



**National
Trust**

PRESS RELEASE

1 April 2019

Soak up summer gardens with the National Trust in Buckinghamshire Berkshire and Oxfordshire

Our gardens are at their best in the summer months with vibrant colours, scented spaces and relaxing areas with breath-taking views. It's the culmination of a year's planning and planting for our gardeners who use their passion and expertise to create successive displays of structure, colour and scent that continue throughout the season. Visitors are welcomed to talk with our gardening experts this summer and bring back some inspiration for their own gardens.

We know that many of our visitors are very knowledgeable about horticulture and appreciate the detail about what they're going to see. Here's a detailed guide to what visitors can expect of our best gardens in Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire.

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Hughenden summer garden 2019 (Buckinghamshire)

The formal gardens at Hughenden were designed by Mary Anne Disraeli in an 18th century Italianate style, a highly fashionable choice for Victorian country estates. Today, the gardens have been recreated to be true to her vision with geometric formal beds, statuary and urns and striking planting.

The summer bedding in the parterre this year features hot reds and orange; blocks of Inca Gold marigold and cosmos set against bright Red Arrow salvia, with planting in bold patterns and varying heights for dramatic effect. Disraeli's much-loved swans are brought to life in topiary form, swimming in a sea of red and orange flowers.

In Mary Anne's small rose garden the scented blooms are predominantly pinks and reds from the pale, delicate petals of Winchester Cathedral to the deep red of rosa floribunda Trumpeter.

In the terrace border, re-established just last year, blues and purples feature with verbena, heliotrope and salvia providing a sumptuous display right through until late summer, a haven for bees and other beneficial insects.

With pristine green lawns between the beds, the south facing formal gardens make for a delightful spot to while away an hour soaking up the summer sun in one of the manor's striped deckchairs.

Away from the formality, the pleasure grounds, with relaxed planting and specimen trees, is home to montbretia Lucifer, its showy bright red plumes flowering long into summer and beyond. Tatarian honeysuckle features short-tubed deep pink-red flowers, followed by bright red berries in late summer.

In the height of the summer even the shaded west bank garden, created for winter interest, makes a contribution to the plant delights. Chocolate Chip bugle with its deep burgundy chocolate tones lightens in the heat of summer and cistus Silver Pink's delicate papery flowers fade to almost white in June and July. And not to be missed is the heady philadelphus. Its creamy-white flowers give a strong sweet scent in the summer.

The open fields of Hughenden's parklands buzz with life and in July the incredible scent from the frothy white flowers of the giant Crimean lime tree reaches all the way across the parterre back to the house.

Hughenden's expert volunteer garden guides provide free daily tours that take in the four different areas of the gardens, and the gardeners are out and about taking care of the beds and borders every day. They're always happy to be asked about a particular bloom or technique. There are also garden history tours through Hughenden's Georgian and Victorian gardens on the last Wednesday of each month 11am-12noon. Book online £4.

For more information, visit nationaltrust.org.uk/Hughenden

Cliveden (Buckinghamshire/Berkshire borders)

Cliveden is famous for the formal flower displays in the Long Garden and Parterre, which are spectacular in summer. Assistant Head Gardener Mark Lamb recommends also making time to seek out some of the less obvious elements of the garden. Among his suggestions are walking the circular path around the Water Garden in June to appreciate the beautiful and impressive tree collection and noting the herbaceous borders in the Long Garden and Forecourt.

Water Garden

Cliveden Assistant Head Gardener Mark Lamb: 'As you pass through the main gate into the Water Garden, on your right is a Japanese walnut *Juglans ailanthifolia* var. *cordiformis* with large, handsome pinnate leaves (paired leaflets along the stem). Further along the path is a bed of Himalayan birches, *Betula* var *jacquemontii*, with ghostly white bark. Turn left after the birches and you will come across several *Acer griseum* planted in the grass. Commonly called paperbark maple, this medium-sized deciduous tree is native to China and has peeling cinnamon-coloured bark.

'To the left of these is another *Acer*, *platanoides* 'Drummondii, or Norway maple with striking leaves that have a creamy white margin to them. We have a large wing nut on the right a bit further along, *Pterocarya stenotera*. This China native has 20cm long catkin-like flower clusters hanging down and is quite rare.

