



National  
Trust

# Near you

## A rare treasure



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©Marlyn Jane Photography



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**We're delighted to report that earlier this year we acquired beautiful Hambledon Hill, one of the most unspoilt areas in Dorset.**

**R**ising steeply above the River Stour and Blackmore Vale near Blandford Forum, the hill has never been under intensive agriculture or ploughed, so the unspoilt nature, wildlife and archaeology are of national importance.

Simon Ford, the National Trust's Wildlife & Countryside Advisor, said Hambledon had been kept in good condition and the Trust will continue this work.

Simon explains: 'The hill faces a continual threat from the spread of

scrub onto the chalk downland which we will need to keep under control. This will lead to a bountiful spread of plants, characteristic of chalk downland, such as harebell, common rockrose, horseshoe vetch and milkwort. There are also a range of orchids and plants such as meadow saxifrage, squinancywort, fairy flax and early gentian. The wildlife is spectacular with 28 species of butterfly, glow worms and rare damselflies. At this time of year you may find the delicate autumn lady's tresses (above)

and see red kites and ravens overhead. It is a wonderful place to visit.'

Originally owned by the Hawthorn Trust, the hill has been managed by Natural England as a National Nature Reserve. It was bought thanks to a Land Purchase Grant from Natural England and funds from a generous bequest which was given specifically to acquire unspoilt countryside or coastline in Dorset. Maintenance costs will be covered from an endowment which is being set up with help from the Hawthorn Trust.

## Bidding for Bantham

Many of you will know that, in June, we launched a multi-million pound appeal to support our bid to buy Bantham beach and Avon estuary in South Devon. You may also therefore know that we were unsuccessful in this bid. We were extremely disappointed by this news, but also heartened by the huge and swift public support. It was clear that Bantham was dear to all those that had experienced it, or something like it elsewhere.

Mark Harold, our Regional Director, says: 'We'd like to thank all of you who understood what was at stake, gave what you could, and encouraged others to do likewise. We are delighted that over half the donors

who gave to the Bantham appeal are happy for us to spend the donations on alternative coastal projects. This money will be spent either on urgent management and maintenance of the coastline we already care for, or we will save it for a future acquisition. Every year it costs us around £3,000 to manage and maintain each mile of coastline that we look after. With the storms experienced over the winter, this price tag is higher. We are in the process of using around £1 million of Neptune funds across the South West this year in damage repairs, so this further support will make a huge difference to our overstretched budgets.'

## What's in this edition...



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©National Trust Images/Nick Daly

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©Steve Draper/Poltopics



The Great British

# Walk

National Trust

This autumn we're running our fourth walking festival, a way to celebrate the wonderful coast, countryside and gardens we look after.

If you are a keen walker, you'll probably have hiked some of the South West Coast Path – Britain's longest national trail stretching over 600 miles. The Trust looks after about a third of it including favourite walks such as Bolberry Down in South Devon - recently voted 'Top Dog Walk in the West' by walkers of the South West Coast Path.

Away from the coast, we offer hundreds of countryside saunters where you can discover wildlife and heritage along the way; and nearer to our towns there are some places with magnificent views, including our website's most downloaded walk which is the Bath Skyline.

There's a wide variety of events from early morning deer walks at Arlington and Castle Drogo to twilight rambles at Antony and on the Bath Skyline. For nature-lovers, there's a fungi foray at Godolphin and a 'Walk on the Wild' Side in North Devon. Those interested in history might prefer an archaeological walk at Stonehenge, a First World War walk at Brownsea or grab the chance of an exclusive visit to Horton Court en route to Dyrham Park. Expert-led walks at Newark Park and Stourhead focus on the unusual and beautiful trees from these and other shores. For more look on our website and in your enclosed 'What's On' bulletin.

## 'For King and Country'

The generosity of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) has allowed the team at Killerton to work with pupils from four local schools as part of the 'First World War: then and now' programme. The £10,000 grant funded the 'For King and Country' project, which included dramatic and visual arts elements.

