



National Trust

News and events for autumn / winter 2018
Bedfordshire | Cambridgeshire | Essex
Hertfordshire | Norfolk | Suffolk

Near you



A time to create memories

Autumn is the perfect time of year to enjoy the vast amount of activities, both indoors and out, that the National Trust has to offer. Whether you enjoy exploring ancient woodlands, getting lost in time in grand houses full of history, or favour a tranquil oasis to watch wildlife, there are sights for you to appreciate across the East of England.

For a classic autumn walk with the family or amongst friends, **Danbury Common, and Blakes Wood** in Essex set the scene perfectly. Hosting several trails to follow, it is up to you whether you want to discover their open heathland, wooded glades or areas of wetland that are home to numerous varieties of wildlife.

Throughout the region, our places are lit up with an autumnal glow; visit one of our parklands to appreciate some of the thousands of acres we care for. Both **Felbrigg** and **Sheringham Park** in Norfolk boast acres of woodland and parkland

that are currently shining with countless tones of bronze and provide another gorgeous backdrop for a crisp walk.

To expand your autumn agenda further than soaking up the glorious colours on a walk, why not enjoy some of our other offerings?

This time of year is renowned for its vast variety of delicious delights, so whether blackberries take your fancy, or classic apples tickle your taste buds, enjoy autumnal foraging at **Dunwich Heath** in Suffolk, **Blickling** and **Oxburgh Hall** in Norfolk, or **Wimpole** in Cambridgeshire.

Beyond picking fruits, a number of our properties are home to many deer herds that are particularly active during the autumn months. Embark on an early morning walk at **Ickworth**, Suffolk, to witness rutting activity at its peak, or take one of our guided deer rut walks at **Hatfield Forest** in Essex, as these majestic animals embark on their territorial acts.



Our gardens flourish during the autumn months with unique and beautiful trees, plants and flowers blooming. Amongst the gardens of **Peckover**, Cambridgeshire, take a walk to see the Tulip and Ginkgo trees for a truly serene atmosphere, or enjoy a stroll through the gardens of **Anglesey Abbey**, Cambridgeshire.

The East of England really does ooze all things autumnal from September onwards and our properties have so much on offer; enjoy our traditional festivities paired with fragrant foods, or simply admire the beautiful colours that encapsulate the season at its finest.

Autumn Colour

Being red green colour blind, the summer landscape and harsh light appears as a flat and fairly uniform shade of green for me (or during this year's heatwave a uniform shade of brown!) By contrast, the autumn provides a kaleidoscope of colour, light and shade.

As the days shorten, leaves stop photosynthesising and producing chlorophyll - the biomolecule that absorbs energy from sunlight and gives leaves their summer green colour. In the autumn this green pigment is broken down, yellow pigments are revealed and other chemical changes reveal red colours. This is why autumn is so well known for great colour displays.

All of our deciduous woodlands put on an incredible show and in the East of England I would head to Hatfield Forest, Wimpole Hall and Felbrigg. To turn the colour up a notch, I would visit our gardens which have many different trees from around the world that add to the paint palette. Best in show for me are the gardens at Peckover House, Blickling Estate and the winter walk at Anglesey Abbey, which as well as leaf colour has contrasting hues and shades of bark that are to die for.

Paul

Paul Forecast,
Regional Director



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Digging for the future of Sutton Hoo

After years of planning, work to completely transform your experience of visiting Sutton Hoo is now underway.

At the end of September, we'll be taking the unusual step of closing completely to visitors whilst we finish work on the £4million project and will be throwing open the doors once again in spring.

The changes you'll see next time you visit include new walking routes, exhibitions and new ways to discover the stories of the Anglo-Saxons who chose to bury not just their king here, but others too.

A viewing tower giving bird's eye views over the Royal Burial Ground and across to the River Deben is also part of the plans, but before we could go ahead with construction, an archaeological dig took place to excavate the footprint of where the tower will stand.

Led by a team of experts from Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA), the dig was carried out with help from Sutton Hoo's own staff and volunteers, with visitors able to watch the action.



The dig was the first in almost 30 years to take place within that area and the range of finds spanned the years from prehistoric, right through to the modern age. At the earliest end of the scale, finds included flints from ancient tools, whilst elsewhere two metal containers thought to be from the Second World War were found.

One find perhaps shone a thought-provoking light on the lifespan of the materials we use today, with a plastic Sunblest bread packet thought to be the remains of someone's lunch unearthed from the last dig, still predominantly intact.



At the cutting edge



Harvesting activities happen in all sorts of ways at the National Trust and at Wicken Fen in Cambridgeshire, a welcome addition to the team has been put to work over the summer.

