

## Plants recorded in the Shakespeare Meadow, May to September 2013

### Dicotyledons

<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow
<i>Aquilegia vulgaris*</i>	Columbine
<i>Cardamine pratensis</i>	Cuckooflower
<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Common Knapweed
<i>Cerastium holostoides</i>	Common Mouse-ear
<i>Cirsium palustre</i>	Marsh Thistle
<i>Crepis capillaris</i>	Smooth Hawk's-beard
<i>Daucus carota</i>	Wild Carrot
<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>	Foxglove
<i>Galium verum</i>	Lady's Bedstraw
<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	Ground-ivy
<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Hogweed
<i>Hypochaeris radicata</i>	Cat's-ear
<i>Iris pseudascorus</i>	Yellow Iris
<i>Leontodon hispidus</i>	Rough Hawkbit
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Oxeye Daisy
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Common Bird's-foot-trefoil
<i>Lychnis flos-cocull</i>	Ragged-Robin
<i>Malva moschata</i>	Musk-mallow
<i>Origanum vulgare?</i>	Wild Marjoram
or <i>Origanum majorana?*</i>	Pot Marjoram
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort Plantain
<i>Primula veris</i>	Cowslip
<i>Primula vulgaris</i>	Primrose
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	Selfheal
<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Meadow Buttercup
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping Buttercup
<i>Ranunculus ficaria</i>	Lesser Celandine
<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>	Yellow Rattle
<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	Common Sorrel
<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>	Broad-leaved Dock
<i>Sanguisorba minor</i>	Salad Burnet
<i>Silene dioica</i>	Red Campion
<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>	Hedge Woundwort
<i>Stellaria graminea</i>	Lesser Stitchwort
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>	Dandelion
<i>Thymus polytrichus</i>	Wild Thyme
or <i>Thymus vulgaris*</i>	Garden Thyme
<i>Trifolium dubium</i>	Lesser Trefoil
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Red Clover
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White Clover
<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>	Germander Speedwell
<i>Vicia cracca</i>	Tufted Vetch
<i>Vicia sativa</i>	Common Vetch

### Grasses

<i>Agrostis capillaris</i>	Common Bent
<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>	Creeping Bent
<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>	Meadow Foxtail
<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>	Sweet Vernal Grass
<i>Bromus sp.</i>	
<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>	Crested Dog's tail
<i>Dactylus glomerata</i>	Cock's-foot
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	Red Fescue
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire Fog

*Phleum pratense*  
*Poa trivialis*

Timothy  
Rough Meadow-grass

The total number of species recorded was 53 including those marked \*. These garden species/varieties have no place in a wild flower meadow.

When establishing the Shakespeare Meadow the aim was to create a meadow of wild flowers similar to the hay meadows Shakespeare would have seen all around him. Only native species of wild flowers and grasses have been used in its creation. Unfortunately some visitors have planted unsuitable varieties of flowers. Since the 1940s 97% of our flower rich hay meadows have been destroyed and the Shakespeare Meadow (together with the Periwinkle Field) with their communities of native wild flowers and grasses make a small but significant contribution to the reinstatement of these habitats.

All wild plant species within the perimeter fence and fedge surrounding the theatre have been recorded – not just the plants growing in the newly created meadow areas. The careful strimming of paths and areas required by actors and audience has resulted in additional areas for the conservation of wild meadow species of plants.

#### Recorded Insects

Bumble Bees and Honey Bees were far less abundant than in 2012. Was this caused by the very cold spring? Butterflies were very sparse – Meadow Brown and Ringlet were recorded.

#### MANAGEMENT OF THE SHAKESPEARE MEADOW

The present regime of strimming the grass paths and the surrounding grass areas which have not been developed as meadow is keeping the coarse agricultural grasses under control. In addition Roger Green who is doing the strimming is careful to preserve any wild flowers growing in these areas. This is one reason responsible for the increase in species diversity. The newly created wild flower areas are strimmed in September and the dead material is raked off.

The following species which were sown and planted in 2008 are fast declining in abundance:

<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow
<i>Daucus carota</i>	Wild Carrot
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Oxeye Daisy

They should be rejuvenated by the following management:

1. After strimming in September, bare patches of soil should be created by hand weeding out patches of abundant species.
2. Seed (purchased from Emorsgate Seeds) should be scattered densely over the exposed soil and gently pressed into the soil surface to make good contact with the soil. Then left over the winter to germinate naturally in the following spring.

Alternatively seed could be sown in seed trays in September and left out of doors or in a cold green house over the winter to germinate the following spring. When the plants are large enough they can be transplanted into the bare patches in the meadow.

Either method could be used to grow meadow flowers anywhere within the enclosure

#### References

Stace, Clive (1977). New Flora of the British Isles. CUP

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