-like leaves
that can't be unfolded.
Spikelets are often reddish.



Size: 20-100cm

Yellow oat-grass *Trisetum flavescens*

Flowering time:
June-July

Yellow spikelets
with bent awns.
Flower head can appear
'fluffy' when dry.
Downwards pointing
hairs at base of stem.



Size: 20-80cm

Common bent *Agrostis capillaris*

Flowering time:
June-August

Spikelets are very small
and often purple when
young. Triangular leaves
at 45° to stem.



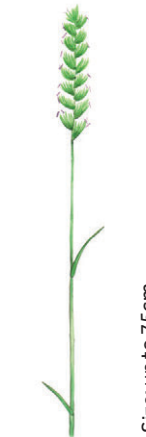
Size: 10-70cm

Crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus*

Flowering time:
June-August

Bristled, one-sided,
spike-like flower head,
often with lilac pollen.

Dark green leaves
at base, that are glossy
and grooved on the
upper surface.



Size: up to 75cm

Quaking grass *Briza media*

Flowering time:
May-August

Very distinctive grass
with delicate, triangular,
flat, purplish spikelets
that 'quake' in the breeze.



Size: 15-75cm

Hay Time

The loss of species-rich meadows and grasslands is unparalleled in the history of nature conservation in the UK. When the Hay Time project first started in 2006, less than four square miles of species-rich hay meadow habitat remained in the whole of the UK.

The Hay Time project, managed by Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, is working to enhance and restore upland and lowland meadows throughout the Forest of Bowland National Landscape and Yorkshire Dales. It does this by providing advice on meadow management and by actively restoring meadows using seed harvested from nearby species-rich donor meadows.

Work to restore species-rich hay meadows is possible because of donations and support from people like you. Together we can save these precious and complex habitats and protect the wildflowers, plants, pollinators and other wildlife that depend on them.

Visit ydmmt.org & forestofbowland.com to find out how you can get involved.



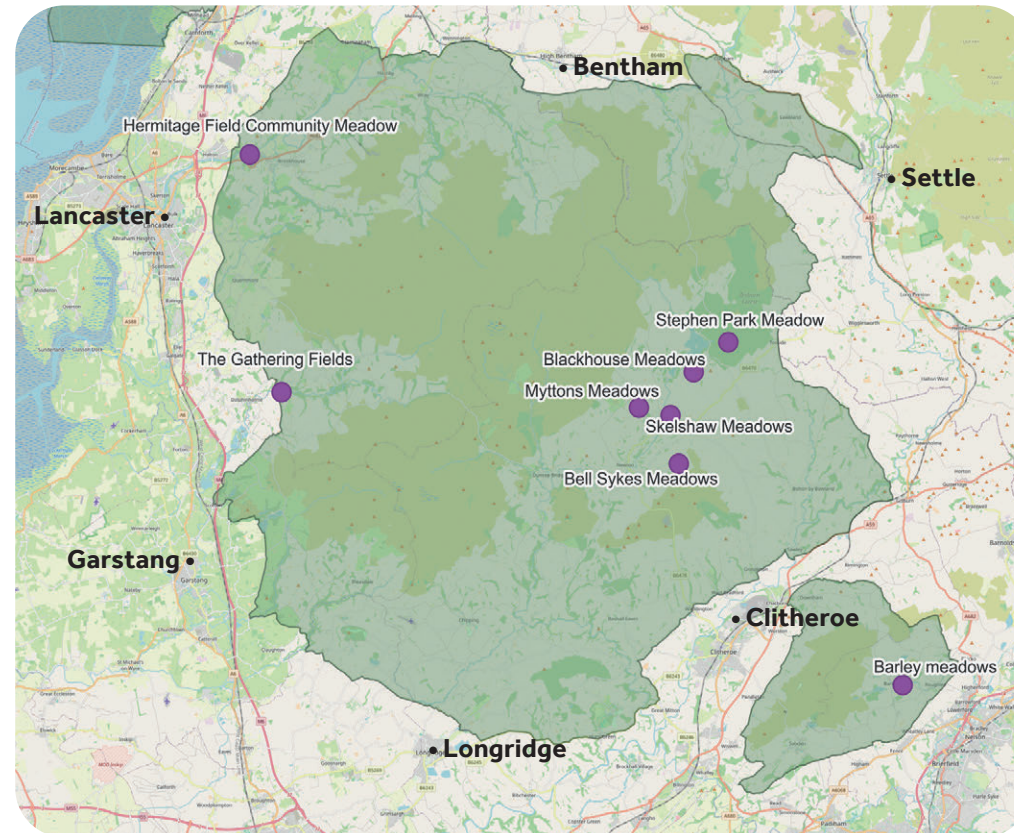
**Forest of
Bowland
National
Landscape**



