

The member magazine for Kent Wildlife Trust

WilderKent

Spring 2025

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Wilder Kent Awards

This years' awards are back and better than ever!

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Your wild spring

Find out more about the delightful plant that carpets ancient woodland floors...

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6 Ground nesting birds to see in Kent this Spring

Leap into action with Kent Wildlife Trust *this Spring*

Check out our What's On Guide

Discover nature through our courses, family events, talks, walks & more!



Kent
Wildlife Trust



ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS

At Adonis Blue, we work with a wide range of clients across the UK, including businesses, farmers, developers, universities, and government bodies, to develop projects that protect and restore nature.

Our comprehensive suite of services ranges from traditional ecology, developments and Biodiversity Net Gain to nature-based solutions and innovative research projects.

With over 20 years of experience providing tailored solutions, our team of expert ecologists, land management advisors, natural capital analysts, and technical environment specialists are here to meet your needs.

The best part? All our profits are returned to Kent Wildlife Trust, helping to fund vital conservation projects and supporting Local Nature Recovery Strategies.

Together with our partners, we are uniquely placed to **help you make a difference for nature.**



Ready to get started?

Visit our website to explore our full range of services or email us to arrange a free consultation.

adonisblueenvironmental.org.uk

hello@adonisblue.org.uk



Welcome

to the **Spring edition** of Wilder Kent



Spring is here, and it brings a renewed sense of purpose and determination as we approach the halfway point of our Wilder Kent 2030 strategy.

Over the last few months, the team has been securing the next generation of chough chicks; challenging the government to 'rethink SeaLink' and stop viewing our remaining critical nature areas as the cheapest places to deliver major development; building the UK's first two bison bridges; and beginning the upgrade of our Sevenoaks Visitor Centre and Wildlife Reserve.

Now, more than ever, there is a vital need for people all over the UK to be given the opportunity to connect with nature. The £2.1m transformation of our Jeffery Harrison visitor centre at Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve is aimed at doing just that. The improved building will offer both adults and children a modern, relaxing, and inspirational location to learn and thrive, with spectacular views across this Site of Special Scientific Interest, and the use of modern interpretation to showcase this flagship reserve, impact, and way of working across our wider landholdings.

More broadly our county-wide engagement work continues to grow through the Wilder Kent Awards. 2024 was our biggest year so far: with over 87 winning groups and more than 16,000 participants, all taking positive action for nature. Given this success, we have decided to expand the scheme and extend the entry period to the full calendar year from January and are holding the ceremony as a stand-alone event – separate from the AGM.

Meanwhile, as the days get brighter and longer, we have a packed programme of events and experiences on offer from Nature Tots and Forest School - where children can discover and learn in nature - to well-being weekends and Bison Ranger Experiences. Check out our 'What's on Guide' on our new website for the complete list of family-friendly events.

Last, but not least, you will see our latest urgent appeal in this issue: a rare and exciting opportunity to buy Hoathly Farm in the Lamberhurst area, and not only restore it from intensive farming into a thriving nature reserve but connect directly with our existing Furnace Farm reserve next door.

This is the beginning of a new wilding landscape for KWT, with other opportunities likely to come up soon in the same area. It is potentially the biggest direct landscape conservation opportunity for the Trust since I have been in post. It is one that we simply must not miss, so please do consider supporting us.

We know how much you want to see a Wilder Kent. The Hoathly-Furnace Farm complex will help us demonstrate multiple benefits for local communities in an area where KWT has traditionally had relatively little on-the-ground presence. It will also provide a boost for our beleaguered wildlife as we apply our wilding approach across a growing mosaic of landholdings in this area of the High Weald.

Thank you in advance for your continued support.
I hope you enjoy this edition.

Evan Bowen-Jones

Evan Bowen-Jones

Chief Executive of Kent Wildlife Trust | Follow me [X](#) [@EcoLlogik](#)

Kent Wildlife Trust is the leading conservation charity for the county of Kent.

