Summer’s here at last

Summer is the season of warmth, longer days and an abundance of wildlife – you just want to be outside. There are many summer adventures to be had at a National Trust place near you.

Why not set your children free with our ‘50 things to do before you’re 11¾’ activities? At Croft Castle and Parkland in Herefordshire you can watch birds in the hide located in the picturesque Fishpool Valley, while Henley Edge in Shropshire is perfect for hunting for fossils. Tick off lots of challenges at Baddesley Clinton in Warwickshire with their Summer of Wildlife (check website for details) with discover what’s in a pond, make friends with a bug, den building and the chance to make your own bug hotel.

For more summer fun why not try nature and craft activities (Wednesdays in the summer holidays) at Wightwick Manor and Gardens in Wolverhampton, boating on the lake and playing cricket at Berrington Hall in Herefordshire and duck racing (every Tuesday in the summer holidays) at Coughton Court in Warwickshire!

If you like things a little more serene, head to the gardens at our places to see flowers in full bloom and borders at their best. In the Walled Garden at Attingham Park in Shropshire see cottage garden favourites, foxgloves, lavender and hollyhocks and don’t miss the veg patch with lettuces, French beans and melons growing in the refurbished Melon House. At Hambury Hall in Worcestershire the Parterre becomes a riot of colour and texture with the addition of summer bedding and the bowling green will be open for games. Take a stroll through the ‘Capability’ Brown parkland at Croome in Worcestershire which reveals statues, temples and follies around every corner and follow the spiral path at Packwood House and Garden in Worcestershire you can find your own little picnic oasis in the shade of one of the historic monuments.

Most times in the summer you are al fresco and having a picnic is the quintessential British way to get outside. At Graftyfriars House and Garden in Worcester you can find your own little picnic oasis in the Walled Garden and escape the bustle of the busy streets, while at Shugborough in Staffordshire enjoy your picnic in the shade of one of the historic monuments dotted around the parkland and at Sunycroft in Shropshire, the croquet lawn is the perfect spot for a picnic and why not have a game?

Nature flourishes in the summer, there’s so much to see. Doodmane in Shropshire is a great place to see damselflies and dragonflies and the Big Pool is home to over 30 species. While at the Clent Hills in Worcestershire listen out for birdsong from thrush, nuthatch, redstart and warblers and see if you can spot the brown trout in the river at The Weir Garden in Herefordshire.

The highlights for this season are busy days, borders in bloom and wondrous wildlife, sure signs that summer is here. You help us protect these signs of summer.
Welcome to the summer edition of Near You. My enthusiasm for nature began with a cloud of butterflies across a meadow. We are trying to make sure that the land that we care for offers that experience to everyone – whether that is through dedicating land for nature, or nature friendly farming. This can make a positive change really quickly and I hope that you will see some of the impacts of that this year at our places.

We also have a number of new exhibitions exploring different stories about our places. At Croome in Worcestershire, the What is Home exhibition explores the stories of its history as a catholic Home exhibition. At Upton House and Gardens, in Warwickshire, the What is Home exhibition explores the stories about our places. At Croome in Worcestershire, to bring this poignant project to life. Ordinarily items with an extraordinary story have been selected to signify What is Home to those who visit her sons, the rosary that began a lifelong devotion and a pink bootie that represents safety and warmth, along with personal testimonies, bring the childhood memories to life. Rachel Sharpe, Croome’s Creative Partnerships Manager explains, What is Home is the culmination of two years of very careful work and close collaboration with ex-pupils and children in care at each stage of the project, learning from their unique life experiences. Kushal Nadim Chaudry has collected and curated these extraordinary testimonies through expertly crafted workshops and conversations, which have resulted in a thought-provoking artwork. Specialist advisors inside and outside of the Trust have been consulted to support the participation work and to help them sensitively understand how the story might affect those children and adults undergoing similar experiences within the care system today.

See World-class portraits of nature’s champions

Attingham Park, in Shropshire, and Upton House and Gardens, in Warwickshire, will soon be hosting art from the National Portrait Gallery. The exhibitions will include portraits depicting champions of nature and the natural world. On show will be works from the 9th century to the present, including outstanding paintings, sculptures, photographs and recent commissions. The selection of portraits includes environmental activists, poets, artists, politicians, campaigners, gardeners, broadcasters and scientists.