This guide has been adapted from the guide produced through the Stories in Stone Project in the Yorkshire Dales, through the Forest of Bowland Hay Time Project and funding from DEFRA for the Forest of Bowland National Landscape.

Meadows on your doorstep

Flower-rich meadows can be found across the Forest of Bowland and generally look at their best in June, when they can be seen in full flower. Please respect these fragile habitats by sticking to footpaths and taking care not to trample the hay crop.



For more information & walk guides visit:
www.forestofbowland.com/walking and
www.forestofbowland.com/hay-time
or scan the QR code with your smart phone.



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**Forest of
Bowland
National
Landscape**

Identifying

**Flowers & grasses
of hay meadows
in the Forest of Bowland**

Common hay meadow plants

Meadow buttercup

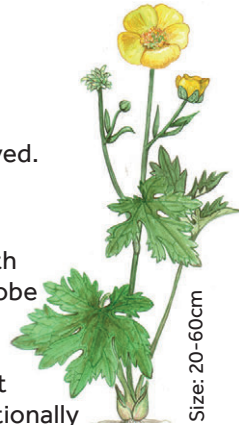
Ranunculus acris

Flowering time:
May-July

Divided leaves.
Flower stalks not grooved.

Similar species:

Bulbous buttercup and creeping buttercup both have a stalked central lobe to the leaf. Creeping buttercup, which has creeping runners, is not normally found in traditionally managed meadows.



Size: 20-60cm

Selfheal

Prunella vulgaris

Flowering time:
June-October

Downy with pairs of pointed oval leaves. Purple/blue flowers form oblong flower head.



Size: up to 30cm

Red clover

Trifolium pratense

Flowering time:
May-September

Hairy. Leaflets in threes, often with white crescents on upper surface. Deep pink flower head.

Similar species:

White clover lacks hairs, has white flower heads and creeps along the ground.



Size: 20-40cm

Ribwort plantain

Plantago lanceolata

Flowering time:
April-October

Long leaves with conspicuous veins. Furrowed stem. Tough, brown flower head with tiny white flowers.



Size: 10-40cm

Common sorrel

Rumex acetosa

Flowering time:
May-July

Arrow-shaped leaves with lobes at the base that point backwards. Upper leaves clasp stem.



Size: 30-100cm

Pignut

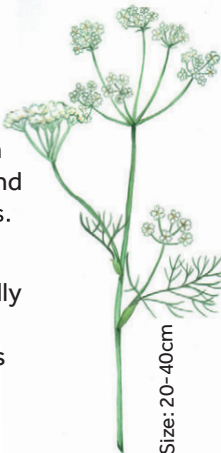
Conopodium majus

Flowering time:
May-June

Delicate white-flowered umbel. Stem hairless with threadlike upper leaves and finely divided lower leaves.

Similar species:

Cow parsley is not normally found in traditionally-managed meadows. It has less divided lower leaves (resembling parsley) and grows to 100cm.



Size: 20-40cm

Less common hay meadow plants

Meadowsweet

Filipendula ulmaria

Flowering time:
June-September

Pairs of tiny leaflets alternate with larger ones, to a three-part end-leaflet. Leaflets white woolly or pale green below. Fragrant cream flowers. Grows in wet meadows.



Size: up to 120cm

Meadow vetchling

Lathyrus pratensis

Flowering time:
July-August

Scrambling plant of the pea family.

Pairs of thin, pointed oval leaflets. Stems end in tendrils that wrap around other vegetation for support. Seed pods black when ripe.