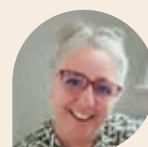
Wildlife is in crisis. The natural world isn't just something for us to enjoy; it sustains us. The decline of nature puts our very survival and prosperity under threat. It doesn't have to be like this.

Our vision is for a better, wilder future. We engage with politicians, business leaders, landowners, communities and people so that we can all work together to protect wildlife.

The Wilder Kent magazine team



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Let's be wilder together

Follow us on social media for updates and to share nature photos and your thoughts with us!

JUST SEARCH FOR

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Local news

A bold new chapter for the Jeffrey Harrison Visitor Centre



More from... Kent Wildlife Trust

Visit our reserves

You're likely living just a few miles away from a Kent Wildlife Trust nature reserve, and spring is the perfect time to get exploring! Our Flagship Reserves are a great place to start, and our Wildlife Arks are vital sanctuaries supporting diverse species. While our Hidden Gems experience low footfall and often have no public access, they exemplify our wilding principles, restoring natural processes with minimal human intervention.

PLAN YOUR VISIT TODAY
kwtg.uk/visit-reserves



Shop for nature

Shop sustainably with our online store! Discover Kent-based products, eco-friendly clothing printed to order, and gift vouchers for unforgettable wildlife experiences. Whether treating yourself or finding the perfect gift, every purchase supports our work to protect nature and create a Wilder Kent.

**SHOP NOW AND
MAKE A DIFFERENCE**
kwtg.uk/shopping



Sign up to our newsletter

If you're not signed up to our fortnightly email newsletter, you're missing out on regular updates on our projects, campaigns and our reserves. It's a way for us to keep you involved in all of the ways your membership donations help us protect and restore nature across Kent and beyond. Plus, as a member, keep an eye out for early access to selected events, and discount codes for our shop!

SUBSCRIBE
kwtg.uk/subscribe-enews

Explore our blog

Our blog is bursting with fascinating wildlife insights, expert tips, and behind-the-scenes stories from our reserves and is the perfect way to stay connected to nature at home. Explore updates on our projects, seasonal wildlife highlights, and practical advice for supporting nature in your own space.

READ HERE
kwtg.uk/explore-blog





Our marvellous members

Taking action for nature: A Wilder Kent 2030

As a member of Kent Wildlife Trust, you're already making a difference. Your support plays a key role in the conservation of Kent's diverse wildlife and ecosystems, but this year, we're encouraging you to go even further.

Visit our reserves, bring your family and friends along to share your experiences and encourage them to visit our website and sign up as a member. Take part in conservation activities, whether volunteering, attending events, or participating in citizen science projects.

Every step you take helps to create a Wilder Kent, where nature thrives, wildlife flourishes, and the natural beauty of our county is preserved for future generations. Your membership supports the Trust's ongoing work to restore and protect habitats, protect threatened species, and ensure that the natural spaces we love are safeguarded. And, this year, we're making it even easier to discover ways to go even further for wildlife.

Visit page 25 to find out more about the new MyWilderKent app.

Find out about the NEW MyWilderKent app
PAGE 25

Annual General Meeting

The 67th Annual General Meeting of Kent Wildlife Trust will be held on Saturday 19 July 2025 from 10:30am.

You can join us online or in person at our headquarters, Tyland Barn, Old Chatham Road, Sandling, Maidstone ME14 3BD.

The AGM is a fantastic opportunity to hear more about the workings of the Trust, our achievements over the past year and what's coming next. As well as receiving the annual report and accounts and electing new trustees, it is also a chance for you to ask the trustees and the Senior Leadership Team any questions. Plus, we'll be sharing some of the incredible projects that your support has helped make possible. Be sure to mark the date in your diary; details on how to register for the meeting, whether online or in person, will be emailed to all members and posted on the Kent Wildlife Trust website soon. Stay tuned!

BEACH CLEAN © TIM HORTON



Things might look a little different at kentwildlifetrust.org.uk...

We're so excited to announce the launch of our new website, which not only reflects our bold ambition to restore 30% of land and sea by 2030 but is also packed full of new features that makes taking action for nature even easier.