'In the grass near the maze, there is a fantastic specimen of the Indian bean tree, *Catalpa bignonioides*. It has a rounded shape, large heart shaped leaves and with its foxglove-like flowers it's a real summer stunner.

'Two trees that must have a mention before leaving the water garden are the attractive *Cercidiphyllum japonicum*, Katsura tree, a magnificent specimen near the water's edge and a group of upright Acers on the island. *Acer palmatum*, or Shishi-gashira.'

The Long Garden

'The Long Garden in August is awash with flower and scent filling the air. Instead of letting your eye be drawn to the stunning blocks of colour in the beds, look to the right, to the notable plants along south-facing walled border. Walk in from the fountain end and there are two large shrubs you will see against the wall that are native to California. *Umbellularia californica*, one of its common names being the headache tree because of its pungent smelling leaves.

'The unusual *Calycanthus occidentalis* is a vigorous shrub known as Californian allspice. This has exotic looking red flowers in August. All along the border are different varieties of penstemon and salvias that we propagate every year. Two noteworthy salvias you will see along this border that put on a fantastic show in August are *Salvia* Amistad with its deep purple/black flowers and *Salvia* Phyllis fancy with two tone lavender/white flowers that continue to bloom well into October.

'We have many climbing roses against the wall but one to mention is *Rosa Graham Thomas*. This lovely, fully double, rich yellow rose has a delicate tea scent and is named after the British horticulturist, author and National Trust gardens adviser that did much work here at Cliveden.

'One of the areas Graham Thomas worked on at Cliveden was the Forecourt herbaceous borders in front of the house. These are two large borders, one with hot colours, the other with cool and they peak in July/August. If you walk through the archway in the Yew hedge on the café side and you will be hit by a myriad of red, orange and yellows.

'Helenium figures strongly down this border, two of my favourites being the orange red *Helenium Moerheim Beauty* and *Helenium Indianersommer* with its rich copper red heads and velvet brown centre. Another plant repeated along the bed is the impressive *Crambe Cordifolia*, or flowering sea kale. It's up to 8ft tall with clouds of white flowers. One shrub/tree on the wall we constantly get asked about is the magnificent evergreen, *Magnolia grandiflora*. We have several along both walls, highly fragrant with gorgeous glossy green leaves.'

Every Tuesday throughout July, a different member of the Cliveden gardens team presents a free tour to our visitors at 2pm. Visitors can sign up on the day in our Information Centre. There are 16 spaces on each tour, first-come-first-serve.

For more information, visit nationaltrust.org.uk/cliveden

Waddesdon (Buckinghamshire)

This summer, Waddesdon's gardeners aim to create a riot of colour, with flamboyant Victorian bedding, a tropical forest, and the unusual appearance of lilies and gladioli in the Rose Garden.

Head Gardener Mike Buffin said, 'This explosion of colour will transport visitors to the vibrant landscapes of the tropics, with hot pinks, lime greens and purple bringing something slightly different to the grounds this year. I recommend visiting in June to see it at its best, though the slightly unconventional inclusion of lilies and gladioli amongst the softer shades of the Rose Garden will be breathtaking, and are definitely worthy of a return visit in the late summer months.'

The tropical foliage plants will be striking during the summer, brilliantly complementing the bright, bold and exotic bedding around the wider grounds. In particular, visitors should keep an eye out for the unexpected appearance of bananas, as well as canna lilies.

For a more rounded sensory experience that will transport you back to your childhood, head to the rose garden, where the perfumed air and pastel shades create a mid-summer haven. The addition of lilies will mean the Rose Garden is particularly aromatic later in the season. As you wander back towards the House, feel the crinkly surface of the ferns, with their rough shaggy bark.

This summer's carpet bedding design on the Parterre is based on 'Auriculas', one of the paintings on display in the summer exhibition: 'Brought to Life: Eliot Hodgkin Rediscovered' (Sat 25 May – Sun 20 Oct). The striking design and brilliant colours lend themselves perfectly to this piece of garden art, in which an incredibly complex selection of plants will be used to recreate the traditional still life painting.

