

Five Flowers for Fownhope

September - October

The greatest variety and number of wild plants in Fownhope grow in the woodland and grassland on the Silurian limestone ridges. Many wild plants also grow along the river bank, roadside verges, hedgerows and in old orchards.



Ivy – woodland, hedgerows, walls and buildings. An evergreen woody climber that can both carpet the woodland floor yet also climb up the tallest trees. Nutrition is entirely from the ground. It climbs using small aerial 'roots'. The abundant green flowers with yellow stamens provide the last nectar of the year and the buzz of insects on ivy is one of the last sounds of summer.



Rowan or Mountain Ash – woodland, often in gardens and streets, occasionally grows in the debris within hollow trees and pollards. A relatively small native tree of delicate form. Each leaf is made up of 5 to 7 pairs of leaflets. Berries turn red in August and remain until blackbirds, thrushes, fieldfares and redwings suddenly and rapidly eat them all in October.



Guelder Rose – damp hedgerows and woods. Not a ‘rose’ but a native viburnum that grows into a shrub or small tree. It develops extraordinary autumn colour and bunches of red shiny berries that the birds leave uneaten until the very harshest cold winter days.



Cyclamen – naturalised from gardens, occasionally along tracks and in grassland close to habitation. Usually grows in small groups with pink or white flowers of remarkable structure – the petals are turned back from a rounded ‘throat’. Often leaves do not develop until flowering is over. A delicate herald of autumn



Wild Damson – hedgerows and at the edges of woodland. These dark blue/purple fruit are bigger and sweeter than the light blue sloes of blackthorn. One of the earliest edible fruits of the season and they cook well with apples. The twigs and branches do not have the ferocious spines of blackthorn.