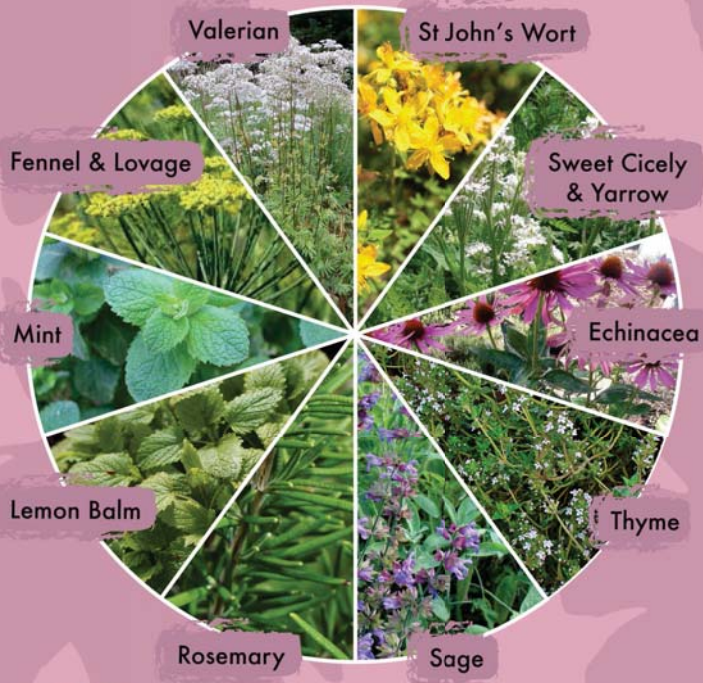


Medicinal Herb Circle

Our herb circle contains examples of plants commonly used in herbal medicines and remedies. Please do consult a qualified medical herbalist before using herbs medicinally. Plants with the botanical name "officinalis" indicates a herb's medicinal use: the officina was the traditional storeroom of a monastery where herbs and medicines were stored.



Have a look around the herb circle and see what herbs you can find! See if you can identify them by their unique scents.



Herbs, Wildflowers, & Weeds

See what you can find while walking around the farm and gardens!



Herbs, Wildflowers, and Weeds



Windmill Hill City Farm

Herbs

The broad category 'herbs' includes any plant used for flavouring food, for medicine or perfume. This is not to be confused with the botanical term 'herbaceous' meaning plants which do not have a woody stem and die down to the ground after flowering.



Sage *Salvia officinalis*

A member of the mint family, sage has many uses in cooking and medicinally.

In medieval times, it was called "Salvia Salvatrix", meaning "sage, the saviour" because it was one of the main ingredients used to ward off the plague. Easy to grow from seed or cuttings.



Rosemary *Rosmarinus officinalis*

An aromatic evergreen shrub with needle-like leaves and pale blue flowers in spring and summer. It is native to the Mediterranean and Asia and is drought hardy. The plant has also been used as a symbol for remembrance.



Mint *Mentha*

There are many species of mint, the most common being Spearmint *Mentha spicata* and Peppermint *Mentha piperita*. Others include furry-leaved apple mint (pictured), chocolate mint and the tiny-leaved Corsican mint. Menthol oil from mint is used as flavouring and also medicinally.



Thyme *Thymus vulgaris*

Low-growing aromatic plant with tiny pink flowers, it grows best in well-drained soil in a sunny position. Thymol oil from thyme is used as an antiseptic, and in teas for sore throats and coughs. Ancient Egyptians used thyme for embalming.

Wildflowers

As well as being beautiful in their own right our wild plants and flowers support all other wildlife. So what is the difference between a weed and a wildflower? A weed is defined as a plant in the wrong place, an unwanted plant... so it is up to us to decide! Below is a small selection of wildflowers we encourage and others that we find ways to manage while appreciating their place in the ecosystem...



Oxeye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare*

Known as Moon Daisy, Dog Daisy, Horse daisy, Moonpenny & Marguerite. Cheerful clumps of white & yellow flowers on tall stems. In the Language of Flowers it symbolises patience.



Knapweed *Centaurea nigra*

With its numerous thistle-like flowers knapweed is a source of good quality nectar and as well as supporting bees, butterflies and beetles its seeds provide food for many birds.



Cornflower *Centaurea cyanus*

Like Corncockle and Corn marigolds, the bright blue Cornflower was once a common sight in cornfields, but has declined due to modern agricultural practices, such as increased use of herbicides and the destruction of field-edges.



Common mallow *Malva sylvestris*

This plant self-seeds happily across the farm, its stems of open chalice-shaped flowers cropping up in unexpected places. The Malva genus includes tree mallow, also a common sight around the garden border.

...Or Weeds?

What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.
Inversnaid (1881) - Gerard Manley Hopkins



Stinging Nettle *Urtica dioica*

Nettles are prolific at the farm, the obvious downside being the sting! However, the nettle is a valuable plant: it can be cooked and eaten like spinach, used in teas and makes a nitrogen rich plant-feed. It provides an important habitat for many butterflies, including Peacock, Tortoiseshell and Red Admiral.



Hedge Bindweed *Calystegia sepium*

Bindweed is a problem at the farm, twining round plants and smothering crops. Its prolific self-seeding (seeds viable up to 30yrs) and the success of its creeping rhizomes causes it to be a persistent weed. In an established hedgerow however, its whitish-pink trumpet-shaped flowers can give a stunning display.



Common Comfrey *Symphytum officinale*

Large rough leaves, with purple flowers loved by bumble-bees. Self-seeds readily and has deep tap roots meaning it can take over. It has many uses in the garden from plant food to activating compost. One common name "knitbone" refers to its medicinal properties.



Creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*

Lovely sunshine-yellow flowers, but sends out runners that can colonise large areas. The name appears to come from a belief that it gave butter its colour. In reality buttercups are poisonous to cattle and are often left uneaten.