Size: 30-120cm

Common knapweed

Centaurea nigra

Flowering time:
July-September

Large, stout, hairy plant with thistle-like flowers, but no prickles. Blackish-brown scales below flower head. Lower leaves oval and pointed, upper leaves stalkless and more linear.



Size: 15-100cm

Marsh marigold

Caltha palustris

Flowering time:
March-July

Large heart or kidney-shaped, shiny, dark green leaves. Bright yellow flowers. Grows in wet meadows.



Size: 10-70cm

Rough hawkbit

Leontodon hispidus

Flowering time:
June-September

Flower head dandelion-like on unbranched, densely hairy stem. Leaves densely covered with forked hairs.

Similar species:
Autumn hawkbit has sparse unforked hairs on leaves and branched flower stem. Cat's-ear also has a branched flower stem, with thick, spongy leaves that have a prominent white midrib and unforked hairs.



Size: 10-40cm

Ox-eye daisy

Leucanthemum vulgare

Flowering time:
May-September

Resembles a large daisy. Lower leaves spoon-shaped. Stem leaves are toothed and clasp the stem.



Size: 50-80cm

Less common hay meadow plants

Common bistort

Persicaria bistorta

Flowering time:
June-August

Hairless plant with oval leaves on winged stalks.

Flower head a cylindrical spike containing many pin flowers. Grows in damp meadows.



Size: 30-100cm

Eyebright

Euphrasia Spp.

Flowering time:
June-October

Very variable plant as there are over 20 species. Distinctive white flowers with yolk-yellow centres. Glossy, deeply toothed, pointed oval leaves.



Size: up to 50cm but often shorter

Bird's-foot-trefoil

Lotus corniculatus

Flowering time:
May-September

Variable, spreading species. Each leaf has five leaflets, two of which are positioned at the base of the stalk. Deep yellow -orange flowers, often tinged with scarlet.



Size: 10-50cm

Devil's-bit scabious

Succisa pratensis

Flowering time:
June-October

Undivided, untoothed leaves in opposite pairs. Dark blue -purple, tight flower head.

Similar species:

Field scabious has lilac flowers with a looser flower head. The stem leaves are divided nearly to the midrib.



Size: 50-100cm

Betony

Stachys officinalis

Flowering time:
June-September

Round-toothed, oblong, heart-shaped leaves, with stem leaves in few distant pairs.

Pinky-purple flowers protrude loosely from square flower head.



Size: 10-60cm

Yellow rattle

Rhinanthus minor

Flowering time:
May-August

Upright stem with unstalked, pointed, toothed leaves and yellow hooded flowers.

Seeds rattle in the capsules when ripe.



Size: up to 50cm

Special plants of Bowland hay meadows

Melancholy thistle

Cirsium heterophyllum

Flowering time:
July-August

Tall, erect, spineless thistle with unwinged, cottony stems. Flower heads usually solitary. Leaves green and hairless above but distinctly white-felted below, with soft prickles on the edge.



Size: 45-120cm

Water avens

Geum rivale

Flowering time:
May-September

Drooping, bell-shaped, peach and red-purple flowers. Lower leaves with alternate leaflets of increasing size towards large, unlobed, end leaflet.



Size: up to 50cm

Lady's mantle

Alchemilla Spp.

Flowering time:
June-September

Very variable plant as there are over ten species. Round leaves with scalloped, toothed edge. Leaves often look as if they have been folded. Tiny green flowers in clusters.



Size: 10-30cm

Globeflower

Trollius europaeus

Flowering time:
May-August

Resembles buttercup but flowers are enclosed, lemon-yellow 'globes'. Leaves divided and toothed. Hairless.



Size: 40-70cm

Great burnet

Sanguisorba officinalis

Flowering time:
June-September

Dull crimson, oblong flower heads on tall stems. Leaves with up to seven pairs of toothed leaflets.



Size: up to 120cm

Meadow crane's-bill

Geranium sylvaticum

Flowering time:
June-July

Violet to sky-blue flowers in pairs with unnotched petals on hairy stalks. Leaves deeply divided into pointed lobes.

Seed head ends in a long, pointed beak, hence the name 'crane's-bill'.

Similar species:

Wood crane's-bill Geranium sylvaticum has broader leaf lobes, red to pink violet flowers with smaller petals and a white centre.



Size: 30-70cm