



Farndale

The beautiful valley of Farndale lies at the heart of the North York Moors. Each spring, its glorious daffodils put on one of nature's most spectacular shows – a dazzling display of colour that carpets the meadows and river banks along a seven-mile stretch of the River Dove. It's often said that medieval monks from nearby Rievaulx Abbey planted the first daffodil bulbs here. But the petite wild daffodil (*Narcissus pseudonarcissus*) is one of our native plants and is protected within the Farndale Local Nature Reserve, established in 1955 to safeguard the valley's famous flowers.

Working with nature

Wild daffodils love riverbanks, grassland and woodland – especially woodland with partial shade at the edges and no encroaching vegetation. Luckily, that describes Farndale to a T, with the River Dove snaking through the meadows of a lightly wooded agricultural dale. The daffodils spread either by their seed falling on the ground or by their bulbs being carried downriver. Weather also has a part to play, as extremes of any kind – from drought to overly wet autumns or cold springs – affect bulb growth and flowering.

There's also one more factor that makes Farndale fab for daffs, and that's the work of local landowners and the National Park Authority, who look after the local habitat together. Maintaining the footpaths keeps visitors on the straight and narrow, avoiding damage to the leaves or roots while growing; while cutting back scrub and branches lets in the light that the daffodils need to thrive.

