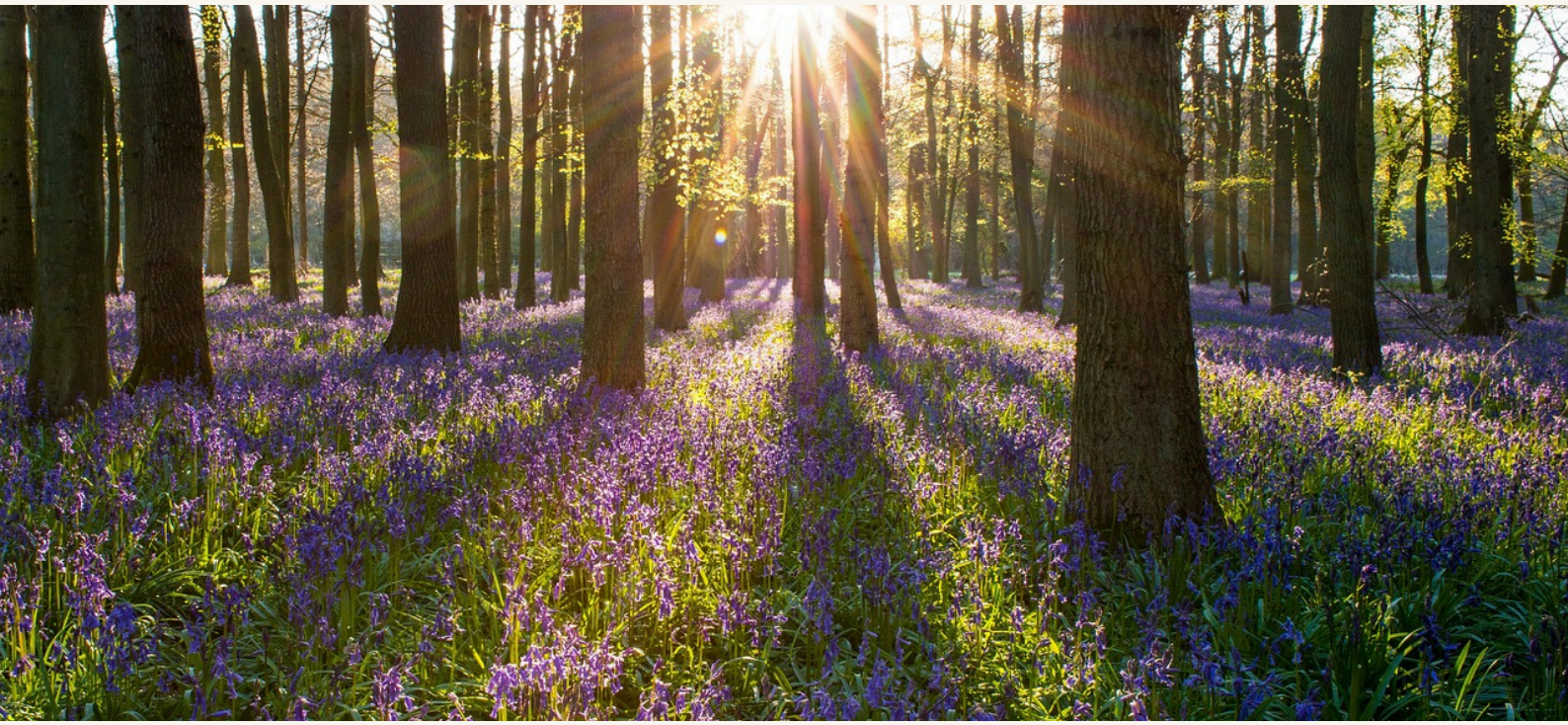
BLUEBELLS

True or False?



Step into the bluebell woods. How much do you really know about one of Britain's best-loved spring flowers? Read each statement and decide whether it is true or false.

HOW TO PLAY

Tick **TRUE** or **FALSE** for each statement. Have a go before checking the answer key. Some statements are trickier than they first appear!

BLUEBELLS

True or False?

