

MAR LODGE ESTATE

The Caledonian pinewoods of Mar Lodge are an ancient ecosystem, eight thousand years in the making. They are home to some of Scotland's rarest wildlife, and form part of the great boreal forest which stretches right around the world. This leaflet tells you about some of the plants that you might spot as you stroll through the woods.

After centuries of decline, Mar Lodge Estate's pinewoods are once again resurgent. We are shaping a more biodiverse future where wildlife can flourish and people can reconnect with nature.



Scotland's
National Nature
Reserves



JOIN TODAY

Fill your year with amazing memories - from coastlines to castles, art to architecture, wildlife to wilderness, let membership take you further.

Join on your next visit or online at

nts.org.uk

The National Trust for Scotland is a Scottish charity, SC007410

PLANTS of the PINEWOOD

Mar Lodge Estate National Nature reserve



4185 GPS 60m 1/18



COMMON OR LING HEATHER

There are three common heathers in Scotland, and this is the commonest. Green bushes are covered with a profusion of small, pink flowers, turning the woods a shade of purple in late summer.



BELL HEATHER

Prefers drier conditions than the other heathers, and so is often found at the edge of paths. Flowers are deep-purple 'bells' and the leaves are the dark green of all the heathers.



BOG MYRTLE

Likes it wet – you'll find it in the boggy bits. Long round leaves and curious orange male flowers give off a gorgeous, distinctive smell. Reputed to have anti-midge properties!



Male flower

Female flower



CROSS-LEAVED HEATH

Very common in the wetter areas of the pinewood. Leaves are pale, 'glaucous' green, and form a 'cross' when looked at from above. A dense cluster of pale pink flowers on a protruding spike.



JUNIPER

This spiky conifer is an important part of the woodland understorey, providing food and shelter to a bewildering number of creatures. Find it in open woodland with plenty of light.



Female cone

Male cone



CHICKWEED WINTERGREEN

It's not a chickweed, nor is it a wintergreen, but it's quite nice nevertheless. Pretty white flowers rise from a whorl of leaves. Spot it in the evening and you'll find it's very faintly bioluminescent.

WOOD ANEMONE

A herald of spring, which forms extensive mats in suitable places. A handsome plant boasting white-pink flowers with yellow centres, and complicated luxuriant leaves.

WOOD SORREL

An elegant early spring plant. A single purple-veined white flower sits above 'trifoliate' clover-style leaves.

BUTTERWORT

It's a carnivore! Butterwort traps unsuspecting insects on sticky leaves. Its impressive purple flower grows high up on a stalk, well away from the leaves, ensuring pollinating insects do not meet a sticky end.

HEATH MILKWORT

A tiny plant with intricate blue flowers. Easily overlooked as it creeps along the ground amongst larger plants like heather. It likes its soil acidic and wet.

DOG VIOLET

Well-known for its distinctive, heavily-perfumed aroma and its heart shaped leaves. Its purple flowers are a sign that summer is on the way.

HEATH BEDSTRAW

A shy and unobtrusive plant, often overlooked. Scuttles along the ground around other plants with whorls of leaves and clusters of small, four-petalled white flowers.

TWINFLOWER

An iconic pinewood flower, and subject to intense conservation efforts. A dense mat of paired leaves on red stems sends up tiny stalks, from which two flowers droop delicately. Let us know if you see it!

LESSER TWAYBLADE

Two small, fat leaves give way to a single spike of intricate deep red flowers. Dainty, delicate and often overlooked. Likes a bit of shade, so look for it under the heather.

COWBERRY

Similar to blaeberry, but its leaves are glossy and have spots on the underside. Bright red berries form from drooping white flowers.

CROWBERRY

Likes the drier parts of the pinewood and it seems particularly keen on growing at the base of pine trees. Stalks are densely covered with thin leaves and glossy crow-black berries.

BLAEBERRY

Blaeberry patches form brilliant green carpets across the pinewoods, which turn fire-red in autumn. Its understated flowers give way to delicious deep blue berries in late summer, which are gorged on by people and animals alike.

INTERMEDIATE LEAVED WINTERGREEN

Mar Lodge is home to four of the five British wintergreen species, and this is the most common one here. A showy plant with thick, glossy leaves and a striking, flamboyant spike of flowers.

COMMON COW-WHEAT

Long, thin leaves give way to pairs of yellow flowers. Only a few insects can reach the nectar in its tubular flowers, while its seeds are dispersed by wood ants.

TORMENTIL

Superficially similar to buttercups, but its yellow flowers have four petals. Tormentil thrives on acidic soils and is found throughout the pinewoods.

HARD FERN

Elegant plants with simple fronds, and the most common fern of the pinewood. Ferns don't bother with flowers to reproduce, instead they produce spores.

GREAT WOODRUSH

The large lush leaves of great woodrush lend a luxuriant aura to the pinewoods. Look out for its hairy armpits where the leaves meet the stalk