Eileen Dillon, Learning Officer at Killerton, said: 'This was a poignant project which uncovered stories we've not told at Killerton before.' Pupils from Broadclyst Community Primary School, Pinhoe C of E Primary School, Silverton C of E Primary School and the Duchy School, Bradninch visited local village war memorials and talked to their own families about their First World War past.

The pupils, helped by National Trust staff, used what they'd learnt to produce a play which explored the first three weeks of the war, and what it meant for the working farms and Killerton estate when people left to fight. This was put on with the children as a community performance. A local band was involved and the compelling performance culminated in a

Blackadder-style charge. The pupils also worked with artist Lucy Rockcliff to create a field of ceramic poppies, each with a name from the village war memorials, to commemorate the people from the four villages above who died serving in the war.

The HLF is supporting this important work with local communities so that the legacy of the conflict can be explored, particularly with young people, in order to help broaden their understanding of how it shaped the modern world.



The cast of 'For King and Country' process through the grounds at Killerton.

©National Trust/Steve Haywood

## It's a Rembrandt!

**A self-portrait, previously doubted as being a genuine Rembrandt is now back on display at Buckland Abbey in Devon having been scientifically verified as being from the Dutch Old Master's own hand.**

**A**fter undergoing a re-examination by the world's leading expert, the 1635 self-portrait is now the first Rembrandt in our collection of 13,500 paintings.

The authenticity of the portrait was thrown into doubt in the 1960s by specialist Horst Gerson and the Rembrandt Research Project. At the time they felt that areas of the painting were not accomplished enough to be by Rembrandt, and that the date and painting style didn't correlate.

However, following a visit to examine the painting at Buckland Abbey, leading Rembrandt expert Ernst van de Wetering concluded that the painting may well be genuine. His assurance led us to send the painting away for further scientific analysis and cleaning, which was funded by players of the People's Postcode Lottery.

Now returned to Buckland, visitors can look at the cleaned painting and through a new exhibition, follow investigations that led to the verification. You are introduced to the concept of provenance and how a painting is attributed to an artist, then encouraged to examine the evidence from the investigative work. Information is presented on glass panels to echo the forensic approach taken and so you can always see and refer back to the painting. A light box allows you to examine microscopic paint samples and infra-red images of the original plans for the painting to see how they vary from the finished product. You're guided through the minute observations made during the conservation work and can listen to Ernst explain why he's now convinced the painting is by Rembrandt.

Harry Dempster aged 8 and the Rembrandt painting.



©National Trust/Steve Haywood

## A tiny and great discovery



©National Trust Images/Nature/Andy Sands

A volunteer team from South Devon, undertaking annual reed bed management alongside the ranger team at Cotehele, has made an astonishing discovery. During their work, the teams discovered two harvest mouse nests.

James Robbins, Ranger at Cotehele, explains: 'The harvest mouse is a rare and localised species in the South West, even in comparison to dormice. Finding two nests in one go therefore makes this a notable record for the estate.'

One of Britain's most elusive rodents, the harvest mouse uses its prehensile tail as an anchor, is just five centimetres long and weighs only four to eight grams. Harvest mice are extremely active climbers and feed in the stalk zone of long grasses and reeds, particularly around dusk and dawn.

# Gardeners go global

Six young gardeners have been hand-picked for a trip of a lifetime to soak up the culture and horticulture of three of the finest gardens in the world.

As part of a brand new TRIAD Fellowship, they're spending time at Hidcote Manor Garden in Gloucestershire, The Alliance of Hyogo on Awaji Island, Japan and Longwood Gardens in Pennsylvania, USA.

Working in partnership, these world-class gardens are sharing their knowledge to nurture and inspire the horticulturalists of the future. Mike Beeston, Hidcote General Manager, says: 'It's vital that we begin to look beyond our own shores and create gardeners with truly global skills and real passion for plants. These budding horticulturalists will get extraordinary hands-on experience through this fellowship that will prove invaluable in their careers.'