Jane Gallagher, Lead Curator for the Midlands, said: ‘Working with the National Portrait Gallery is a really exciting partnership for us as it gives local people the chance to view world-class portraits closer to home.’ At Attingham, staff, volunteers and local school children have contributed to the exhibition by sharing their personal reflections on nature and the work of the portrait sitters. The exhibition is part of a year-long visitor programme ‘Grow Your Green Roots’, a year long celebration highlighting the work to conserve and protect nature on Attingham’s 4,000 acre estate.

A day in the life of…

The farm at Fernhall is nestled in the Herefordshire countryside and has been home to my wife and I for the past two years. It has 300 acres of mainly permanent pasture and mainly permanent pasture and wildflower meadows. We also grow around 40 acres of arable crops for feed and bedding and run a holiday cottage on the farm. Conservation is very important to us, we are custodians of this land and we must look after, and protect it and the wildlife for future generations. Our farm is very traditional and has changed little in over 150 years. Hares, roe dear, red kites, barn and tawny owls, Skylarks and snipe all make their home here. Springtime is my favourite time of year, lambing is over and the shearing is done. The cattle are all out grazing the meadows but we still have a couple of cows to cake. The morning routine starts by checking all the stock. At this time of year we are busy making hay and round bale silage to feed our animals for the coming winter – preparation is key. No two days are the same, so afternoons can be spent sat on the tractor turning hay or on the quad with my dogs, Belle and Molly, gathering lambs for market and moving sheep. Whatever the day brings, I always try to take time out to look over the land to see the hay fields in full flower with orchids, cowslips, treflies, vetches and yellow rattle which are alive with bee’s and butterflies - a sure sign of summer.

Love the countryside? Love nature?

Then join us this summer at BBC Countryfile Live

This year’s Countryfile Live takes place at Blenheim Palace from 1-4 August and Castle Howard from 15-18 August and we’d love to see you there!

Special National Trust passes for members start at £4.40 for two adults at Blenheim Palace and £3.50 for two adults at Castle Howard and include a car parking pass, making this great value for money. Use code NT19 to book.

For more information about this year’s offer visit

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/countryfile-live

To book tickets visit www.countryfilelive.com *(including 10% booking fee

© National Trust
Summertime Gardens - Evening Opening
Sat 3 Aug - Sat 31 Aug (Sats only), 5.30pm-8.30pm
Every Saturday evening in August, Berrington’s gardens will be open for visitors to explore. We will be holding special events on some of these evenings, including ‘Gardener’s Question Time’ on Saturday 10 August.

Party in the Pleasure Grounds
Sat 3 Aug, Sat 24 Aug & Sun 25 Aug, 10am-4pm
Join us in the walled garden and pleasure grounds as we celebrate our Berrington Garden Project. Show your support and help us raise funds for our vital conservation work with live music, games and much more.
Adult £2, child £1

Boating on the Lake
Mon 5 Aug - Fri 30 Aug (Mon – Fri only), 12noon-4pm
The best way to see the 14-acre lake is by boat. Hire a boat for a trip around parts of the lake and see some of the hidden spaces in the Capability Brown designed water habitat. Boat hire is for half an hour per session.
Adult £6, child £3

Berrington 10K
Sun 22 Sep, 10am-4pm
Get your running shoes on and take part in our first ever 10K around ‘Capability’ Brown’s iconic walled garden and pleasure grounds. All £5 - suggested sponsorship amount TBC
Price TBC

Second World War Home Front Cooking
Sat 6 Jul & Sun 7 Jul, 10am-4pm
Step back in time to the Second World War and taste authentic Home Front recipes cooked on a traditional Soyer Stove outside the castle.
All £2.50

Orchard Walk
Sun 30 Jun, 2pm-4pm
The walk will be through orchards over undulating terrain, covering approximately three miles and will be mildly strenuous. Participants will be able to discover how they can join in with the Reimagining Orchards project. Visit website for details.
All £5

Fruit Rhymes Trail
Fri 19 Jul, 2pm-4pm
Fun for all ages, how many of the nursery rhymes do you know? Which fruits can you identify and how many of the fruits featured have you tried?
Price TBC

Minecraft Building Day
Tue 13 Aug & Sat 31 Aug, 11am-4pm
How many trees can you plant and how many can you harvest? Build an awesome orchard from Minecraft blocks and see where our new orchards will grow. Discover how we will be helping nature and growing delicious fruit for the future.
All £2

Croft Castle and Parkland
Croft during the Second World War
Sat 8 Jun & Sun 9 Jun, 10am-4pm
Discover more about Croft during the war, including how the castle was used as a school for evacuated children and the family’s link to Churchill, with authentic wartime recipes, archive material, memorabilia, uniforms and weaponry.