	TRUE	FALSE
01. The native British bluebell is called Hyacinthoides non-scripta.	☐	☐
02. Native bluebell flowers usually hang mainly to one side of the flower stem.	☐	☐
03. Bluebells only grow in ancient woodland and nowhere else.	☐	☐
04. A native bluebell usually has flowers with tips that curl back.	☐	☐
05. Spanish bluebells and native bluebells are always easy to tell apart.	☐	☐
06. Bluebells are usually at their best in the UK during spring.	☐	☐
07. Bluebell bulbs are safe to eat if they are cooked thoroughly.	☐	☐
08. Bluebells provide nectar and pollen for visiting insects.	☐	☐

	TRUE	FALSE
09. A carpet of bluebells can be a clue that a woodland has a long history.	☐	☐
10. You should dig up a bluebell bulb to check whether it is a native bluebell.	☐	☐
11. Bluebells can also grow in hedgerows and grassy places, not just woodland.	☐	☐
12. Walking through a bluebell carpet can damage the plants, even if you do not pick any.	☐	☐

Your score: _____ / 12

Name (optional): _____ Date: _____



CHECK YOUR RESULTS

The answer key

Give yourself one point for each correct answer. Read the explanations too — they are where the best discoveries are hiding.

1. TRUE
The native bluebell is Hyacinthoides non-scripta. It is a familiar spring flower in many parts of Britain.

2. TRUE
The flowers of a native bluebell typically droop to one side of the stem, giving the flower spike a distinctive curved appearance.

3. FALSE
Bluebells are strongly associated with ancient woodland, but they also grow in hedgerows, grassland and other suitable habitats. Their presence alone does not prove a wood is ancient.

4. TRUE
The tips of native bluebell flowers usually curl backwards. This is one useful identification feature, although it should be considered alongside other features.

5. FALSE
They can be confused, especially where Spanish bluebells and hybrids occur. Spanish bluebells often have more upright stems, broader leaves and flowers arranged around the stem, but features can overlap.

6. TRUE
Bluebells generally flower in spring, often from April into May in much of the UK. Local weather, altitude and location affect the timing.

7. FALSE
Bluebells are poisonous if eaten. Never taste wild plants as an identification test. Keep bulbs and plant parts away from children and pets.

8. TRUE
Bluebell flowers provide nectar and pollen for insects, including bees and other pollinators.

9. TRUE — WITH A NOTE
Bluebells are often associated with ancient woodland and can be a useful indicator species. However, they can occur in other places, so they are not proof on their own.

10. FALSE
Never dig up a wild bluebell. Disturbing plants damages the colony and its habitat. Identify plants from features you can observe without digging or picking.

11. TRUE
Although woodland carpets are iconic, bluebells can also be found in hedgerows, banks and other suitable habitats.

12. TRUE
Repeated trampling can crush leaves and flowers and compact the soil. Enjoy bluebells from paths and avoid walking through the display.

YOUR SCORE

10–12: Woodland wise — excellent work!

7–9: Budding naturalist — you know your bluebells.

4–6: Good start — take another look at the facts.

0–3: Every expert starts somewhere. Try again after reading the explanations.

TAKE IT OUTSIDE

Become a bluebell detective

Next time you visit a woodland or hedgerow in spring, take a closer look — without picking or disturbing the plants.

LOOK FOR THESE FEATURES

Flower shape	Native bluebell flowers are narrow, bell-shaped and usually have tips that curl back.
Flower arrangement	The flowers usually hang to one side of the stem.
Scent	Native bluebells often have a noticeable sweet scent.
Leaves	The leaves are narrow and strap-shaped, usually emerging from the base of the plant.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Bluebells can form dense carpets because they spread over time, including through underground bulbs.
- Their flowering period is relatively short, so the display can change noticeably from week to week.
- Native bluebells can hybridise with introduced Spanish bluebells, making identification less straightforward in some places.

A NOTE ABOUT CONSERVATION

Wild bluebells are best enjoyed where they grow. Do not pick, dig up or damage them. Keep to paths where possible, avoid trampling the plants, and never remove bulbs or seeds from the wild. Bluebells are poisonous if eaten, so do not taste any part of the plant.

FIELD NOTES

Where did you spot bluebells? What did you notice about their flowers, leaves or scent?

Keep exploring. Use this activity as a starting point for learning about the wild plants and trees around you. Always check identification with a reliable field guide before making decisions about a plant.