The special cutting machine, called a Fen Harvester, was recently introduced to manage the cutting of 40-50 hectares every year as efficiently as possible. It can cope with the wet, soft and uneven terrain of the fen and doesn't cause the soil to compact, which means the plant communities and wildlife at Wicken Fen can thrive.

Unfortunately this also meant that the old cutting equipment could no longer keep up. The new Fen Harvester will help rangers complete the cutting that is needed every year to aid the recovery of the fen as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Following the trial of a fen harvester loaned from the Broads Authority, the team at Wicken Fen were so impressed with its suitability for the fens that they purchased their own machine. The new harvester has been named 'Fen Voyager' and thanks to your support, the future on the fens is looking bright.

Wicken Fen is our oldest nature reserve and contains a unique remnant of undrained fen, which once covered the lowlands of East Anglia. Increasing water levels have helped to sustain many of the 9,000 plus species found at Wicken Fen, but



Birdwatcher's dream

Wishing for warmer climes this winter? So are millions of migrant birds, arriving on UK shores making the Norfolk and Suffolk coasts a birdwatcher's dream.

On the Suffolk coast at Orford Ness, Marsh harriers nest among the reeds of King's Marsh and Airfield site, whilst barn owls make their homes in several of the site's old military buildings. The mud flats and salt-marsh also provide valuable feeding and roosting areas for many hundreds of waders and wildfowl.

At nearby Dunwich, our conservation work has enhanced the biodiversity on the rare lowland heath which boasts a stunning display of wildlife all year round and can be particularly special during autumn.

Whilst on the Norfolk coast one of the great winter wildlife spectacles to enjoy is huge skeins of pink-footed geese. More than a third of the world's population of this species spend the winter in Norfolk, peaking in number during January and February.

Wherever you're on the watch for birds, keep your eyes peeled for the chance to learn more about the species which visit our places, and the ways we care for them. Why not have a chat with a ranger or join one of our guided walks next time you visit?



Autumn conservation in action



As autumn leaves start falling and days shorten, you might imagine it could be a time of slowing down for our countryside teams too.

Whatever the weather, you're likely to come across teams of staff and volunteers getting stuck into essential conservation work.

At Dunwich Heath on the Suffolk coast, Lead Ranger Richard Gilbert and his team will be carrying out the annual winter task of coppicing Common Gorse.



The heath is a haven for birds and insects, and managing the gorse helps ensure it continues to provide an ideal habitat.

'Gorse becomes very leggy and open if not cut when it gets old,' said Richard.

'That's not a particularly useful habitat for birds such as Dartford warbler and stonechat and also presents a fire risk.

Healthy gorse is a strong, robust plant and is typically used by Dartford warblers for feeding as it is rich in spiders and other invertebrates.'

Further along the coast, the Orford Ness team will also be managing habitats for birds.

They'll be cutting back rushes and grass to keep the edges of pools clear and open grassland short, creating the ideal conditions for breeding waders such as lapwing and avocet.

Work to improve river health at Oxburgh Hall in Norfolk is starting to pay off, as an increase in the number of otters has been recorded. In 2013, silt was cleared and sluices repaired in the river running through My Lady's Wood.

Now, the resurgence of the otter is a good indicator that the overall health of the river has improved, thanks to this work.



Bringing the house to life

As summer draws to a close and the days get shorter, you might think that there is less to see behind the doors of our historical houses when actually, the opposite is true. Autumn and winter can be some of our busiest periods indoors with a hive of activity going on behind the scenes.

This season is the time when our conservation teams get really stuck in, cleaning the house and collections from top to bottom.

During the autumn months, Anglesey Abbey will be celebrating the conservation work the team does on a daily basis to preserve the house, mill and gardens. The mill wheel and float will be undergoing huge conservation work to keep it turning, which visitors will be able to watch and discuss with the mill team. In the gardens, visitors will be able to discover how the garden team prepare to create next year's displays. Our statue cleaning team will be working to put the statues to bed

avoid possible damage in the winter months. In the house, the conservation team will be showcasing how they care for Lord Fairhaven's home and getting visitors involved in the work that goes into preserving the stunning collection.

Ickworth will be focussing on conserving their book collection, and if you want to find out how they go about this then you can have a go yourself on the 11 September. Melford Hall also has two conservation in action days this autumn, looking at furniture and ceramics. Over at Felbrigg Hall, we hope to see recently conserved paintings rehanging on the walls in the Cabinet Room during autumn and, with the help of the Textile Conservation Studio, the Drawing Room carpet will be having a deep clean.