Reviving Croft’s Fishpool Valley
Sat 7 Sep & Sun 8 Sep, 10am-4pm
Try our new walks through the valley, see the dam repairs in action and meet the team. Find out more about the project and see the industrial history of the valley brought to life with horse logging, pole lathing, chestnut splitting and other traditional woodland crafts.
All £2.50

Forties Music Weekend
Sat 29 Sep & Sun 22 Sep, 11am-4pm
Step back in time and enjoy live forties music in the Saloon. While you’re here, discover more about Henry Page Croft’s role as Undersecretary of State for War and Edward Croft Murray’s vital contribution to the Second World War as one of the Monuments Men.
All £2.50

‘50 things to do before you’re 11 ¾’
Come along every Wednesday for self-led activities to complete your ‘50 things’ list. Build a den, toast a marshmallow and even fly a kite.
All £2

Key to symbols
Booking advisable. Call individual property
Booking essential. Call individual property
Event repeated on other dates, check website for details
School holiday event

This is just a selection of our events. To find even more great things to do visit us online at www.nationaltrust.org.uk/midlands

Events for summer 2019
Herefordshire | Shropshire | Staffordshire
Warwickshire | West Midlands | Worcestershire
Shropshire

Attingham Park

Faces of Change: Nature’s Champions
Sat 22 Jun – Sun 30 Sep, 11am-4.30pm
This exhibition, in partnership with the National Portrait Gallery features portraits of environmental activists, poets, politicians, campaigners, gardeners, scientists and ecologists from the 19th century to the present day, depicted in outstanding paintings, sculptures, photographs and recent commissions.

Guided Walk - Gardening in a West Midlands Glasshouses Restoration Project
Assistance dogs only.

Thur 20 Jun – Fri 21 Jun, 9am-10am
Grow Your Green Roots and re-discover the Walled Garden on a walk around its walls. Learn how it was gardened historically and how it’s gardened today. Free guided walk, any donations will go towards the Glasshouses Restoration Project.

Carding Mill Valley and the Long Mynd
Bird Watching Walk
Fri 11 Jun, 6.30-8.30pm
Bird enthusiast and expert Dave Peercy will be your guide to a walk to find and identify some species of birds that call the Long Mynd home. All £7.50

Solstice Sleepout
Thu 20 Jun – Fri 21 Jun, 7pm-9pm
Join our Ranger and Fort day staff for an unforgettable night of wild camping on the Long Mynd. Our team will be serving a warming fire. You will need a small tent, a sleeping bag, torch, food and drink. All £20

Stars in Your Skies - Moon Landing at 50
Sat 20 Jul – Fri 26 Jul, 9pm-11pm
On 16 July 1969 three astronauts, Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins were launched on an historic trip to the moon. Stars in Your Skies are providing an exhibition to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the moon landing. All £7

Lecture Lunch
Thu 12 Sep, 1pm-2pm
Join Patrick, our Area Ranger for an illustrated talk about the important conservation work and the volunteer effort to carry out through sun, wind and snow to achieve these goals. Children can join in with the talk. All £7

Meet The Grazers - Walk and Talk
Thu 19 Sep, 1pm-2pm
Are you interested in learning about the history of farming that is shown by the grazers? Join Patrick, our Area Ranger on this walk, meeting in the Batch Valley. All £7

Mindfulness Walk
Sun 16 Sep, 10am-12noon
We will walk the health and wellbeing impacts being explored. Join us to develop some mindfulness exercises in the woodland making use of the natural environment and the benefits it brings. This will be outdoors, including a short walk through uneven terrain, please wear appropriate outdoor clothing and footwear. Meet at the parking area at Forest School car park – TF31 6DH.