To gain a place, the six students, two from each of the three countries,

needed a qualification in horticulture and some working experience – but equally importantly they had to show a real passion for plants and a desire to work with them in the long-term. They'll have at their fingertips everything from plant identification and pest management to landscape and exhibition design.

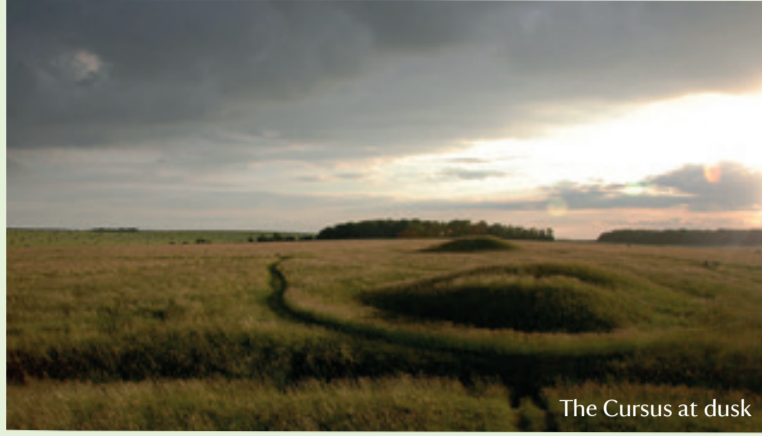
The two American fellowship students from Longwood Gardens, Nicholas Giaquinto and Christina Olivieri (pictured) have recently finished their time at Hidcote, replaced in September by the two British students Philip Brown and Rhiannon Harris.

If you'd like to follow the students on their journey round the globe and share their experiences, simply go to the blog [Triadfellowship.wordpress.com](http://Triadfellowship.wordpress.com)



©National Trust/Gordon Shanks

# Circling the stones



©National Trust/Alan King

The Cursus at dusk

Stonehenge has been very much in the news with the opening of its new visitor centre, but behind the scenes work has also been quietly going on to improve the wider World Heritage Site that we look after.

The Stonehenge Cursus is the latest to get some much needed attention. This large Neolithic monument stretches out near Stonehenge for almost two miles. We're not quite sure what the Cursus was for but it seems to have been used in ceremonies, maybe as a processional way.

Recently, part of a beech plantation at the end of the Cursus has been taken out to reduce root damage and to protect an ancient burial mound. Before work began on the plantation, a bat roost had to be carefully relocated under licence from Natural England.

Through this work we've reunited the Stonehenge Cursus with

Amesbury 42 Long Barrow. Both these Neolithic features are older than Stonehenge itself – dating back to between 3600 and 3300BC. It's thought that the two are somehow related, but no-one knows for sure which came first.

We don't own Stonehenge itself, which is cared for by English Heritage, but it is surrounded by the National Trust Stonehenge landscape. Since the 1920s we've been caring for land around the stones, including much of the avenue that links Stonehenge to the River Avon, the Greater and Lesser Cursus and many of the Bronze Age burial mounds.

There are now more than 70 pedestrian gates over the 2,000 acres circling Stonehenge, and new information panels are helping visitors to understand the significance of the whole Stonehenge landscape.

# Stonemasons at Stourhead

Visitors to Stourhead over the past few months will have noticed the Pantheon was shrouded in scaffolding. This was to allow repairs to be undertaken, part of a £640,000 project to restore many of the features and structures in the grounds of Stourhead.

The Pantheon is the largest and most prominent of the temples and we were delighted to see it released from its scaffolding in the summer. With a leaking roof causing internal damage, repairs to this were top priority and these were completed thanks to a grant of £260,200 from the SITA Trust. This grant will also pay for work this autumn on the lower pump house which is currently inaccessible, and to the waterwheel which was part of the water system on the estate.

