



DOG'S MERCURY (*Mercurialis perennis*)

A very common perennial plant throughout the British Isles, but very rare in Ireland and northern Scotland. It is absent from Orkney, Shetland and the Outer Hebrides.

It is a very common plant of ancient and deciduous woodlands, old hedgerows and limestone pavements on calcareous and base rich soils, including clays. It is very tolerant of shade and often forms solid carpets in beechwoods and ancient woodlands.

The plant has separate male and female plants, the male plant having small green flowers (stamens), and the female plant having small round capsules that swell into paired fruits.

The plant flowers from February to April, and the flowers are wind pollinated.



RAMSONS OR WILD GARLIC (*Allium ursinum*)

A widely distributed bulbous perennial plant found throughout the British Isles, but it is scarce in north and north east Scotland. It is absent from Orkney and Shetland, and is rather local and scattered in Ireland.

It is a common plant of damp ancient woodlands on rich loamy and mildly calcareous clay and chalk soils throughout England and Wales. It often grows in association with bluebell, primrose and wood anemone in large drifts and clumps.

It is also found alongside streams and river banks but avoids waterlogged areas.

The plant is easy to identify due to its strong onion smell, fleshy green leaves and white star shaped flowers which are produced in April to June. The young green fleshy leaves can be used in salads and for slimming diets, and the plant is related to the cultivated garlic. The juice of the leaves can be made into a syrup used to treat coughs and sore throats. The small black seeds are formed in three-chambered capsules in July and August and are distributed by black ants and other insects.