



GETTING INVOLVED

Nature and A Midsummer Night's Dream Set design challenge

Shakespeare set *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in Athens and a nearby wood, although it is clear that he has based the description of the wood on the Warwickshire countryside where he grew up.

Using the famous speech below from Act II, scene 1, design a set for Titania's fairy home, paying particular attention to the exact plants that Shakespeare has included.

*I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine:
There sleeps Titania sometime of the night,
Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight;*

Research each of these six wild flowers mentioned and find out exactly what they look like.

Creatively add them into your set design and label. If it's helpful, you can use the attached template of the Globe for your design.

(Hint: some go by different names today, for example, woodbine is an old name for honeysuckle. Oxlips are similar to cowslips, but larger. Musk roses are *Rosa arvensis* and eglantine is *Rosa rubiginosa*).

Have you seen any of these in the wild?

If you happened to watch the last episode of BBC's *Spring Watch 2020* (episode 12) you would have seen Wild Thyme feature in the programme and the Large Blue butterfly it attracts.

It would be very rare to find all these flowers in the same spot in Warwickshire today as wild flowers have dramatically declined in numbers. However, by researching, drawing and recognising them, you have a direct connection to Shakespeare's world.