Teams at Wimpole Estate will be reaching new heights as they use scaffold towers to work from the top down, cleaning walls, textiles, ceramics,



furniture and finally floors. For the first time this year they are taking the Winter Clean 'on tour' - from room to room, and for all to see. If you want to delve deeper you could join a 1930s cooking experience lead by our Living History Cooks at Ickworth, or book one of our lecture lunches at Lavenham Guildhall. Here you can enjoy a guided walk around the medieval village and the Guildhall, topped and tailed with plenty of refreshments.

Life at the National Trust never stops. With guided tours and conservation in action in abundance, we hope to show you things that you've not seen before as we continue to bring our houses to life.



Inspired by the natural world

Throughout the centuries we've been a nation obsessed with nature.

Hand-painted botanical studies illustrate the meticulous work that botanists, artists and floral enthusiasts undertook to accurately study nature surrounding them. Pressed specimens of flora with handwritten notes were kept preciously in paper books, whilst insects and butterflies were carefully collated and displayed in curiosity cabinets.

As knowledge and observations of living specimens grew, craftspeople and designers quickly adopted natural motifs when designing textiles, wallpaper and ceramics. This autumn our 'Natural World' collection continues along this theme, taking inspiration from the historic collections in our care.

The extensive herbarium at Felbrigg Hall, which is a collection of dried and



pressed flowers; along with illustrations by the Italian naturalist Fabio Collonna, from Blickling's book collection - have inspired designers to create new prints.

The designs will be used on items in our shops, including ladies' accessories, kitchen and home products. Look out for this new range and many others, from autumn.

Get active



Autumn and winter is an exhilarating time to get outdoors and get active. The crisp mornings, the crunch of the leaves on the ground and seeing your breath in the air all make us feel alive. So grab your trainers, wrap up warm and get your heart pumping at one of our places.

Our region is ideal for cycling and there is a wide range of routes suitable for all ages and abilities.

Why not take in two places at once and cycle from Wicken Fen to Anglesey Abbey along the Cambridgeshire fens or go off-road on Blickling's all weather trail? A number of places now offer bike hire with all the equipment you need including helmets, trailers, child seats, tag-alongs and even a tandem.



Beat your personal best on a Parkrun at Blickling Estate, Sheringham Park or Wimpole Estate. Parkruns take place every Saturday morning and are open to anyone whether you are new to running or a budding Olympian. Or if you are feeling competitive then why not sign up for a half marathon? And for something different, how about a night run?

If you would rather move at a gentler pace then strap on your walking boots and get walking. There are so many different walks that will let you take in historic landscapes, majestic woodland and wild coastal paths. Many places also offer accessible routes that are buggy and wheelchair friendly.

To find out more about how to get active at your local National Trust place visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk/eastofengland



Every donation counts

Whether it's historic buildings in need of repair or the coast and countryside where wildlife needs a helping hand to thrive, your support goes a long way. Here's a round-up of our appeals, see which place or cause is closest to your heart.

Raising the roof...
We currently have two big conservation projects in the pipeline at Ickworth and Oxburgh Hall, both of which require extensive and urgent roof repairs due to aging tiles, timbers and brickwork.

Revealing the secrets of Sutton Hoo...
Extraordinary treasures were found buried at Sutton Hoo, but only part of this story is being told. With your support we'll begin to transform the site and reveal why our ancestors chose this as a royal burial ground.

Blickling's library on borrowed time...
Blickling's library on borrowed time faces threats from death watch beetle, damp and mould. With your help we can conserve the building to prevent on-going damage to the collection.



Keep Horsey Windpump's sails turning...
There was once a network of working windpumps in the Norfolk Broads, now there are four, one of which is Horsey Windpump, which requires constant care and maintenance.

Wimpole's heavy horses...
For centuries they tirelessly worked the land, but Shire horses are a breed under threat. We need your help to look after these magnificent beasts and secure their future.

Support the herd at Wicken Fen...
Highland cattle and Konik ponies are helping to create new habitats for rare wetland plants and wildlife at Wicken Fen. However, we need your help to look after this grazing herd.



Hatfield Forest's coppice appeal...
Hatfield Forest has a history of coppicing that dates back to medieval times. An ancient form of woodland management, we're now in need of new equipment that will help continue this tradition.

And finally, you can help make a difference to a child's life...
In memory of Caroline Gundle who loved visiting National Trust places, the Brancaster Bursary Fund helps provide financial support to enable more children to experience the great outdoors at Brancaster Activity Centre.

To make a donation and for more appeals, visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/donate-to-an-appeal-in-the-east



Autumn Challenge

We welcome the first day of autumn on the 23 September this year and with it our Autumn Challenge. It is the perfect time of year to get out and about with the family to explore everything autumn and our regional places have to offer.