So please do explore at kentwildlifetrust.org.uk - we hope you love it as much as we do.

IT'S COMPETITION TIME!

For your chance to **win a £50 Gift Voucher for our online shop**, simply answer the following question:

Q Which type of birds build their nests in spring under the eaves of a building?



A Sand Martins



B Nightingales



C Swifts

**WIN a £50
GIFT Voucher
for our
online shop**

Email your answer to membership@kentwildlife.org.uk along with your name and address. The competition closes on Wednesday 30 April 2025. A winning entry will be picked at random and contacted after this date. Good luck! 🍀

Are you a UK taxpayer?

You can help us even further by saying YES to Gift Aid!

We can claim Gift Aid on your membership subscription if you are a UK taxpayer at zero cost to you! Gift Aid is a tax relief allowing UK charities to reclaim an extra 25% in tax on every eligible monthly or yearly donation.

We can currently claim back 25p on every £1 you kindly donate, but only if you say we can!

If you are a UK taxpayer and not yet signed up to Gift Aid, please email us at membership@kentwildlife.org.uk with your name and address and we will do the rest.



You can email us if you have moved house, have a new email address or need to change any personal details.

We'd love to hear from you

Contact us using the details below to update your details or preferences, let us know your date of birth to receive your birthday card and special discount code for our online shop, or to share your ideas, questions or suggestions about how we could improve your membership.

**Thank you so much again
for your incredible support!**

Your **membership** team



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Ian Searle



Wilder perspectives

Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory, founded in 1952, is one of the UK's first independent bird-ringing stations and is located near the southern end of Sandwich and Pegwell Bay National Nature Reserve. Ian Searle, Trustee and Talks Coordinator at Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory, recalls an inspiring collaborative talk attended by Kent Wildlife Trust as part of the Rethink Sea Link campaign.



At the beginning of December, representatives from Kent Wildlife Trust and the local community gave a talk at Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory to our members to illuminate the proposed Sea Link project and its potential impact on our area.

The Sea Link development, a proposed cable linking Suffolk and Kent, not only directly impacts our census area but will impact the internationally important Pegwell Bay, a recognised site for birds and mammals. We wanted to keep our members properly informed - especially after the damage caused by the previous Nemo Link development which has left a long-lasting scar across the salt marsh.

We also wanted to ensure that our members learned of the nearby development on Minster Marshes, a key area where birds from Pegwell Bay go at high tide when they must look for alternative feeding and roosting sites.

The Stour valley is an important wildlife corridor for all types of flora and fauna (stretching from Ashford through Canterbury to Sandwich and Pegwell Bay). Therefore, any development along this area will have an adverse effect on nature.

The detailed talk updated our members on not just the proposed developments but also on Sea Link's newest changes to their previously published plans that most people were unaware of. Lots of questions were asked at the end of the talk and the subsequent appreciative feedback, meant many could take action themselves and raise their concerns directly to the Secretary of State.

Sandwich Bay Bird Observatory have since again written to Sea Link and the Secretary of State, voicing our new and continued concerns about the development and urging them to rethink their plans. 🐦

Want to learn more about how you can help in this campaign?

VISIT
kwtg.uk/sea-link





YOUR WILD Spring

Spotted?
Share a picture on
social media by tagging
@KentWildlife and
using **#WilderKent**

Wood anemone

Anemonoides nemorosa

The wood anemone is one of spring's opening acts, blooming with enough time to absorb the sunlight before the canopy becomes too dense. They are a part of the Ranunculaceae (buttercup) family and grow from rhizomes, horizontal underground stems, that allow their slow growth. Other common names include the 'windflower' and the 'smell fox'.



Pop up in woodlands
March to May

HOW TO IDENTIFY

Growing up to 25cm tall, wood anemones are easily identifiable by their star-shaped flowers. Their six to seven large, white 'petals' (which are actually sepals) are offset by startlingly bright yellow anthers, making them difficult to miss. The flowers sit atop a thin, red stem and its basal leaves are deeply lobed.

