

New Year plant hunt 2026

January 3rd dawned chilly, but bright and seven keen flower-spotters gathered outside the church for a walk around the area to see how many plants we could find in flower, not including those in gardens. The first ones, Annual Meadow-grass and Guernsey Fleabane were growing out of the pavement at our feet, and Water Bent was near the cycle racks in Quay Street. By the time we had reached the edge of the harbour we had found another seven plants in flower.



Our route took us along Little London on the west side of the river. We looked over patches of road verges, hardstanding at the edge of car parks and boatyards and walls. Winter heliotrope, which has a distinctive vanilla fragrance, was the showiest plant we found.

Walking along the path to The Mermaid sculpture we found Hazel catkins nodding in the breeze shedding their yellow pollen and a large Hogweed plant still in bloom. After enjoying the view over the estuary at high tide, the water sparkling in the bright



sunshine and gentle breeze, we set off up the slope to Riverway and the industrial estate. The verges proved quite productive and we named another dozen or so species here including Greater Periwinkle, Lesser Celandine, Ox-eye daisy and Burnet Saxifrage. Additionally, there were several species of Brassica which were more challenging and just recorded by photography.



In total, we named 38 species in flower and added these to the [national database](#) (**click the link to view our results**). Our list was placed 121st = in the national ranking, out of 1,985 lists submitted countrywide. All of these lists are being checked and analysed to help our understanding of how our flowering seasons are changing.

