



**DOGS MERCURY** is a characteristic plant of ancient woodlands and is highly poisonous; it gives off a putrid smell. It has hairy stems and leaves and has catkins of yellow stamen flowers on long spikes, either male or female each on separate plants. The leaves are dark green pointed in opposite pairs and neatly toothed in the margins.



**LESSER CELANDINE** is a member of the buttercup family, carpeting our woodland. It has 8-12 narrower petals, 3 sepals and bright yellow solitary flowers in clusters which only open in bright sun. The



leaves are on long stalks, heart shaped at the base. William Wordsworth wrote a poem praising the flower as shining "*Bright as the sun himself.*"

If you are lucky you will see the **EARLY PURPLE ORCHID** which is very rare in our woods. It has pink-purple flowers in loose spikes on a stout upright stem and can be recognised by the round purplish blotches on the upper surface of its lance shaped leaves. In infamous literature the flowers were draped over Ophelia's drowned body in Shakespeares' Hamlet.



**LORDS AND LADIES** or **CUCKOO PINT.**

This plant has curious pointed flowers, enclosed in a cowl-like spathe, which is ribbed like a seashell. The leaves are long stalked arrow-shaped, shiny and sometimes

purple-spotted. The orange-red berries are highly poisonous. It has many local names such as

**JACK-IN-THE-PULPIT** and **KITTY-COME-DOWN-THE-LANE-JUMP-UP-AND-KISS-ME.**

Starch from the tubers was used like arrowroot and to starch laundry like the elaborate ruffs of Elizabethan England.

**GOLDBLOCKS BUTTERCUP** is a rare plant in our woods. A perfect flower has up to 5 bright shiny-ragged yellow petals, but one or more petals are often missing. It has deeply divided upper leaves and is the main British woodland species.

The wild flowers of the **VIOLET** family are recognised by their likeness to the garden violets and pansies but are smaller and more delicate than their commercially bred cousins. The **COMMON DOG**



**VIOLETS** flowers are blue-violet in colour with a pale spur and hang upside down. The

leaves are heart-shaped and the flowers unscented.

**MOSCHATEL** is a delicate pale green plant which has a musk-like scent which is stronger at dusk and in dampness. Its yellowish-green cubed-shaped flower head has an arrangement of five flowers together, hence its local name "**TOWN HALL CLOCK.**" The fleshy leaves have three lobed leaflets on long stalks.



**GREATER STITCHWORT** has big star-like white flowers. The five petals are notched halfway in loose clusters with ten pale yellow stamens. Its leaves are stalkless, narrow and long-pointed arranged in opposite pairs.



The common name refers to its use as a folk remedy for a stitch or sudden pain.