Dudmaston
Outdoor Theatre - ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’
Wed 19 Jul, 7.30-10pm
Bring a chair and a picnic and spend a glorious summer evening watching Shakespeare’s most famous comedy. Performed in the open air, by an all male cast with Elizabethan costumes, music and dance. Gates open at 6.30pm. All £15

Wenlock Edge
Wenlock’s Wildflowers
Thu 27 Jun, 6.30-8.30pm
Join the rangers and explore the internationally important wildflower meadows of the Long Mynd. Bring a torch to see the night flowers. All £7

Forest School at Kinver Edge
Thu 21 Jul – Fri 30 Aug, 8am-9pm
Forest School takes place in the beautiful woodlands of Kinver Edge, delivered by Open Trail. Activities differ every week but always involve an open fire and natural play. Suitable for ages 5-14 – a variety of age-appropriate activities. Child £10

South Staffordshire

Biddulph Grange Garden
Mr Magnolia - Outdoor Theatre
Sat 10 Aug, 2pm-3.30pm & Sun 11 Aug, 1pm-4pm
Folksy Theatre returns to Biddulph Grange Garden with a perfect family afternoon performance of family favourite Mr Magnolia. Bring a chair or a rug to sit on and join in the singing. Adult £12, child £10, concessions £10
Booking essential via www.folksytheatre.co.uk

Kinver Edge and the Rock Houses
Artisan Expo
Sat 7 Sep – Sun 29 Sep
Sat & Sun only, 11am-3pm
Throughout September find out about traditional apple pressing. Use the apples from our orchard, see how apple juice is made. Small charge per bottle. See website for more details.

Rag Rug Workshop
Tue 30 Jul, 4pm-6pm
Join the rangers and explore the internationally important wildflower meadows of the Long Mynd. Bring a torch to see the night flowers. All £7

Moseley Old Hall
The Three Inch Fools: A Musical Take on Shakespeare
Tue 18 Jun, 7pm-9.30pm
Watch The Three Inch Fools perform their highly imaginative and vibrant musical take on Shakespeare’s Much Ado About Nothing, equipped with all manner of musical instruments, in the farmyard.
Adult £16, child £8, group £40

Midsummer Wool Fair
Sat 22 Jun & Sun 23 Jun, 11am-4pm
It’s Midsummer! Come to Moseley Old Hall to celebrate a festival of all things wool - old and new. There will be historic displays, family activities and stalls, plus you can have a go at spinning and weaving.

Summer Activities
Mon 29 Jul – Tue 20 Aug (Mon & Tue only), 11am-3pm
Join us each week for family fun in the garden and woodland. With a different theme each week including Llama Map Quest, What’s My Wildside?, Civil War Camp and something to make and take home. Child £3.50

Pole Lathe Bowl Making with Amerton Arts Studio
Mon 2 Sep, Tue 3 Sep & Wed 4 Sep, 10am-4.30pm
Have a go at turning your own wooden bowl from start to finish using a pole lathe. Suitable for both beginners and more experienced individuals who want to refine their craft. All materials, tools and equipment are provided.
Adult £70

Michaelmas Harvest Fair
Sat 28 Sep & Sun 29 Sep, 11am-4pm
It’s the time of year to see if our Wassailing worked! Find out the stories behind our heritage variety of apples, pears, quinces, medlars and more. There will be stalls, activities and fun things to learn, making the seasonal changes.

© National Trust Images/Rob Stothard
© National Trust Images/Ian Shaw/Arnhel de Serra
Outdoor Cinema
Fri 26 Jul & Sat 27 Jul, 7pm-11pm
An exciting opportunity to watch one of your favourite films against the backdrop of the moated manor house. Don't forget to bring a picnic. Please note that the time is subject to change due to light levels and will be confirmed when tickets are booked. Early bird rate before 1 Jun: Adult £12.50, child £8.50 (under 12); Rate from 1 July: Adult £15, child £10.50 (under 12), under 5s go free. Booking essential via http://summersc السل.png

Walk Bath
Fri 7 Jul & Sat 6 Jul, 9.30am-4pm
Join us as we try to spot some of our resident bats. Stroll around the grounds with a member of Warwickshire Bat Group to find out a little more about them and, hopefully, see a few. Detecting equipment will be provided.
£7.50

Ceramic Workshop
Sat 21 Jul, 10am-2pm
Join local ceramics artist Ros Ingram, who will guide you, step by step, through the process of sculpting using stoneware clay with slip decoration. £45 incl. refreshments and materials.

