

Yellow Bird's-nest, *Monotropa Hypopitys*

Description

The yellow bird's-nest is a saprophytic species of woodland found mainly in County Fermanagh, with isolated sites in Counties Londonderry and Antrim.

A herbaceous plant consisting of a globose, perennial underground stock which bears numerous fibrous roots and seasonal above-ground flowering shoots of waxy appearance. The flowering shoots are a uniform yellow colour; grows to about 25cm in height. The tubular flowers droop downwards, but become erect in fruit. Flowering shoots may not appear every season.



The plant may persist for an unknown number of years entirely in the form of an underground stock that produces numerous roots which are infected by a fungus. The flowers are pollinated by insects and are succeeded by a round fruit capsule containing the seeds the mycorrhizal fungus as an intermediary. Germination of the seed may take place in the absence of the mycorrhizal fungus, but infection of the seedling by the fungus is required for development to maturity.

Distribution

The easiest places to find this plant are Straidkilly National Nature Reserve near Glenarm, County Antrim and several sites in western County Fermanagh such as Correl Glen National Nature Reserve near Derrygonnelly, Carrickreagh, Ely Lodge Forest and Castle Caldwell Forest Park around Lower Lough Erne.

Action

Many habitats of this species are designated as ASSIs.

Some sites for this species are designated as National Nature Reserves.

Some sites lie within forests or forest parks managed by Forest Service.

Sites are monitored on an *ad hoc* basis by various field botanists.

Further Information

<http://www.habitas.org.uk/priority/species.asp?item=3921>

MLA Species Champion