Situated just below the carpet bedding is an area that visitors often miss; during the summer months the Frog Fountain will be home to marginal aquatic plants. This impressive area of the garden looks out onto wider parkland, offering visitors a different outlook of the Waddesdon grounds.

Visitors can also enjoy the permanent display of outdoor statuary and an Aviary which houses endangered species of bird, and from June to September the new addition of a 'Mowed Maze'.

Waddesdon is introducing a series of new garden events to appeal to garden experts and novices alike. There's a range of activities to choose from, including walks that explore the creation of flamboyant spring colour with Waddesdon's Gardens Manager, Mike Buffin, and weekly Wednesday tours of the Dairy Water Garden and Eythrope's Walled Garden (booking essential).

For more information, visit nationaltrust.org.uk/waddesdon

Basildon Park summer garden 2019 (Berkshire)

Lord and Lady Iliffe bought Basildon Park in 1952. The mansion had been badly damaged during the war and the couple set about sensitively restoring the house and garden. They gifted the property to the National Trust in 1978 and occupied a wing of the house until 2007.

Lady Iliffe loved roses and the Rose Garden at Basildon Park is a tribute to her vision. Gardener Tim Martin has featured old-fashioned varieties such as *Rosa Mutabilis* which changes colour over the season from peachy yellow to watermelon pink, and finally a rich dark red.

Rosa 'White Pet' is another of Tim's favourites. It's a small shrub growing no taller than knee-height. 'There are lots of tall roses, but this compact little old rose sits at the front of the rose beds and flowers away all summer,' says Tim.

This year Basildon Park will be celebrating the roses' flowering with *Basildon Park in Bloom*. You can book a floristry 101 class to create your own bouquet, and browse rose themed gifts and treats in the shop and tea-room.

The 50m herbaceous borders near the house at Basildon Park will also be a lovely sight this summer with fragrant sweet peas and blue delphiniums. Don't miss the stunning sea of hundreds of buttercups over the front lawn in early summer, and the common spotted orchid appearing in the hidden valley, which can be reached via the 'blue walk'.

For more information, visit nationaltrust.org.uk/basildon-park

Greys Court summer garden 2019 (Oxfordshire)

The gardens at Greys Court were virtually derelict when the Brunner family arrived in 1937. Lady Brunner in particular was keen to make them into a haven of tranquillity, which she was keen to share with visitors. There are hints at her theatrical background in the 'hide and reveal' drama of the walled gardens.

Rambling roses climb up the stonework of the mansion and wind around the bandstand in the garden at Greys Court. The Rose Garden 'room' in the series of walled gardens traces the history of the rose from early damask varieties to modern hybrid perennials.

Roses are not the only show of colour at Greys Court. The peony border comes to life in summer with splashy blooms from purest white to dark, rich reds, with fragrant lavender surrounding it. At the lower end of the walled gardens crab apples and clematis have been trained over hoops to create a lush flower tunnel and the two combined make for a beautiful display of pinks and purples. For a wilder wander, the orchard is filled with Ox eye daisies and wild flowers surrounding the fruit trees.

Around midday, visitors can take tour of the gardens with one of our knowledgeable volunteers. It's best to check with Visitor Reception for the time and availability on arrival, though as they vary day to day. The kitchen garden comes into full production later in the year to supply the Cowshed tea room with fresh produce for its seasonal dishes.

For more information, visit nationaltrust.org.uk/greys-court

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About the National Trust

The National Trust is a conservation charity founded in 1895 by three people who saw the importance of our nation's heritage and open spaces, and wanted to preserve them for everyone to enjoy. More than 120 years later, these values are still at the heart of everything the charity does.

Entirely independent of Government, the National Trust looks after more than 250,000 hectares of countryside, 780 miles of coastline and hundreds of special places across England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

More than 26 million people visit every year, and together with 5.2 million members and over 61,000 volunteers, they help to support the charity in its work to care for special places for ever, for everyone.

For more information and ideas for great seasonal days out go to: www.nationaltrust.org.uk

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