Cottage Hire
Sat 5 Jul, 9am-12pm
Join talented local artist Lis Mann for a special workshop. Introduce the children to illustrating with watercolours. Booking essential via http://summersc السل.png

much ado about nothing
Sat 5 Jul, 10am-3pm
Join local actors performing a production of Shakespeare's Much Abo...
West Midlands

Birmingham Back to Backs

Discover Your Family History
Thu 6 Jun, 6.45pm-8.45pm (Irish); Sat 8 Jun, 6.30pm-10.30pm (Irish/Scottish) £15 £22

Discover how to delve back further into your family history with the help and guidance of our genealogy specialist.

Consortium in Action Workshop
Mon 10 Jun & Mon 15 Jul, 6pm-3.30pm Get hands-on with Consortium stage scenes look at the combination work we do on site. Enjoy some hands on tasks and learn more as we look after the Backs to Backs.

£10 £20 £25

Mystery Murders at the Backs to Backs
Fri 14 Jun & Fri 20 Sep, 7pm-9pm

There's been a murder at the Backs to Backs. Can you get to the bottom of what happened? Interrogate the suspects, follow the clues and help the police solve the mystery.

£22 £25

Open Air-Ragging - Folkly Theatre presents 'Mister Magnolia'
The Theatre presents 'Mister Magnolia'
Open-Air Theatre - Folkly Theatre 'The Comedy of Errors'
Thu 22 Jun & Fri 21 Aug, 7pm-9.30pm

Take a peek inside one of Croome's eye-catchers, usually closed to the public. With fascinating. An evening of views from Worcestershire from the top of the tower you'll understand why it was chosen as a viewing platform, guided by James Wyatt. All donations welcome.

£2.50 per kit

The Film Orchestra @ Croome Court
Sun 22 Jun, 7.30pm-9.45pm
Performing a full concert of film music favourites including Star Wars, Pirates of the Caribbean and Harry Potter. Conducted by TFO Associate Conductor Jack Camplin with TFO Leader Maric Roberts-Watkins. Bring a picnic, gates open at 6pm. Adult £16, child £10, family £44 booking essential via www.folksytheatre.co.uk

Worcestershire

Clent Hills

Ramble with the Ranger
Sun 30 Jun & Wed 14 Jul, 10am-1pm
Join our ranger for a rewarding walk taking you through one of Clent's finest countryside walks and building your confidence to continue exploring the Clent Hills. £11

Summer Play Trails
Sat 20 Jul - Sun 1 Sep, 9am-4pm
A selection of trails will run throughout the holidays and each one comes with a surprise £2

Summer Sun Ramble
Sun 25 Aug, 10am-4pm
Enjoy the summer sunshine with a 5-mile guided ramble through the beautiful countryside of Clent. £9

Hidden Histories Ramble
Wed 9 Sep & Sat 29 Sep, 10am-1pm
Join us for an invigorating 5-mile ramble on an afternoon exploring the hidden history of the hills. The terrain can be steep at times; please wear sturdy walking shoes and creme for the weather.

£15

Croome

Grayson Perry: Landscape Tapestries
Sun 24 Jun - Sun 30 Nov, 10am-4pm
An exceptional exhibition of five recent works centred around landscapes by the internationally renowned contemporary artist Grayson Perry. Includes the epic 'Building of Britain Tapestry' and the intricate external etchings of 'An Englishman' and 'Map of Days'.

£10.50, trail £2

Embroiderers’ Guild Exhibition
Sat Jan - Mon 30 Sep, 11am-4pm
The guild will produce a cross-section of current and new textile art work. Working in their own unique style members will create scenes in reaction to the National Trust people's Landscape theme of 2019

Bridge and Wilson: Croome’s Landscape Revolution
Sat 1 Jun - Mon 30 Sep, 11am-4pm
A new painting by Antony Bridge. Croome was completed in 1694, make its debut using the same view as Richard Wilson’s famous landscape painting. Free to view, including a guided tour. £5

The Fleece Inn

Annual Asparagus Auction
Sun 2 Jun, 6.30pm-8pm
Please join this year’s inaugural Fleece auctions, selling the season’s best and freshest local asparagus. Make a day of it by visiting two charming outdoor gardens first, buy your fresh grass!

