



## Foxglove



**Latin:** *Digitalis purpurea*

**Irish:** *Lus mór*

The foxglove is a herbaceous, biennial plant which means that it takes two years to complete its lifecycle.

The foxglove's main flowering season is from June to August, and it is most commonly found growing in woods, on roadsides and in low scrub.

It is also known as Common Foxglove, Purple Foxglove, Fairy Glove or Lady's Glove.

**Flowers:** The flowering stem of the foxglove develops in the second year and can grow from 50-180 cm in height, or sometimes even higher. The flowers are large, bell-shaped, and hang downwards from the stem like a pendent. They can be purple, pink, blue, white, yellow or peach in colour.

**Leaves:** The leaves of the foxglove grow in a spiral shape around the stem and form a tight ring at soil level in the first year. They are large and spear-shaped, with a soft downy covering and slightly wavy edge. The colour of the leaves is grey-green.

**Seeds:** The fruit of the foxglove is protected in a small pod that splits open in when fully grown to release numerous tiny seeds.

**Other:** The foxglove is an extremely poisonous plant and can be fatal if eaten. Its toxic nature means that it is sometimes called 'Dead Man's Bells', and has been used in medicine to slow down the heart beat.

The name 'foxglove' originates from the Latin *Digitus*, which means 'finger'. It happens that the flowers of the plant resemble the individual fingers of a glove.