

## GET TO KNOW YOUR BUTTERCUPS

There are several native British buttercups. They grow in a wide range of habitats including meadows and marshes and other wet places. These flowers have five, shiny yellow petals and lots of stamens. Here we look more closely at three of the most common species of buttercup.



**Do you like butter...?**  
Hold a buttercup under your chin to see!



### Meadow Buttercup *Ranunculus acris*

The leaves of meadow buttercup are divided up into parts and the outline looks like a hand (known as palmate). The flowers are bright, golden yellow. You may see meadow buttercup growing on roadsides and usually on or near meadows, particularly damp ones. They can grow waist high!  
**Spot it April-September.**

### Some common features of Buttercups

- Bright yellow
- Shiny, reflective petals
- Palmate or triangular outline to leaves
- Grow in damper places
- Favour grasslands

### Creeping Buttercup *Ranunculus repens*

The creeping buttercup is quite distinctive as it has runners or shoots above the ground which come out of the "nodes" of the plant, helping it to spread easily. Can you spot the runners? The leaves are quite triangular in outline. The flowers are deep yellow. You may see this in grassy places and gardens. **Spot it May-September.**



### Did you know?

**Ranunculus**, means little frog and comes from the Latin word **rana** meaning a frog, as many buttercups come from wet or damp places. The origin of the common name buttercup appears to come from a belief that it gave butter its golden hue. In reality buttercups are poisonous to cattle and are often left uneaten.



### Bulbous Buttercup *Ranunculus bulbosus*

The leaves of bulbous buttercup are split into three shapes with a triangular outline. The stem grows bigger below ground and has a swollen or bulbous base just under ground. The flowers are bright yellow and the sepals under the flower head are bent back. If you look closely you may spot that the stem has ridges or grooves. The bulbous buttercup flowers earlier on than the others and grows in