



From mid-August onwards, pluck your own flowers at the Dahlia Picking Garden of **De Tulperij** before enjoying some coffee and homemade apple pie in the greenhouse.
DETULPERIJ.NL

Where the Wild Flowers Are

The Netherlands might be synonymous with the tulip, but in the summertime, fields around Amsterdam bloom with often-forgotten-about flora.

It's early August in the area around Hilversum and Laren. The sun dips beneath its usual peak, and light crests the meadows. Throughout the year, these same fields go from frost-tipped to faded green, as the seasons do their work. But for a short period in summer, everything turns purple. That's thanks to the heather in full bloom. A wildflower native to the Dutch landscape, when in bloom, it transforms the gentle flat land it calls home into a royal carpet woven of deep lavender. It's an evocative sight and a reminder of the country's diverse tapestry of flowers come the summer, which is often overlooked in favour of the tulip in the spring.

Wildflower heaven

The Netherlands is one of the world's largest exporters of flowers, account-

ing for nearly half of the world's flower trade. But for all its trade, some of its blooms still linger in the shadows. From heather to red clovers, water forget-me-nots and daisies, the Netherlands is home to an abundance of wildflowers, both native and cultivated. In fact, there are believed to be close to 800 different species, many of which you can find in meadows, forests and the dunes. And though springtime in the flower region around Amsterdam, such as in Hillegom and Lisse, sees those famous flowers bloom, the summertime is just as worthy for those seeking a pretty picture.

Dearest dahlia

One of the highlights is the dahlia blooming season. While not native to the Netherlands, dahlias are now widely cultivated, and their



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Summer in Bloom

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blooming season rivals even the tulips for colour and spectacle. For flower farmers such as Noor Reijkerkerk, dahlias are a way of life. 'My family has always worked with flowers, but dahlias are my favourites', says Reijkerkerk, who runs the website ilovedahlia.com. 'It was once a wildflower, but now it's cultivated here. We grow more than 600 different varieties, and they're all incredibly unique – you have some the size of your hand and others your fingertip.' They bloom in August, which is also the best time to pick them at one of the picking gardens such as Reijkerkerk's. But for many wildflowers, you can spot them beyond the growing fields in locations you least expect. And stumbling upon them is part of the beauty of flowers in the first place, says Reijkerkerk. 'When you're out in the fields, I don't want to say it's heaven, but it's close to it. When people come to us, they leave their phones and selves behind momentarily. They go out into the meadow, at peace with the flowers.'



ILoveDahlia

All the flowers

ILLUSTRATIONS © AJ&A ZDRAVKOVIC



Heather

Native to the country, this pink and purple wildflower carpets dunes, moors and woodlands.
Blooming season: August-September
Where to find them: Zuiderheide near Laren/Hilversum



Poppies

These slender scarlet buds appear alongside roadsides around Amsterdam.
Blooming season: May-August
Where to find them: Zuid-Kennemerland National Park



Daisies

The friendly face of every garden, these yellow and white flowers represent beauty in simplicity.
Blooming season: March-October
Where to find them: Fields and meadows everywhere, like in Broek in Waterland and Edam



Alliums

A non-native flower, these purple, globe-shaped bulbs dubbed the 'Purple Sensation' (*Allium hollandicum*) are cultivated favourites.
Blooming season: May-June
Where to find them: Keukenhof, Bollenstreek

The Botanical Prints postcard box from Rijksmuseum includes 50 cards of floral and botanical illustrations that are works of art themselves.

[RIJKSMUSEUMSHOP.NL/EN/POSTCARDBOX-BOTANICAL-PRINTS](https://rijksmuseumshop.nl/en/postcardbox-botanical-prints)



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The national flower

Contrary to popular belief, the daisy (not the tulip) is the Netherlands' national flower, at least informally. While the Netherlands doesn't have an official national flower, radio show Vroege Vogels organised a 2023 competition with the daisy coming out on top of the public vote. The tulip didn't qualify as it's technically not native to the country.



Cornflower

Electric blue beauties that are a symbol of hope.
Blooming season: June-August
Where to find them: Roadsides and wildflower meadows in Het Twiske



Red Clover

These pink and purple wildflowers play a key role as pollinators in the local ecosystem.
Blooming season: May-September
Where to find them: Wildflower meadows and canal banks



Water Forget Me Nots

Beautiful blue blooms that linger near watery shores and are a symbol of remembrance.
Blooming season: June-September
Where to find them: Nature reserves such as Ilperveld and wetland areas

Dahlias

Often peachy and pink. The Netherlands is one of the largest producers of them in the world.
Blooming season: Mid-August-Mid-October
Where to find them: ILoveDahlia or DeTulperij flower fields