The Handlebards Outdoor Shakespeare
Fri 21 Jun, 6.30pm-9.30pm
The Handlebards present Shakespeare’s plays as you’ve never seen them before – fast-paced, irreverent and brilliantly performed. Adult £15, child £10

Hanbury Hall

Father’s Day Falconry
Sat 15 Jun & Sun 26 Jun, 10am-4pm
Pack a picnic, bring the whole family and enjoy the beautiful surroundings of the Great Garden and park. Worcestershire falconry expert, Trevor Hill will be back this Father’s Day with his majestic birds of prey.

£2.50 per kit

Music Makers
Thu 18 Jul - Sun 1 Sep, 10.30am-3.45pm
Explore The Firs and help us put our musical instruments back together to fill the air with music. Join an instrument kit to make your own instrument to take home. £2.50 per kit

Outdoor Theatre

Outdoor Theatre - Folksy Theatre presents 'Mister Magnolia'
Open-Air Theatre - Folksy Theatre 'The Comedy of Errors'
Thu 22 Aug & Fri 21 Sept, 7pm-9.30pm

This is just a selection of our events. To find even more great things to do visit us online at www.nationaltrust.org.uk/midlands.

Notes

Normal property admission applies to all events unless otherwise stated. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Family ticket includes two adults and any child under 18.

Guided walks: Prior booking for guided walks is essential as places are limited. Contact numbers given above are for dogs allowed unless otherwise stated.

All event details correct at time of going to press.

Contact us for more information, as each class will include a course meal is served from 6.30pm. £2.50

Hanbury Hall

Discover Your Family History
Sun 29 Jun, 11am-3pm
Join us in a traditional Victorian holiday experience. Try something new, or get creative and make your own instrument kit to make your own musical instruments back together to fill the air with music. Join an instrument kit to make your own instrument to take home. £2.50 per kit

Outdoor Cinema

Outdoor Cinema - The Fleece Inn
Sat 29 Jun, 7pm-10pm
An evening of Outdoor Cinema in the beautiful setting of Hanbury Hall. Enjoy some well earned down time with your friends and family. Bring the picnic blanket, some snacks and maybe even something with bubbles and enjoy our unique experience. Booking essential, see website for details

Outdoor Theatre - Wuthering Heights
Fri 11 Jul, 7.30pm-10pm
The iconic Bronte novel is a timeless love affair between two restless souls as wild and untamed as the bleak Yorkshire moors. If there’s a chair or blanket, a picnic and dress for the weather as this stormy narrative unfolds.

£11

Outdoor Cinema

Outdoor Cinema - The Fleece Inn
Sat 3 Aug, 7.30pm-10pm
Join us for an evening of Outdoor Cinema in the beautiful setting of Hanbury Hall. Bring the picnic blanket, some snacks and maybe even something with bubbles and enjoy our unique experience. Booking essential, see website for details
When summer arrives it’s time to play. Lots of our places have natural play areas – perfect for family adventures and great for ticking off some of the ‘50 things to do before you’re 11¾.’

To find out more visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lists/play-time

1 **Dudmaston, Shropshire**

Bring your bikes to Comer Woods at Dudmaston and cycle the Explorer Trail. The Scout Camp is a great halfway point to pause, climb the tree with many trunks or play stepping stones on the tree stump path. A little further along the trail, there’s a great spot for den building. Collect natural materials and challenge your friends and family to build the best woodland shelter.

2 **Clent Hills, Worcestershire**

The Clent Hills are a great place to come for an outdoor adventure. Between the natural play area and the play trail, there are plenty of places for playing, climbing and balancing. Get off the path to explore the woods, great for a game of hide and seek, or try out the Family Fun Trails, available throughout the summer holidays. It costs £2 a trail which includes a prize!

