

July 2021

Large-flowered Mullein, *Verbascum densiflorum* L.

From the mullein family (Scrophulariaceae)

The true mullein is a 2-year-old herbaceous plant. In the first year it forms a rosette with large oval, grey-green, woolly leaves. In the second year it develops 1-3 m tall, woolly and flowery stems with a main stem and later several side shoots. The flowers stand together on the long inflorescence and bloom from bottom to top between June and September. The individual flowers are 35-50 mm in size. A capsule with about 300 seeds is formed from each individual flower in autumn. The dense, woolly, felty hairs of the plant are an excellent protection against evaporation. This makes the mullein well adapted to sunny, dry locations. It is found in rocky places, dry slopes, roadsides and sunny weedy areas. In the garden, it prefers light, loamy sandy soils and a sunny spot sheltered from the wind.

Mullein is a well-known medicinal plant, its main constituents are mucilage, saponins and flavonoids.

For hoverflies, bees, bumblebees and beetles, mullein is an extremely rich source of pollen. The leaves of the mullein provide an important food source for the caterpillars of the owl moth and the mullein moth, which specializes in mullein, from July onwards.