Star-shaped flowers

WHERE TO SEE IT

The wood anemone is one of many ancient woodland indicators.

Ancient woodlands are incredible habitats, evolving and maturing for many hundreds and thousands of years. Alongside the wood anemone, you'll find other flowering species like wild garlic, red campion, primroses, and of course the iconic bluebell, all giving a nod to the age of the woodland.

You will find these dainty flowers popping up in woodlands like Potters Wood at Queendown and Cromers Wood between the months of March to May. They thrive in coppiced areas, as this form of traditional management allows sunlight to give life to wood anemones and so much more fauna and flora on the forest floor.

CONSERVATION STATUS

While wood anemones are not under a direct threat, ancient woodlands are, and they need our protection now more than ever.

DID YOU KNOW?

The wood anemone is named after the Greek wind god, Anemos, who sent his namesakes, the anemones, in early spring to herald his coming. The legend gives the flower its other common name of 'windflower'.

JOIN US
on our
GUIDED WALKS
MORE DETAILS
ON PAGE 17

Updates from our reserves

As winter's chill fades, spring bursts with birdsong and amazing displays of colour in our meadows and woodlands. Our reserves are beginning to buzz, not only with wildlife, but – more people are starting to visit too.



1 Hunstead Woods

Introduced from Asia by the Victorians, rhododendron has since spread rapidly through our woodlands, smothering out native wildlife. At Hunstead Wood, our Blean Warden and volunteers worked tirelessly to cut down and dig up huge amounts of this plant. In time, we hope native woodland and wetland plants will recover.

2 The Gill

Sheep have shortened the turf at the Gill, and volunteers have cleared the aggressive bramble alongside new warden Pierre. Some spring grazing by our mountain sheep will help create dense, mixed edges benefiting the insects, small mammals and birds this little oasis supports.

3 East Blean

Woodland coppicing involves cutting multi-stemmed trees so they can regrow quickly in the following years. In East Blean Woods we focus on sweet chestnut trees and are eagerly awaiting spring's burst of wood spurge, red campion and cow wheat - the vital and only food plant of the rare heath fritillary butterfly.





5 Using water on our reserves as a Nature-based Solution

Our nature reserves are not just havens for wildlife – they also play a vital role in water management, combatting floods, drought and pollution. Many reserves act like sponges, absorbing, filtering, and storing water. Wetlands like Ham Fen reduce flood risks by slowing water runoff and holding excess rainwater, reducing pressure on urban drainage systems.

Forests within reserves stabilise soils, prevent erosion, and promote groundwater recharge. Vegetation naturally filters pollutants, improving water quality and supporting aquatic ecosystems. These sustainable, cost-effective processes are nature's alternatives to industrial infrastructure. Inspired by beavers, we have even built leaky dams across channels to slow water flow and hold more water in preparation for increasingly hot summers.

Our wetland sites also store carbon. Sites like Hothfield Heathlands and Ham Fen rely on saturated soils to build peat, which, when carefully managed, locks up carbon permanently.

Our reserves not only protect wildlife but are essential as part of a natural system that benefits both people and the planet.

4 Holborough

After successfully reintroducing Kentish milkwort to Queendown Warren, we are working with the Species Recovery Trust again to introduce this rare plant to another site in the Medway area. We hope that these seedlings will flourish, bolstering the population of this true Kentish treasure.



VISITORS NOTICE

As the warmer weather entices people from their homes to explore our wonderful nature reserves, we'd like to remind everyone that these are places where wildlife lives. Please stick to paths and take notice of any signage. Thank you!





6 ground nesting birds to see in Kent

this Spring

While many birds call trees their home, Kent is also home to a wonderful variety of ground-nesting birds found across almost every habitat. From skylarks and lapwings in our meadows to woodlarks and nightjars in our woodlands and heathlands, these birds are vital to their ecosystems. Sadly, many are vulnerable and often listed as species under threat.

