

Bluebell

Hyacinthoides non-scripta

Plants · In flower Apr–May



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A bulbous woodland perennial with narrow strap-like leaves and a one-sided nodding spike of deep violet-blue, narrow, sweetly scented bells with tips that curl right back. Bluebells carpet oak and hazel woodland around Dumfries in late spring. The native plant is quite distinct from the stouter, upright, scentless Spanish bluebell of gardens, which hybridises with it.

BEHAVIOUR

Bluebells complete their whole above-ground year in a few weeks, flowering and setting seed before the tree canopy closes over and shades them out, then dying back by midsummer. Colonies spread very slowly, so a dense bluebell carpet is a strong indicator of long-established ancient woodland. The species is protected: digging up bulbs from the wild is an offence.

WHEN TO SEE IT

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QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Asparagus family (Asparagaceae)
HEIGHT	20–50 cm
STATUS	Native and protected; an ancient woodland indicator

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