

July



Svmer is icumen in
Lhude sing cuccu
Groweþ sed
and bloweþ med
and springþ þe wde
nu
Sing cuccu

Summer has arrived is a good translation. One of the oldest traditional rounds known, written down and noted as far back as 1226.

Hottest day of the year in England so far today. Mind you as it's the beginning of summer and the weather has been steadily getting warmer since February the hottest day will be sometime during this month or August. The early summer has been mild rather than hot (just how I like it) and wet. So flowers, both wild and cultivated have been rather good so far. Just a selection.

Above is a common spotted orchid which I saw in a country park in Essex. It grows in all sorts of habitats and as the name suggests is quite common.

And below is chickory which grows all along one of the footpaths. It is native to Europe although it has been introduced to America and New Zealand. Popular as a coffee substitute, a sweetener, a salad vegetable and various medicinal purposes. What I didn't know until just now is that it is a member of the dandelion family and another one of its names is blue dandelion.



And my husband took this rather good picture of an opening Yellow Water Lily (*Nuphar lutea*) at Wicken Fen near Ely in Cambridgshire.



This next is a wildflower bed deliberately sown to provide a habitat for insects in a municipal suburban park. There are poppies, cornflowers (a different shade of blue to that of the chickory flowers, but both a 'true blue') and several sorts of daisy. One year the groundsman chose a mix that included thistles and there were letters to the local paper from ratepayers who didn't understand complaining about the neglect and the 'weeds'.



Finally a cultivated arch of sweet peas in the renowned Grade I listed gardens of Helmingham Hall in Suffolk.



**Summer looked for long an I:
Much shall change or e'er I die.
Prithee take it not amiss
Though I weary thee with bliss.**

William Morris. From his selection of Verses for Pictures. I don't know about the copyright to quote him here, under a series of pictures of summer. But the poem was on the website of the Marxist Internet Archive, and they believe that all property is theft.