

Selfheal

Prunella vulgaris

Plants · In flower Jun-Sep



Photo by Ivar Leidus, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons

A low, creeping perennial with square stems, paired oval leaves and short dense oblong heads of two-lipped violet-blue flowers set among purple-tinged bracts. Selfheal is common in lawns, verges, pasture, woodland rides and short grassland throughout the Dumfries area, and often persists in closely mown grass.

BEHAVIOUR

It is remarkably tolerant of mowing and trampling: creeping stems root as they spread, and in regularly cut grass the plant simply flowers on much shorter stems, so a mown lawn can still carry it. That makes it one of the easiest nectar plants to keep in a garden — raising the mower blade is usually all it needs. The name reflects a long history as a wound herb.

WHEN TO SEE IT

J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

QUICK FACTS

FAMILY	Mints and deadnettles (Lamiaceae)
HEIGHT	5–30 cm
STATUS	Native; abundant in short grassland and lawns

Photo by Ivar Leidus, CC BY-SA 3.0, via Wikimedia Commons