



Gwent Wildlife Trust

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Early Purple Orchid *Orchis mascula*

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Species information

i **Common name**
Early Purple Orchid

Latin name
Orchis mascula

Category
Wildflowers

Statistics
Height: up to 40cm

🌍 Conservation status
Common.

About

As its name suggests, the Early Purple Orchid is one of our earliest flowering orchids, appearing from April to June. This orchid is often found in habitats with non-acidic soils such as hedgerows, banks, ancient woodland and open grassland. The pinkish-purple flowers appear on a spike of medium height.

How to identify

Early Purple Orchids display up to 50 dark purple flowers arranged in a dense, cone-shaped cluster on a tall spike. The lower lip of each flower has three lobes and the upper petals form a hood. The leaves of the Early Purple Orchid are glossy and dark green with dark spots, and form a rosette on the ground; they appear from January onwards.

Where to find it

Widespread.



When to find it



How can people help

The Wildlife Trusts manage many nature reserves for the benefit of all kinds of wildlife, including many different species of plants. But these precious sites are under threat from development, intensive agricultural practices and climate change. You can help by supporting your local Trust and becoming a member; you'll find out about exciting wildlife happenings, events on your doorstep and volunteering opportunities, and be helping local wildlife along the way.

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