See the spectacle for yourself in Kent



1 Eurasian skylark (*Alauda arvensis*)

The Eurasian skylark is a well camouflaged bird and nests in open fields, grasslands, and farmland. It constructs its nest in the ground, typically hidden in long grass or crop fields and will lay between three to five eggs. Skylarks are famous for their aerial displays, especially during the breeding season.

Found in: Grassland sites



2 Nightingale (*Luscinia megarhynchos*)

Nightingales build their nests in dense vegetation close to the ground, often in brambles or tall grass. Known for their beautiful, powerful songs, nightingales are primarily ground-feeding, foraging for insects, worms, and spiders.

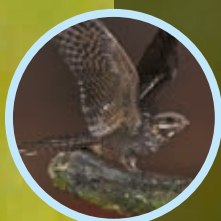
Found in: Woodland and scrub



3 Blackbird (*Turdus merula*)

This common garden bird often nests near the ground in dense shrubs, low hedgerows, or thick vegetation. The female builds a cup-shaped nest using twigs, mud, and grass, cleverly hiding it from predators. Blackbirds feed on the ground, foraging for insects, worms, and berries.

Found in: Gardens, parks and woodlands



4 Nightjar (*Caprimulgus europaeus*)

Nightjars are nocturnal birds which make shallow scrapes for nests, often covered with twigs and leaves for camouflage. At night, they hunt insects, especially moths, by catching them mid-flight with their wide mouths. These mysterious birds bring a quiet magic to dark heathlands.

Found in: Recently coppiced woodland or heathland



5 Lapwing (*Vanellus vanellus*)

The lapwing, with its striking black and white plumage, nests in shallow scrapes lined with grass and moss. Famous for its acrobatic flight displays and loud, distinctive calls, especially during the breeding season, lapwings are increasingly rare as habitat loss continues to threaten them.

Found in: Farmlands and wetlands



6 Oystercatchers (*Haematopus ostralegus*)

Striking black-and-white shorebirds with orange beaks, oystercatchers nest on coastal shores, gravel banks, and occasionally inland. Their simple nests of shallow scrapes in sand or pebbles hold two to four camouflaged eggs. Both parents incubate and fiercely defend their nests from predators.

Found in: Wetlands and shingle beaches

Ground-nesting birds are particularly vulnerable to disturbance, especially from walkers and dogs. To protect them, please stick to paths and keep dogs on leads at our reserves. Any disturbance could cause adults to flee their nests, leaving chicks exposed and at risk to predators and starvation.

Have you spotted any of these hidden wonders?

We love to see what you spot on your visits to our reserves. Please tweet us your best photos! @KentWildlife 🐦

Wilder Kent Awards returns for 2025



2024 was the biggest year yet for the Wilder Kent Awards – with 87 winning groups, including 18 Gold winners! Over 16,000 people were recorded as having taken positive action for nature as part of the Wilder Kent Awards and we're hoping these numbers will continue to grow in 2025.



Kerry and Tash from Wellesley Haddon Dene School receiving their Gold award!



Kris from Spadework, and his daughter, receiving their Gold award

Whats new for 2025?

CHANGE OF DATES

The Wilder Kent Awards now run for a full year – from January to January – giving you more opportunities to take action for nature!

NEW AWARDS VENUE

With the awards growing each year, we wanted to give you an awards ceremony that reflects the growing impact you're having on nature in Kent. We are proud to announce that Chapel House Estate will be our venue sponsor for the 2025 awards!

The application process remains the same for 2025. Simply sign up online, receive your awards guides and submit your evidence via the online submission form before January 31 2026 to be considered for the 2025 awards.

Ready to start your journey?
SIGN UP AT kwtg.uk/wka



WHY THE WILDER KENT AWARDS?

The Wilder Kent Awards are here to support and encourage more groups in Kent to take positive actions for nature and celebrate those groups who are already doing so much!

WHO CAN ENTER?



The Wilder Kent Awards are open to schools, nurseries, colleges and universities as well as community groups, businesses and the villages, towns and cities of Kent.

