**Wild Carrot**
Dactylis carota
- found on cliff top grassland
- often a single deep red flower in centre
- also known as Queen Anne’s Lace, Bishop’s Lace and Bird’s Nest

**Thrift**
Armeria maritima
- grows on grassy slopes, rock and saltmarshes
- also known as Sea Pink and Lady’s Cushion

**Oysterplant**
Mertensia maritima
- found on upper parts of shingle beaches, where fresh water can be found
- mostly found on southern Co. Down shores
- flowers June-August

**Glasswort**
Salicornia spp.
- grows on mudflats
- fleshy shoot like leaves are edible, often boiled and known as Samphire

**Sea Holly**
Eryngium maritimum
- found on sand and shingle shores, mostly sand dunes
- member of carrot family
- very distinctive, though a rare sight

**Common Bird’s-foot trefoil**
Lotus corniculatus
- grows in clusters on sand dunes and cliff tops
- flowers May-August, followed by black peapods
- bird’s foot name derives from shape of seed pods

**Common Scurvy grass**
Cocklebur officinalis
- member of cabbage family
- sallows used ascuny grass to ward off scurvy, as it is high in vitamin C it was a popular tonic drink at one time

**Yellow Horned Poppy**
Glaucium flavum
- found on shingle or sea walls
- long horn-like seed pod
- soft petals that fall quickly
- flowers June-September

**Common Rest harrow**
Ononis repens
- grows on sand and dunes
- sticky to the touch
- also known as Horse’s Breath
- roth larvae feed on thorn

**Sea Rocket**
Cakile maritima
- found on top of beaches, sand or shingle
- in the mustard family
- grows mostly on the outer shore
- flowers July-August

**Ringed Plover**
Charadrius hiaticula
- plumage deeper brown during winter months - summer plumage with black and white banding; orange/red base to the beak
- feeds on open mud and sands during low tides, mostly at high water
- present during winter as a small breeding population on the esker islands

**Lapwing**
Vanellus vanellus
- at a distance appear vaguely black and white, but have stile green greyish plumage
- favour shingle backed by farmland
- also called peewit (reflecting its call) and Green Plover

**BIRDS**
A colourful array of birdlife can be found on and around the shore throughout the year, but winter is when the area really comes alive with visiting flocks, especially around Strangford Lough.

**Pale Bellied Brent Goose**
Branta bernicla hrota
- "yap-yap" calls can be heard from some distance
- pattern of bars on the wings found on young
- the most iconic and abundant goose on the lough; more than 20,000 present in October (most of the eastern Canadian Arctic breeding population) mainly on the northern mudflats where they feed on eelgrass

**Arctic Tern**
Sterna paradisaea
- red bill, short red legs
- hard to spot from Common Terns, which have black spot on bill
- nests in northern countries and the Arctic

**Sandwich Tern**
Sterna sandvicensis
- long black bill with yellow tip
- black legs

**Ruddy Shelduck**
Tadorna ferruginea
- greybrown back, paler belly with long, redorange legs
- found in most habitats, picking through weed, stones and on muddy sands for small invertebrates
- also look for green legged Greyneshank Tringa nebular

**Explore the Coast**
be a Coastal Guardian
A species guide for the County Down Coast. Produced by the Strangford Lough and Lecale Partnership and Action for Biodiversity to help people look after our fascinating coastal wildlife as part of the Coastal Guardians.

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