

## Crop & Fallow

Some of the machair is cultivated (usually a mixture of small oats and barley) to produce feed for livestock.

Cropping is rotated so plot is left fallow for at least two years. Minimal use of inorganic fertiliser and pesticides allows annual species, such as corn marigold, long-headed poppy and stork's-bill to grow along the crop margins.



Long-headed poppy  
*Papaver dubium*



Wild pansy  
*Viola tricolour*



Corn marigold *Chrysanthemum segetum*

## Dune Slack

Some machairs are flooded in the winter or have a higher water table all year round. These damper conditions support species such as:



Marsh violet *Viola palustre*



Bog pimpernel  
*Anagallis tenella*



Ragged robin  
*Silene flos-cuculi*

For more information on our flora and wildlife please visit the Outer Hebrides Biological Recording website:  
[www.ohbr.org.uk](http://www.ohbr.org.uk).



Photographs © Chris Johnson & Flora Donald

## Common Plants of the Uist Machairs

Machair is found along the western and northern coastline of the Uists, formed behind the dune ridge from wind blown shell-sand that has created a fertile, low lying plain.

Machair is not a single habitat type: it is a complex mosaic of sand dune, coastal grassland, dune slack and marsh, created and maintained over thousands of years by human settlement and agriculture. It is as much cultural as ecological and geomorphological.

Botanically machair is special because of the species that grow together, the sheer density of flowers and the wildlife it supports.

We hope you enjoy looking at the flowers of the Uist machairs - please do so responsibly, following the Scottish Outdoor Access Code.

*Thank you*





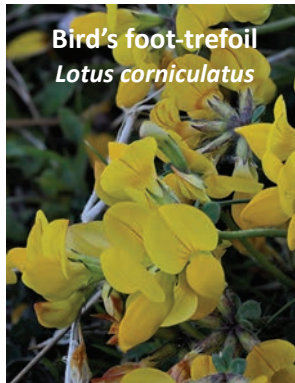
# Machair Grassland

Machair grassland in full flower is a stunning spectacle!

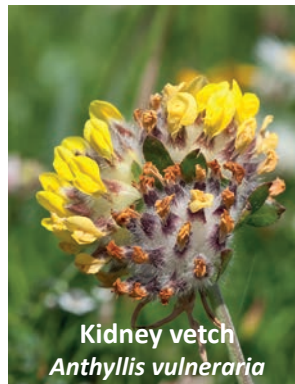
Grazing the grasslands with cattle suppresses vigorous grasses and allows the wild flowers to flourish. In May the machair turns white with daisies and golden with buttercups, bird's-foot trefoil and later yellow rattle and lady's bedstraw. As the summer progresses the colours change as the tufted vetch, red bartsia and red clovers come into bloom.



Yellow rattle  
*Rhianthus minor*



Bird's foot-trefoil  
*Lotus corniculatus*



Kidney vetch  
*Anthyllis vulneraria*



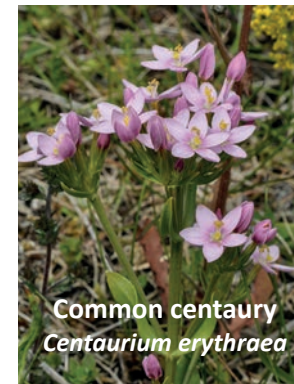
Wild carrot  
*Daucus carota*



Red bartsia  
*Odontites vernus*



Early marsh orchid  
*Dactylorhiza incarnata*



Common centaury  
*Centaureum erythraea*



Common knapweed  
*Centaurea nigra*



Tufted vetch *Vicia cracca*  
with hogweed  
*Heracleum sphondylium*  
and meadow buttercup  
*Ranunculus acris*



Ox-eye daisy  
*Leucanthemum vulgare*