Alder
Alnus glutinosa
Alder is a tree which can grow up to 20 m high. It is often found in wet places. Its leaves are round with toothed edges. There are two flowers to look for. It has a male flower which is yellow and 4-6 cm long – dangling down from the twig – a “catkin”. It has female flowers too. These are green cones in groups along the twig.

When I found it:

Where I found it:

Lesser Celandine
Ficaria verna
This bright yellow flower is a cheerful sign that spring is on its way. It has dark green heart-shaped leaves. This flower can be found on roadsides, woodland, hedge banks, stream sides and meadows. It looks like a buttercup, but has differently shaped leaves and more than 5 petals in its flower.

When I found it:

Where I found it:

Sweet violet
Viola odorata
This is a pretty, blue-violet coloured flower. Sometimes it can be white. It has leaves covered with small hairs and its stem is hairy too. It grows on the edges of woodland and along shady hedgerows. It has its own smell – of violets of course! The most common violet is a dog violet which is often more lilac in colour and does not smell.

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Opposite-leaved golden saxifrage
Chrysosplenium oppositifolium
This plant is found in damp, shady places. It grows low to the ground in a patch. Look for tiny yellow flowers, 3-4 mm wide growing between leaves. The flower do not have petals, only yellow stamens. It has rounded leaves which grow in pairs but on the opposite side of the stem to each other.

When I found it:

Where I found it:

Thale cress.
Arabidopsis thaliana
This has tiny (3 mm wide), white flowers, grouped together. Its leaves form a ring, (rosette) around the bottom of the stalk. It has seed pods lower down the stalk that are long and thin and don’t burst open when you touch them. It does not need much soil, so can grow on pavements, and even walls.

When I found it:

Where I found it: