Grow to Give

Support Horatio's Garden and your community with little acts of kindness

IDENTIFYING WEEDS & WHY YOU MIGHT LIKE TO KEEP THEM

with Head Gardener of Horatio's Garden Oswestry, Imogen Jackson

DANDELIONS & DOCK

Both have long tap roots which will need pulling out completely if you want to be rid of them. You need to try to remove the dandelion before it creates seed heads (like the photograph in the middle) if you decide that you can't live with them. However, they are very valuable for the bees, especially in early spring, so it is worth considering letting them grow. They are really quite pretty when you give them a chance! In addition, dandelions are good to eat, either by including their young leaves in a salad or including them in your diet as a coffee substitute.

YOUNG WILLOW HERB

These pop up all over the place in Horatio's Garden Oswestry. Thankfully, they are very easy to pull out. They can grow to be quite large with insignificant pink flowers if left unattended. When they're left long enough, they make lots of fluffy seeds.

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Registered Address 2 Throope Down Office, Blandford Road, Coombe Bissett, Salisbury, SP5 4LN

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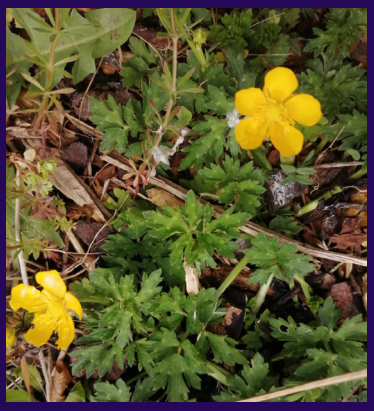

CREEPING BUTTERCUP

This weed has pretty flowers, but it can quickly take over your borders with thick foliage and underground runners. If you don't want it in your garden, you will need to dig it out with a trowel in spring or repeatedly hoe it throughout the summer.

GOOSE GRASS

This annual weed is also sometimes known as 'Cleavers'. It's covered in tiny hairs that will stick it to your clothes and scratch your skin. If you're removing it, you may choose to wear gloves as it can be a skin irritant. Its seeds hold the inspiration for velcro with their tiny hooks, which are perfect for clinging to animal hair or clothing fibres. When it's tiny it looks pretty and is not sticky, so don't be fooled! It can quickly sprawl across your beds and produces hundreds of seeds, which can cause havoc. Again, thankfully they're easy to pull out, so don't let them take hold!

SPURGE

This annual weed is quite pretty, so you may like it as an addition to your garden. However, it will quickly self-seed if allowed to. If you decide to get rid of it, it is easy to pull up as long as you keep on top of it. Be sure to wear gloves when dealing with it as it can be an irritant.

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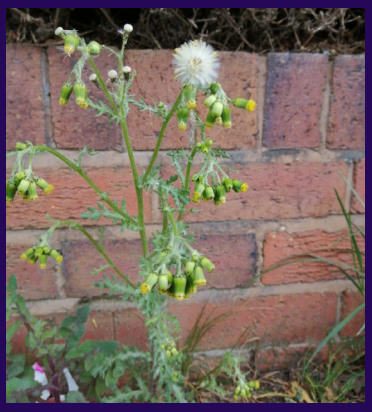
SPEEDWELL

These plants have pretty blue flowers and are easy to pull up by hand. If your lawn is stressed they can take over, but are rarely a problem in healthy, well-tended areas. You can keep your lawn healthy and your beds mulched with bark mulch, so you will always be able to pull this weed up if you see it beginning to grow. Make sure you remove all parts of the plant as it can regrow from stem.



GROUNDSEL

Also known as 'ground swallower' because it seeds so prolifically and can overrun other young seedlings. It's a common, annual weed that the birds enjoy the seeds of. It's also an important food source for moths and butterflies, as well as being the only plant species that the Cinnabar Caterpillar can live on. It can harbour Cineraria leaf rust and the fungus that causes black root rot in pots. If you don't want it in your garden, easily remove it with a hand fork before it sets seed.

RIBWORT PLANTAIN

Despite being a weed, ribwort plantain is an excellent food source for many birds and insects and its leaves have a whole host of medicinal purposes. If you decide you can't live with it, you will need to dig its long roots out or else it will regrow. Its rosette of leaves are very good at avoiding the lawnmower!

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LESSER TREFOIL

Again, if you can live with this weed it can be a wonderful thing to have in your garden. It's valuable as a host plant for the Common Blue Butterfly to lay its eggs, whilst it also fixes nitrogen thus acting like a fertiliser. As it grows underground via rhizomes and seeds, forming mats of intertwined stems, you will need to use a grubber to pull out the roots if you want to remove it.

HERB ROBERT

This is an annual weed with tall, pretty spikes of pink flowers. They are easy to pull up and generally like shady areas, so be sure to check for it in such places. If left unattended, it can self-seed prolifically.

USING A GRUBBER

See the photo to the left for an insight into how to use a grubber. They're a very handy tool for ensuring you get to the root of your weed problem!

OTHER WEEDS TO MAKE SURE YOU REMOVE

- Japenese Knotweed
- Bindweed
- Horsetail/Marestail

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