



PHOTOGRAPHS OF
WILDFLOWERS
GROWING ALONG
THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY

Photographs by Sarah O'Connell

"Earth laughs in flowers" as Ralph Waldo Emerson said, and I have found myself smiling often in the company of wildflowers, the most enchanting of subjects for myself and my camera.

Enchanting, and also energetic...



Bumblebee on Honeysuckle

What do wildflowers do?

Our native wildflowers have evolved as a natural food source for native insects.

When insects visit flowers to drink nectar or feed off pollen, pollen grains stick to their bodies and get moved within individual flowers and between blooms.

In summary, **Pollination** happens.



Bumblebee feeding on Willow tree catkin

Wildflowers and the P word contd.

Pollination is the start of the process of flowering plants producing fruit & seeds.

Apples, strawberries, broccoli, tomatoes and many other fruit and vegetable crops we depend on, need help with pollination.

The natural way to protect pollinators is to protect their natural food supply...the wildflowers.



Blackberry or bramble flower

Wildflowers can lift the spirit

A person told me she found comfort in having a photograph of a wildflower in her living room during the pandemic, when she was unable to go outdoors.

For inquiries about how to purchase photographs, or to see more of my work, please email me at wildatlanticwaywildflowers@gmail.com

.
.



Purple loosestrife

Wild Atlantic Way wildflowers

The 'micro-scenery' of wildflowers could easily be missed with the dramatic beauty on the Wild Atlantic Way.

The following pages show some of the lovely blooms you will see on this route during spring and summer months.



Sea carrot growing over cliffs at Aughris Head, Co. Sligo

Blackthorn

Clusters of tiny, white flowers appear on the thorny branches before the leaves open.

Fruits of blackthorn are called sloes.



Hawthorn, (Whitethorn)

Flowers are fragrant and may be white or pinkish as they emerge between the lustrous leaves.

Whitethorn has always been thought of as a protective plant with flowers and fruits both having medicinal properties.



Willow

The flowers of willow trees and shrubs, much loved by bees, are called catkins.



Gorse (furze)

Gorse, blackthorn and willow were among the bushes and trees protected in the ancient Brehon Law of Ireland because of the importance placed on their value to society.



Common Dog Violet

Appears in late March in grassland, woods
and along hedge banks and is reputed to
have many medicinal qualities.



Primrose

Sweet scented delicate blooms that open around March- April

Clumps of primroses grow freely in hedges among Atlantic-facing sand dunes



Dandelion

According to Jean Palaiseul, dandelions are capable of producing viable seed without outside fertilisation.

In April, their omnipresence would have you think that dandelions are a favourite flower of the creator.

Also much esteemed by herbalists ..



Crimson Clover

Richly honey-scented, crimson or red clover is much valued by herbalists as an alkaline remedy.



Plantain

Once you start to notice them, you cannot ignore wildflowers ever again!



Slender Saint John's Wort

This plant possesses medicinal properties
and was said to protect the home against
harm and loss



Mullein

Mullein grows on dry, grassy and bare places.

The one shown here was thriving on a stone wall near Pollnadvvia Pier in the Wild Atlantic Way.



Bird's eye speedwell

The tiny blue flowers of his little plant
have remarkable medicinal powers
according to Juliette de Bairacli Levy.





IVY FLOWER AND FRUIT

Yarrow

A beautiful, stately flower found along pastures and waysides.

Pink and off-white yarrow will also be found growing abundantly along the seaside.



The Calm Atlantic Way

Wildflower blooms colour the hedges,
fields and roadsides of the Wild Atlantic
Way.



Bramble flowers and cows in view of sunrise over Ben Bulben

Wildflowers on the Wild Atlantic Way

Recognising and being able to name local wildflowers is a sure way to feel our silent connection with this beautiful landscape.



The fate of
wildflowers is in
our hands

For inquiries about how to purchase photographs,
or to see more of my work, please email me at
wildatlanticwaywildflowers@gmail.com



White clover, Chickweed dried, Vetch, Herb Robert, Crimson clover.



Resources

www.irishwildflowers.ie

www.irishhedgerows.weebly.com

www.naturelearn.com

Books

Wildflowers of Britain & Ireland, by Marjorie Blamey, Richard Fitter and Alastair Fitter, ISBN 0-7136-5944-0

Common Herbs for Natural Health by Juliette de Bairacli Levy, ISBN 0-9614620-9-4

Grandmother's Secrets Her Green Guide to Health from Plants by Jean Palaiseul , ISBN 0140462295