

## Wildflower Group Report – February 2024 Ann Thomson

Thirteen of us met at Deepdale Woods on Wednesday, 14th February. Whilst we were congregating, we noticed Snowdrops, Aconites and Dog's Mercury in flower, a short way in we spotted Lesser Celandine.

Gavin was our excellent leader and guide imparting his extensive knowledge and expertise on how to identify trees in winter.

There are various ways of identifying trees in winter: bark, colour, and texture; twigs, buds and catkins. Buds are staggered or opposite, predominantly opposite in Britain as is displayed in Deepdale.

Coppicing is a traditional method in woodland management where trees and/or shrubs are repeatedly cut at the base to create a 'stool' encouraging new shoots to grow in order to provide a sustainable supply of wood. At Deepdale this forms a hedge round the Forest School, species found here include Hornbeam, Hawthorn, Elder and Guelder Rose (*Viburnum opulus*). The latter three are beneficial to birds with their red berries, Waxwings are attracted to the Guelder Rose berries.

Deepdale has a very old Willow thought to be possibly around 200 years old.

We came across Scarlet Cup/Scarlet Elf Cups (*Sarcoscypha coccinea*) a British fungi which grows on decaying sticks and branches in damp spots and beneath leaf litter on the woodland floor.

Our next walk will be on Wednesday, 13th March when we will be ambling along Cotherstone Railway. Then on Wednesday, 10th April we'll be looking round the Egglestone Abbey area.