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FLORA IN SWITZERLAND

Primula elatior, Schlüsselblume, Oxlip

Primula elatior, the oxlip, is a flowering plant in the genus *Primula*, found in nutrient- and calcium-rich damp woods and meadows throughout Europe, with northern borders in Denmark and southern parts of Sweden and eastwards well into Russia.

The Schlüsselblume is a low growing herbaceous perennial plant. The light yellow flowers are produced in the



Schlüsselblume

spring. The flowers are in clusters of 10-30 together on a single stem 10-30 cm tall, each flower 9-15 mm broad.

It may be confused with the closely related *Primula veris* (cowslip) which has a similar general appearance although *P. veris* has smaller, bellshaped, bright yellow flowers (and red dots inside the flower), and a corolla tube without folds. The leaves of *P. veris* are more spade-shaped than *P. elatior*.

I still remember the bunches of Schlüsselblumen we used to pick as signs of spring. They grew along a stream, and the nicest Schlüsselblumen were always precariously perched above the water, and yes, I fell in more than once. But that's not too high a price for Schlüsselblumen.

Anemone nemorosa, Buschwindröschen, Guggublüemli

Anemone nemorosa is an early-spring flowering plant in the genus *Anemone* in the family Ranunculaceae. Common names include wood anemone, windflower, thimbleweed and smell fox, an allusion to the musky smell of the leaves. It is a perennial herbaceous plant.



Guggublüemli

The plants start blooming soon after the foliage emerges from the ground. The leaves are divided into three segments and the flowers, produced on short stems, are held above the foliage with one flower per stem. They grow from underground root-like stems called rhizomes and the foliage dies back down by mid summer. The rhizomes spread just below the soil surface, forming long spreading clumps that grow quickly, contributing to its rapid spread in woodland conditions.

The flowers lack both fragrance and nectar and it has been suggested that they are primarily self-pollinated, but it has also been demonstrated that they can be pollinated by bees and other insects.