- Are you part of a community group who is committed to sustainability?
- Does your local school or nursery regularly carry out litter picks?
- Has your local parish council pledged to protect wild spaces?
- Is your business committed to sustainability?

If you know of a group in Kent that is taking meaningful action for nature, we'd love to hear about them! Nominate a group by emailing us at awards@kentwildlife.org.uk and we'll be in touch!



JOIN US IN CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE

**Become a proud
Sponsor of the Awards**

To find out more or become a sponsor email corporate@kentwildlife.org.uk or call 01622 357800.

What's On

Your guide

BISON RANGER EXPERIENCES

April, May and June

A Morning at West Blean

1 April, 19 April, 11 May and 3 June
West Blean and Thornden Woods, CT6 7NZ

Meet the people who know the Wilder Blean project best. You'll take an in-depth look at this pioneering wilding initiative, discover more about the herd and how they're monitored, then head out to explore the woods and use the rangers' expertise to try tracking the bison, ponies and cattle.

PLEASE NOTE

Fees or donations apply per person and booking is essential for all events.

Scan this QR code to view all our events and book, or visit kwtg.uk/events-spring



FAMILY EVENTS

Spring is the perfect time to reconnect with nature, and we're here to help! We have an exciting line up of events to inspire adventure and exploration, from pond dipping, woodland walks and special weekend activities.

Pond Dipping

5 and 6 April

10.30am - 12pm

Tyland Barn, ME14 3BD

As part of the Kent Big Weekend, enjoy a pond dipping session during your visit to Tyland Barn.



Spring Family Fun

11 April 10.30am - 12pm

Tyland Barn, ME14 3BD

Sevenoaks, TN13 3DH

West Blean, CT6 7NZ

Celebrate spring with seasonal, nature-inspired crafts and an outdoor trail.



Pond Dipping

30 May

Tyland Barn, ME14 3BD

Sevenoaks, TN13 3DH

Have a go at pond dipping and learn how to identify what you find under the water.

Wild Woodland Walk

30 May

West Blean, CT6 7NZ

Discover the wildlife that calls the woodland home, and what makes it a welcoming habitat for them.



Big Wild Weekend at Tyland Barn

14 June

Tyland Barn, ME14 3BD

Take part in all things wild during this special event to mark the Big Wild Weekend.

Nature Tots

This spring, bring your little explorers to Nature Tots – a parent and toddler group where your children will embark on journeys of discovery with hands-on activities. With our Forest School approach, children lead their own learning, sparking confidence and a love for nature! Our 6-week programmes welcome all pre-schoolers at Tyland Barn and Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve.

BOOK NOW AT

kwtg.uk/events-spring



FAMILY EVENTS



Wilder Holiday Club

Wilder Holiday Club is now award winning at the Beautiful South Awards for Active and Learning Experience of the Year!

Hosted at our wonderful sites by our dedicated tutors, Holiday Club has days packed full of activities from pond dipping to mini-beast hunts. No two days are ever the same!

With dates throughout the school holidays, Wilder Holiday Club is available at Tyland Barn in Maidstone, and Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve.

BOOK NOW AT

kwtg.uk/events-spring

Home Ed Forest School

Join us this spring for a Forest School designed specifically for home educated families –

it's den-building, bug-hunting, fire-making, marshmallow-toasting time outside!

Forest School activities are proven to improve self-esteem, confidence and to develop key skills for independent learning. all while encouraging a respect for the environment and a re-connection with nature.

Sessions run from Tyland Barn and Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve.

BOOK NOW at kwtg.uk/home-ed-spring



Birthday Parties

Unleash your child's wild side with our Wilder Birthday Parties! Hosted at our stunning reserves, these adventures are packed with games and nature-inspired activities. Choose from themes like Minibeast Madness, Teddy Bear's Picnic, Wildlife Adventurer and Wild, Wet n' Wacky – there is something for everyone!

Woodland Birthday Parties offer Forest School fun with survival skills, crafting and wildlife discovery.

Available year-round –rain or shine!