An iconic and picturesque time of year, September and October bring us crisp mornings, golden leaves, an abundance of seasonal foods and reunites us with some familiar

friends. To connect everything the season has to offer, we invite you to join us on a quest to find and share the unique characteristics about autumn at our places and at home.

Perhaps you will enjoy some seasonal cooking or get involved with pumpkin carving, you might find the perfect fallen leaf or chase a fiery sunset; whatever it might be we'd love to see it! Keep up to date with each weekly theme and share your creations with us.

To round up our Autumn Challenge we will be hosting a 'Superchallenge' week over half term. We will set a challenge each day for you to go out and find or create something and share your favourite picture of it with us. Follow our regional social media channels to find out more... are you up for the challenge?

Take part in the #NTautumnchallenge, www.nationaltrust.org.uk/autumn-challenge



Supporters help fund sheepdog for Hatfield Forest



There is a new four legged addition to the team at Hatfield Forest in Essex.

Thanks to the generous support of the Enfield and Chelmsford supporter groups, Selena the border collie moved from Pembrokeshire to Essex in April to start a very important job assisting the busy rangers in the conservation of the grazing sheep.

A sheep dog is a great help in this as the areas are often heavily overgrown when the sheep first start to graze there and without a dog it is an arduous and often thorny task to count and check them all.

Hatfield Forest currently has 23 sheep including manx, wylshire, jacobs, hebridean and a white faced woodland ram. They graze the areas of scrubby woodland growth which have grown up in the wood pasture when grazing stopped during the Second World War. Grazing this land keeps alive 1,000 years of history at the forest, it also helps keep the correct mixture of flora growing.

Selena now lives with Ranger Ian Pease at his cottage in the forest. Ian said: 'Selena helps out every day to round the sheep up in both enclosures so that they can be checked for welfare issues. She is also a great help at shearing time rounding the sheep into a pen so that they can be safely handled and sheared with the least stress to the animals. She has settled in well and is a great addition to the team'.

Christmas is coming



Once the clocks go back and the nights draw in, thoughts start to turn to Christmas. Over the festive period our special places are alive with sights, sounds and smells of this joyful time of year.

Anglesey Abbey will celebrate Lord Fairhaven's passion for collecting, through a trail of 12 uniquely decorated trees placed throughout the house and gardens. Help decorate the final tree in the garden using decorations you can make from nature in the Domestic Wing.

Ickworth House will sparkle once again this Christmas with festive fun for all the family. There will be craft activities, stories round the Christmas tree, a visit from a big man in a red suit for the little people and a glass of

mulled wine for the grown-ups. Father Christmas will also be making a visit to Oxburgh Hall, Wicken Fen and Dunwich Heath.

If you are after something unique for someone special then come along to the Medieval Christmas Fair at Grange Barn in Coggeshall on 24 and 25 November or the Guildhall in Lavenham 7 to 9 December which will host a range of unusual and traditional gifts and treats for the village's annual Christmas Fair. For full details of these and all other Christmas events and activities across the region visit the website.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/days-out/christmas-in-the-east-of-england



Winter illuminations

As darkness falls, experience the landscapes you know and love like you've never seen them before.

Repton Revealed at Sheringham Park

2-4, 8-11 November
New for 2018, Repton Revealed illuminates Humphry Repton's vision for Sheringham Park and is the highlight in a year celebrating the life and work of this visionary landscape designer. Just as Repton designed his landscapes, travel along a route with stunning reveals of animated light and projections leading to a view befitting his most favourite work.



Winter Lights at Anglesey Abbey

9-11, 15-18, 23-25 November
Winter Lights has been a sell-out festival for the past few years and this year we've added an extra night to the programme. Among the areas to be illuminated include the winter garden, silver birch grove, Lode Mill and the abbey itself. You may be lucky enough to snap up the remaining few tickets.

Blickling's Garden of Light

1-21 December
A must for those wanting to kick start their festive season, this year we're extending the experience throughout December. With the iconic tree lined drive and 19,000 lights decorating the gardens, we'll be staying open until 6.30pm so you can enjoy the magic when darkness falls. And if you want to beat the crowds, why not visit during the week?



Enchanted Felbrigg

7-9, 14-16 December
Celebrate nature in all its winter glory at Enchanted Felbrigg, which returns with new installations. Your journey starts in the Walled Garden, where light and sound, along with storytelling and crafts make for a great family night out.

For more illuminating details, see our 'what's on' section and brighten up the darkest of evenings this winter.

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