

# Survey Guide

## Kentish Milkwort – *Polygala amarella* ssp. *austriaca*

### Description:

A small herb with erect to ascending stems to 15 cm long but often only 1.5 - 5 cm.

Leaves are spoon-shaped at base, forming a distinct rosette at very base of stem; stem leaves are usually smaller and narrower.

Inflorescence a raceme of 6 – 30 very small flowers, each 2.5 – 5 mm long, with non-anastomosing (cross-linked) veins on the inner sepals.

Flowers pale mauve to white with hints of green.

Flowering from May to July

### Habitat:

Short turf chalk grassland. Plants will only be found in open ground, but often lurk on the edge of more tussocky vegetation rather than being out in the open.

### Confusable species:

Chalk Milkwort, which often grows with it, has a short stem below the basal rosette and larger, more vividly coloured flowers. But the very small size of Kentish sets it apart.

### Associated species:

Upright Brome (*Bromopsis erecta*)

Tor-grass (*Brachypodium pinnatum*)

Quaking Grass (*Briza media*)

Horseshoe Vetch (*Hippocrepis comosa*)

Salad Burnet (*Poterium sanguisorba*)

Mouse-ear Hawkweed (*Pilosella officinalis*)

Fairy Flax (*Linum catharticum*)

Dwarf Thistle (*Cirsium acaule*)

### What to record:

- Numbers of plants (if over 100 count to the nearest 10, if over 100 to the nearest hundred)
- Area of patch (there may be multiple patches, but don't overcomplicate things!)
- Exact location of plants, with combination of GPS and sketch map
- Mark plants with red pegs or similar and photograph

### When to survey:

Best surveyed May-July when plants are in flower due to the difficulty of finding vegetative rosettes. Plants will persist into early September but may be harder to spot.



# Habitat

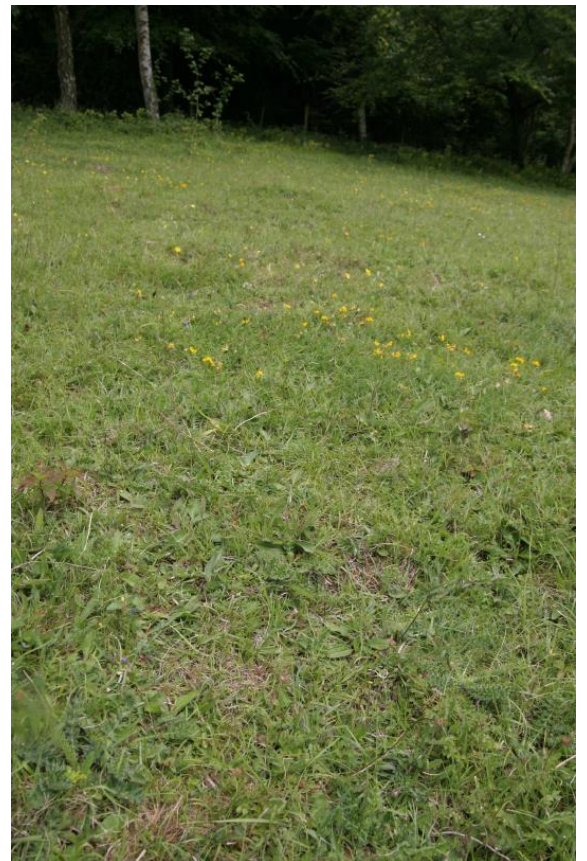


In chalk grassland, nestling at the edge of Tor-grass tussocks



In thinner swards, often associated with bare soil and sometimes sheltered by shrubs which protect it from grazing

Short sward with some bare soil



## Associate Species



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