This summer, stonemasons have been hanging from ropes 160 feet up

to check the condition of King Alfred's Tower (right). The tower is a triangular 160ft folly located about two miles from Stourhead's Palladian house and famous eighteenth-century landscape garden. Following the stonemasons' detailed assessment, the roof and stonework around the top of this Grade I-listed tower are now receiving urgent conservation attention. This work was possible in part thanks to £96,000 given by Viridor Credits Environmental Company after they were shown the huge public affection for the tower on the Stourhead Facebook page.

Thank you to everyone who has supported the Stourhead appeal so far. We're still fundraising to restore the ha-ha, boat house, and St Peter's Pump which marks the source of the River Stour. Donations can be given at [nationaltrust.org.uk/stourhead/donate-now](http://nationaltrust.org.uk/stourhead/donate-now)



©South West News Service

# Painting an autumn picture

Despite expectations, there's never one 'best time' to see the autumn colour. Autumn paints with its vibrant yellows, reds and rusts right through from September until the beginning of November.

Autumn colour doesn't just mean the trees changing colour in a month or so's time. Many of our herbaceous borders are still stuffed full of colour, such as the Red Borders at Hidcote. Displays of salvias, asters and dahlias can be found in many of our gardens. 'Look out for autumn flowering bulbs' says Ian Wright, our regional Garden Adviser, 'particularly *Amaryllis belladonna*, better known as naked lady; the autumn flowering crocus and *Nerine Bowdenii* with its pink flowers

crowded against hot walls. At Coleton Fishacre, flowering exotics like cannas can be found enjoying the mild climate there, while at Trelissick you will find plenty of salvias in the borders. At Trengwainton an avenue of blue hydrangeas should be in full bloom.

Alan Power recommends keeping a sharp eye out for signs of autumn in your own garden or street. As Garden and Estate Manager at Stourhead, he looks for early clues: colour spreading through borders as the *Crocsmia* 'Lucifer' turns rust-brown and the



©National Trust Images/Andrew Butler

day lilies fade to yellow. Autumn colour is triggered by shorter days and colder nights, and by the start of October individual trees at Stourhead join in the autumn show. Alan says: 'By the end of October the trees are coming together as a team, with the buttery yellow tulip trees, russet swamp cypresses and rich red American oaks. Our native beeches create an essential backdrop to any autumn portrait, setting off the more exotic star performers to perfection.'

But nature never has a set plan, so it's worth getting out and about whenever you can. A benefit of your membership is that you can visit many times over the coming weeks to see autumn's glorious work in progress.

©National Trust Images/Nick Daly



Hidcote's Red Borders in autumn

# News in Brief

## Choughs return to the Lizard

Volunteer watchers were uncertain whether choughs would breed at Lizard Point again this year, and were thrilled when three new chicks successfully fledged, adding to a total of 17 chicks from all five broods across Cornwall. Previously extinct, choughs arrived back on the Lizard in 2001 and have bred there ever since. Last May the original male bird on the Lizard died defending his territory against a young incoming male, who then paired up with the existing female. Two weeks later, she too disappeared. Fortunately, the younger male successfully raised her youngsters and, since then, he has held his territory, attracted a new mate and this year raised a brood of chicks of his own. RSPB and National Trust volunteers maintain a close eye on them.



©Terry Thirkway

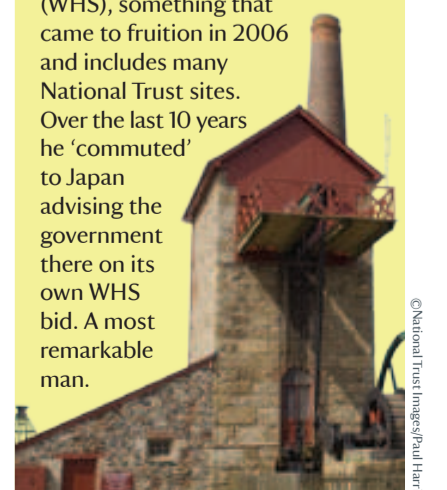
The new Lizard Point pair of choughs

## Asking your opinion

We use a visitor survey to help us understand what visitors like and where improvements could be made. This year, if you've visited us and given us your email address, you may be emailed a survey. Please take the time to tell us what you think. We'd love to hear your ideas on how we can make your visit even better.

