



## Gorse - *ulex*



The Gorse is easy to spot throughout the year, as it is the dominant plant in one specific place in Selsdon Wood.

Gorse is a thorny evergreen shrub with yellow flowers (below left 17/4/11). The plant has a long flowering season from autumn, all through winter and on into late spring or early summer. Gorse is related to the Pea family and the fruit are pods which burst explosively to spread the seed (below centre and right 17/5/12).



Gorse is found in just one part of Selsdon Wood, known as The Gorses. Although the name has a long history, until recently the area had very little Gorse and was dominated by Larch. The Larches were nearly full grown and should have been thinned many years ago if they were to become a permanent part of the wood as had originally been intended when they were first planted. They had become spindly and unstable so, in 2009, it was decided to fell all the Larches between East and Middle Gorse to see if any Gorse would re-emerge. This work was carried out by Council contractors and the Friends also helped by removing bracken and bramble (below left summer 2011).



This proved highly successful as by last November (centre right 21/11/12) hundreds of shoots had appeared and the plot is now covered with flowering Gorse (above 17/5/12) thus increasing diversification in the wood by returning part of The Gorses to its previous habitat.

Visit the Gorses area at any time of year and enjoy the colourful display.



