

A Taphophiles Quick Guide

Identifying Plants & Flowers on Headstones

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This quick guide has been created to assist you with identifying the plants and flowers that the stonemasons have carved on headstones and monuments.

We don't have the luxury of colour or a sense of smell and seasons to help us identify them, but we can count the number of petals and view the shape of the leaves to help us identify each individual flower or plant.

A glossary of emboldened words can be found on page 2 and please visit <http://headstonesymbols.co.uk> to decipher the meaning of the plant or flower that you have identified.

We hope that you will find this guide useful and we welcome your feedback.



A Taphophiles Quick Guide to Identifying Plants and Flowers

Plant	Petals	Leaves/Other Features
Acacia	Ball like flowers	Ovate leaves
Acanthus	Flower spikes with hoods	Large lobed leaves
Almond, flowering	5 separate petals	Long leaves, fruit
Amaranth	Many clusters of tiny flowers	Rhomboid leaves
Anemone	6 petals	3 lobed
Asphodel	6 star like petals	Long and slender
Balm	None	Heart or ovate serrated leaves
Bay	Small round buds at base of leaves	Long ovate leaves
Bluebell	Groups of hanging bell-like flowers	Long and narrow
Broom	Pea-like flowers	3 leaflets
Buttercup	5 petals	5-7 lobed
Calla Lilly	Single tubular	Broad lanceolate
Campanula or bellflower	5 bell like petals	Linear
Carnation	Rose like but with more petals	Very narrow
Chrysanthemum	Many petals. Saucer like bloom	Narrow lobed leaves
Cinquefoil	5 separate petals	5 narrow leaflets attached centrally
Clematis	4-8 petals with small centre	Climbing plant. Leaves opposite on stem
Clover	Round clusters	3 lobed
Clover, four-leaved	Usually not shown	4 lobed
Crocus	6 cup like petals	Linear
Cypress tree	None	Tall narrow conifer
Daffodil	6 outer and 1 central trumpet	Linear
Daisy	Many ray like petals	Spoon like leaves
Dogwood	4 petals flowers in clusters	Ovate with curving veins
Evening Primrose	Small rose like flower	Many small leaves
Figs	Round fruit	Deeply lobed , 3-5 lobes
Flax	5 petals	Narrow elliptic
Forget-me-not	5 petals	Hairy, elliptic
Gladiolus	Groups of 3-6 bell like flowers	Sword like
Gorse	Flowers the length of the branch	Dense spines
Grapes	Clusters of round fruit	3 lobed . Sometimes other vine leaves are used such as ivy
Harebell	5 bell like	Linear
Hawthorn	5 petals in clusters or berries	3-7 lobes also spines on branch
Holly	Small berries	Spiked leaves
Hollyhock	5 petal saucer like flower	Narrow lobed
Honeysuckle	Trumpet like and in pairs	Ovate
Iris	6 irregular	Grass like
Ivy	None	3-5 lobes on vine
Jonquil	6 outer petals and 1 round inner	Grass like
Lily	6 petals with long stamen	Broad lanceolate
Lily of the Valley	6 petal small bell many on long stem	Broad lanceolate
Marigold	5 petal	Heart shaped
Morning Glory	Trumpet like	Heart shaped



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Myrtle	5 petals star like flower	Lanceolate
Oak	Acorns	Lobed
Palm	None	Large deeply lobed
Pansy	5 petals, bottom 3 striped	Long narrow
Passion Flower	10 outer petal, radiating inner and nail like stamen	Ovate
Peony	5-8+ petals & a rose like appearance	3 leaflets . No thorns
Periwinkle	5 curved	Ovate
Pine	Pine cones	Christmas tree shaped
Primrose	5 petals	Ovate leaves
Poppy	2 outer and 2 inner	Toothed edges and feather like shape
Rose	5, and multiples of petals	5-9 ovate leaflets and thorns
Rosemary	Small interspersed flowers on a sprig	Needle like leaves
Sage	Bell shaped 2 lipped	Broad ovate leaves
Shamrock	None	3 heart shaped leaves attached centrally
Snowdrop	3 long +3 short bell like	Grass like
Star of Bethlehem	6 separate radiating petals	Lobed
Strawberry	5 petals, fruit	3 ovate leaflets
Sunflower	Large with many ray like petals	Heart shaped
Sweet William	Carnation like	Grass like
Thistle	Spiny cases with hair like petals protruding	Long spiny
Tulip	6+ petals, cup like bloom	Grass like
Violet	5 irregular	Heart shaped
Weeping willow	None	Tree with braches bending down at the ends. Styles of branches vary
Wheat	None	Rows of seeds on stem
Woodbine	Tubular 2 lipped flowers	Ovate leaves, climber
Yew	None	Conifer. Much wider than high

Glossary:-

Elliptic wider round leaf with no points at the ends

Lanceolate long, narrow leaf pointed at the stem and tip

Leaflet is where there a stem splits to form several leaves

Linear long narrow leaf with no sharp point at the ends

Lobed deep indentations in the leaf

Ovate wider rounder leaf with point at the tip

Pea-like Flowers 5 irregular petals shared by the pea family of plants

Rhomboid diamond shaped

Stamen protruding part of the flower containing pollen