## Stuart Smith OBE (1943-2014)

Stuart Smith OBE was a world class, 'hands on' industrial historian who, with Sir Neil Cossens, established the Iron Bridge Gorge Museum, a World Heritage Site. In 1992 the National Trust in Cornwall recruited Stuart to set up the Trevithick Trust, a pioneering partnership project to manage industrial heritage sites of various ownerships in a coordinated way. He was the first person to see that the mining landscape of Cornwall was a potential World Heritage Site (WHS), something that came to fruition in 2006 and includes many National Trust sites. Over the last 10 years he 'commuted' to Japan advising the government there on its own WHS bid. A most remarkable man.



©National Trust Images/Paul Harris

# 'Paradise' comes to Tyntesfield

Part of the Trust's contemporary art and craft programme - Trust New Art Bristol - has invited five international and national artists to make a new work in direct response to Tyntesfield and Leigh Woods. Each has considered these places in terms of design, and used diverse materials including ceramics, edible plants, taxidermy and reclaimed furniture to create a 'paradise'.

At Tyntesfield, Lady Wraxall's garden has been transformed into a sustainable

oasis while the Aviary shows birds and humans in new forms (right). In direct response to the plans for an orchard, artists Owen Griffiths and Fern Thomas have created 'the Green Room'. This room will host a range of activities and events connected to the process of preparing the soil for the new orchard. A viewing platform is being constructed so that visitors can overlook what will one day be home to the orchard. Meanwhile Leigh Woods hosts 'Spirit of Play', a series of play woodland workshops

exploring how to make Trust places more 'playable'. This is a work co-commissioned with the Arnolfini gallery. 'The works are found in spaces that are hidden or unused' says the Trust's Project Curator Ruth Gooding. 'Rather than being kept a respectful distance away, visitors can touch the work and see how it affects them.'

The exhibition is on until 2 November



## Access for all



Whether you're walking, cycling, on horse or mobility scooter, access to Penrose on the southern tip of Cornwall has been improved through an impressive community effort.

Taking a bold step, we've opened up more than seven miles of permissive routes which are now designated footpaths and bridleways. The Penrose Paths for Communities (P4C) project has created a network of new paths and bridleways and greatly improved existing ones. Natural England funded £112,000 of the £150,000 project, the remainder being covered by donations and from the Trust's own funds. Mike Hardy, Penrose's Head Ranger, said that right from the start local groups and

regular visitors were asked what would help them to enjoy Penrose. A partnership of Trust rangers and volunteers, residents, community and user groups then saw the project to completion.

There's improved surfacing at Helston Drive, a new easy access route avoiding the coast path steps at Tye Rock and a new boardwalk at Carminow Creek. Horse riders can trot safely along much needed off-road routes. To make the most of it, there are clear waymarkers and information boards across the estate. There's also a free outdoors guide and map, downloadable walks and a five-mile trail booklet available. Go to [nationaltrust.org.uk/penrose](http://nationaltrust.org.uk/penrose) for details.

## Stir up some Christmas Spirit

There's a special atmosphere around our places at Christmas – you can learn how Christmas was celebrated in the past and enjoy some traditional activities with your family and friends.

Christmas – these are all simple pleasures that can still be enjoyed at many of our places today.

So, find your Christmassy spirit with the wide variety of festivities on offer from food fairs to choral concerts and recover some peace and tranquility in our beautifully decorated houses and magical winter gardens. There is more information in your 'What's on' bulletin and on our website.