3 **Shugborough Estate, Staffordshire**

**Inspired by the story of George Anson’s journey around the world, Explorers’ Wood is a nautical themed children’s play area at Shugborough for explorers of all ages. It’s laid out with more challenging structures to discover the deeper you explore and natural materials have been used wherever possible to blend in with the beautiful surroundings.**

4 **Brockhampton, Herefordshire**

**Calling all young explorers! Make nature your playground as you discover, play and create this summer in the great wide wilderness of Brockhampton. Pick up a kids only map and get trekking to the natural play area in Paradise Wood, crossing streams and climbing trees along the way. There’s so much fun to be had, it’s no surprise they call it the ‘great outdoors.’**

5 **Packwood House, Warwickshire**

Go on a woodland adventure along Packwood’s Welly Walk. Children (and their grown-ups) can run free, spot wildlife, crash along winding paths and splash in muddy puddles – it’s not called the Welly Walk for nothing! Using your map, families can have a go at activities like den building and tree trunk hopping, making memories together in the great outdoors.

**Previously unseen works by Rossetti on display**

A collection of early drawings by Pre-Raphaelite artist Dante Gabriel Rossetti are on display for the first time in a new exhibition at Wightwick Manor and Gardens in Wolverhampton.

‘Rossetti – Pre the Pre-Raphaelites’ features 30 drawings, most of which have never been on public display before, drawn by a young Rossetti between the ages of 16 and 20 (1844-1848) while studying art.

‘Here is Rossetti the teenager – an artist on the cusp of what would become an astonishing career,’ says Helen Bratt-Wyton, House and Collections Manager, who has curated this exhibition. ‘It’s great to get this glimpse of a famous artist before they became famous – to understand their development and influences. It encourages us to think about what has influenced us in life, and what young people today might draw on to inspire their own creativity.’

A total of 52 early Rossetti drawings were acquired by the National Trust which originally belonged to Alexander Munro, the sculptor and close friend of Rossetti. They were given to the nation in lieu of inheritance tax upon the death of Munro’s granddaughter, Mrs Katherine MacDonald, and allocated to Wightwick Manor by the Arts Council in early 2018.

The Mander family, who owned and built Wightwick Manor, were keen collectors of Pre-Raphaelite art from the 1930s onwards, and many later Rossetti pictures and objects that he owned now form part of the permanent, ever-growing collection at Wightwick.

**New café opens up previously unexplored spaces at Charlecote**

Nestled in the once beating heart of the working buildings at Charlecote Park in Warwickshire is the wood yard – an area that visitors have only been able to glimpse through brown latticed gates. Now, for the first time, this space has been opened up to the public and it now houses the new Wood Yard Café.

‘We know people have sometimes had to suffer long queues in the existing Orangery restaurant,’ explains Kellie Manger, General Manager, ‘so we’re really pleased to be opening an additional café for that all important cuppa, especially in an area that’s new to visitors.’

The surrounding buildings within the wood yard will be opened up over the next few years, after a specialist team of conservators has assessed the work needed to care for them.

Kellie continues, ‘This is just the start of our investment in the facilities here at Charlecote. Over the summer visitors will see us working on improvements to the car park and a new visitor reception area, which will help to make your visit run more smoothly (and involve less queuing).’

‘We couldn’t do this work without the support we get from our members and visitors – every cup of tea you buy helps protect Charlecote for the future.’

Find out more about the new Wood Yard Café and our next steps for improving Charlecote Park at www.nationaltrust.org.uk/charlecote-wood-yard

...and don’t forget to share your play adventures with us

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/westfield-school-at-berrington

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/rosetti-at-wightwick

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lists/play-time

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/lists/pre-the-pre-raphaelites

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/charlecote-wood-yard
Neither made of butter nor a fly!

The small pearl-bordered fritillary, besides being saddled with the longest name of any British butterfly, is an exquisitely beautiful insect of damp grassy habitats where its caterpillars eat the leaves of marsh-violets.

Like these ‘quarters of British butterfly species, its populations have declined over the past 50 years and it is now rare in the West Midlands. The Shropshire Valley on Staffordshire’s Cannock Chase is one of its last refuges in the region. The northern end of the valley lies within the Trust’s Shugborough Estate and over the past couple of years we’ve been working hard with a range of partner organisations to improve conditions for the butterfly, by controlling scrub which was reducing the area of grassland and blocking ‘grips’ (shallow ditches) to rewet the site, grassland and blocking ‘grips’ (shallow ditches) to rewet the site, thus encouraging more marsh violets to grow.