The build up to Christmas should be a time to slow down, reflect on the year gone by and observe traditions. In the past, families would gather together at the start of advent to make a Christmas pudding, with everyone taking a turn to mix and make a wish. It's known as Stir up Sunday and we're making the most of it on 23 November. It's activities like this and other time-honoured rituals that help make the lead-up to Christmas a magical time.

Choosing a Christmas tree, making home-made natural decorations or an advent wreath, sampling scrumptious edible treats, singing carols by candlelight, playing festive games – and not to forget, meeting Father



Stirring up the pudding at Buckland Abbey

## South West Directory of National Trust Centres and Associations

There are over 30 local supporter groups in the South West; each runs a programme of visits, talks and holidays and raises money to support the work of the Trust. Group details below, or contact Maria Vicary by email, [maria.vicary@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:maria.vicary@nationaltrust.org.uk) or call 01392 883157.

### Bath & Bristol

Bath Centre	01225 420044	
Bath NT Volunteer Group		BathNTV@googlemail.com
Bristol Centre	0117 9681817	brian.raftery@live.co.uk

### Cornwall

Friends of Godolphin	01736 758227	godolphinfriends@btinternet.com
North Cornwall Association	01208 869126	timfilunt@btinternet.com
Penwith Association	01736 757047	david.holyoake@bcs.org
South East Cornwall Association	01579 384332	taynton486@btinternet.com

### Devon

Axe Valley Centre	01297 35880	
Culm & Exe Valleys Centre	01884 841264	marylewis748@btinternet.com
Exeter & District Centre	01626 890740	biclarke2010@btinternet.com
Exeter NT Volunteer Group	01392 495987	s.e.illing@btinternet.com
Haldon Association	01626 866794	
Honiton, Ottery & District Association	01404 42081	gillgoodes@btinternet.com
Mid Devon Centre	01363 772718	
Newton Abbot Association	01626 336155	jean.newtonabbot@gmail.com
Plymouth Centre	01752 402658	sdown1946@talktalk.net
Raleigh Centre	01395 264977	petermartin70@sky.com
Sidmouth Centre	01404 811295	kingwoodpeckers@btinternet.com
South Devon NT Volunteer Group		southdevonntv@hotmail.com
South Hams Centre	01548 852591	
Torbay Centre	01803 314251	
West Devon Association	01822 617600	ntwda@barryhodge57.plus.com

### Dorset

Bournemouth & Poole Association	01202 751520	
Bournemouth NT Volunteer Group		bnt.volunteers@gmail.com
Christchurch & New Forest Association	01425 610590	mcmoretton@aol.com
East Dorset Association	01202 855001	ednta2011@yahoo.co.uk
Golden Cap Association (West Dorset)	01297 489571	theknoll1@btinternet.com
Purbeck Association	01929 550488	jandave.cole@tiscali.co.uk
South Dorset Association	01305 832198	southdorsetassociation@gmail.com

### Gloucestershire

Cheltenham & Gloucestershire Centre	01242 674808	
Cheltenham NT Volunteer Group (ANTS)	01242 243714	ants.chelntv@btinternet.com
North Cotswold Association	01451 822208	

### Somerset

Blackmore Vale & Yeovil Association	01747 838810	brijo@waitrose.com
Quantock Centre	01823 335427	eileen.eglington@gmail.com
Somerset NT Volunteer Group	01643 705420	clive1940@btinternet.com
Wells & District Centre	01458 448134	
West Somerset Association	01643 862294	
Weston-super-Mare & District Association	01934 633593	

### Wiltshire

Kennet Valley Association	01672 512829	egilbert@wilts.org.uk
North & West Wiltshire Association	01225 703730	nwwnta@gmail.com
Salisbury & South Wiltshire Association	01722 711005	simonemattinson@hotmail.com
Upper Thames & Ridgeway Association	01793 762599	millerwrde@homecall.co.uk

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