Raising the Roof at Moseley Old Hall

Moseley Old Hall in Staffordshire is famous for having sheltered a King on the run – Charles II hid here in 1661 after losing the Battle of Worcester against Parliamentarian forces. Now this modest Tudor farmhouse needs help to keep providing shelter to visitors after stone masons revealed vital repairs are needed to keep the weather out. As with many old buildings, the full extent of the work will only be revealed once work has started – the scaffolding alone cost over £20,000.

Visitor Experience Manager, Zoe Willems hopes that visitors will show their love for Moseley and support their fundraising efforts. She said: ‘We’ve got a display to reveal construction methods, plus you can get hands-on with a 3D timber frame puzzle – tilting a model of the roof with your hands-on with a 3D timber frame puzzle – tilting a model of the roof with your

Volunteers help care for the bees

Honey bees are incredible insects. Not only do they produce the sweet stuff for our breakfast cereals, they also do a very important job of telling us about the health of our environment.

Alison Wakeman, volunteer beekeeper at Dudmaston in Shropshire, takes care of the four hives in the orchard and during summer it’s a beekeeper’s busiest time of year. She said: ‘Once the spring flowers are over, I come to check the hives regularly. It’s common for bees to suffer from starvation in late June because the summer flowers are yet to bloom so I add syrup to their food stores to boost their diets.’

July and August sees a buzz of activity around the lavender on the garden rickety at Dudmaston. Honey bees also love herbs, particularly marjoram, and wild flowers – plants which Alison encourages budding beekeepers to try growing at home.

Are you inspired by Alison’s story? There’s so many varied volunteering roles on offer. For some ideas that might interest you visit

Your membership matters

Did you know, the places you love receive £2.56 each time you visit? For membership queries please call 0344 800 1895

For membership please call 0344 800 1895 If you require this information in alternative formats, including the Talking Newsletter, please telephone 0121 224 7460 or email: mi.customerenquiries@nationaltrust.org.uk

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/mids-volunteering

News in brief

Archaeological finds on display at Attingham

People have lived and worked on the Attingham Estate in Shropshire since the Bronze Age and highlights of the archaeological finds from over the years are on display in the Mansion. Artefacts range from a Neolithic stone hand axe to a 20th-century fuel tank cap and an American Air Force military vehicle. You’ll also see ‘finds’ found below the floorboards, or within the structure of the Mansion, such as a historic shock absorber which has been concealed to bring luck to the house.

Visit the exhibition daily until Sunday 3 November, www.nationaltrust.org.uk/attingham-archaeology

Gifts on the outside at The Weir Garden

Hereford College of Arts students will be bringing culture and creativity to The Weir Garden in Herefordshire this May with an art display inspired by the Herefordshire countryside.

After spending time at The Weir, the students have been using various media to create individual pieces which will be threaded throughout the garden from Saturday 25 May until Sunday 27 July.

Visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk/craft-at-the-wer for more information.

Stories from the women of Baddesley Clinton

This year at Baddesley Clinton in Warwickshire we’re continuing to explore the story of four women who, despite the centuries between them, are united by their activism, faith and fight for a voice in a world dominated by men.

Discover the story of a heroine who hid priests beneath the floorboards, a devout Catholic who fought for her rights in the courts, a socialite who became a best-selling author and a prolific artist whose paintings still adorn the walls of this moated manor house.

Find out more about these fascinating and inspiring women www.nationaltrust.org.uk/voice-activism-faith

Our work in Birmingham includes a range of places, outdoor spaces and new partnerships – all of which speak of the ordinary and extraordinary lives of the people of Birmingham and the Black Country and places that are part of the city’s identity. As well as the Back to Backs in the city centre, and the Clent Hills on the edge of the city, we’re exploring new ways to work with partners to protect and bring alive the heritage and green spaces that are important to local communities in urban areas. At Moseley Road Baths we are leading a coalition of heritage and community partners to work with Birmingham City Council to find a new future for the Grade II Listed Jacobian mansion.

One of the last great Jacobean houses to be built, Aston Hall is a magnificent 17th century red-brick mansion situated in a picturesque public park on the north side of Birmingham. Built between 1618 and 1635 for Sir Thomas Holte and home to James Watt Junior from 1817-1848, Aston Hall is steeped in history.

To plan your day out at Aston Hall visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk/Aston-Hall

Visit the exhibition daily until Sunday 3 November, www.nationaltrust.org.uk/attingham-archaeology

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/mids-volunteering