Celebrate from just £160.

BOOK NOW AT kwtg.uk/birthdays-spring

**Celebrate
from
JUST £160**

Available all year round
– rain or shine!



WEEKEND WELLNESS

Take some time for yourself over the weekend and spend a couple of hours with our Wilder Wellbeing team. Choose from a variety of activities designed to increase your wellness by encouraging you to connect with the natural world.

Forest Bathing in the Blean

23 March, 27 April

*West Blean and Thornden Woods,
CT6 7NZ*

Soothe your body and mind on a guided, meditative walk through the woods, inspired by the Japanese practice of Forest Bathing – Shinrin Yoku.

Nature Retreat at West Blean

18 May

*West Blean and Thornden Woods,
CT6 7NZ*

Immerse yourself in the natural world for a day of woodland inspired wellness, including healing forest bathing and calming crafting.

BOOK NOW AT kwtg.uk/events-spring



OPEN GARDENS AND WILD ABOUT GARDENS WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

Wilder Gardening workshops

Spring: 26 March

Summer: 18 June

Tyland Barn, ME14 3BD

Learn how to build a garden with nature at its heart at our seasonal workshops.

£35 per person

Nature-friendly open garden in Faversham

11 May

Langdon Court, Faversham, ME13 9DA

Children FREE

PLUS optional add-on activities

One of our most popular open gardens, this is a three-acre wildlife oasis in the making.

£5 per person

Tyland Barn open garden and nature park

26 July

Tyland Barn, ME14 3BD

FREE to attend with

optional add-on activities

Explore our head office's gardens at Tyland Barn. Our gardens team will be on hand with advice, garden tours and optional craft activities.

FREE

BOOK NOW AT kwtg.uk/WAG-spring

Open farm garden safari in Shadoxhurst

£5 per person

22 June

*Green Farm Kent, Shadoxhurst, TN26 1LT
Moat Farm, Shadoxhurst, TN26 1LY*

Children FREE

Don't miss out on this chance to visit two nature-friendly farm gardens and their neighbouring land.



WILDER KENT EXPERIENCES

Introducing a fresh way to experience the wild. Meet Kent Wildlife Trust's Area Wardens, who look after our reserves and ensure they remain beautiful havens for wildlife. Each warden has personally chosen a specialist species or reserve to share with you in a small group on these engaging experiences – you could even try your hand at a new skill, like bat detecting or moth trapping! Knowledgeable reserve wardens, we invite you to join us for inspiring new encounters.

BOOK NOW AT
kwtg.uk/events-spring

£35
 per ticket

Walk with the Cows at Heather Corrie Vale

16 April
 TN15 6AE

Nightingales at Burnt Oak Woods

19 April and 17 May
 TN26 2EL

Enjoy special access to this woodland to experience the beautiful music of nightingales.

From Industry to Sanctuary at Oare Marshes

23 April and 23 May

Meet the Moths at Tyland Barn

21 May and 18 June
 Tyland Barn, Maidstone, ME14 3BD

Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to spend the morning with our Area Wardens as they unload moth traps set the previous evening and demonstrate trapping and identification techniques.

Walk with the Cows at Hothfield Heathlands

8 May
 TN26 1HD

Beginners Guide to Bushcraft

17 May
 TN13 3DH

Bats and Amphibians at Hothfield Heathlands

16 May
 TN26 1HD

As the sun sets, head out to the heathland with echometers, nets and torches to learn the best techniques for spotting the wildlife that becomes most active after dark.

Beavers and Buffalo at Ham Fen

18 May
 CT14 0DZ

Evening Wildlife at Tyland Barn

27 - 28 May
 ME14 3BD



£16
 per ticket

WALK WITH A WARDEN

These guided walks are the perfect way to discover a new reserve or see one you're familiar with in a different light. These walks are a great introduction to seasonal highlights and the plants and wildlife to look out for during your visit.

Spring at Hothfield

4 May
 TN26 1HD

Become familiar with seasonal heathland plants and wildlife on this guided walk.

Spring at Sevenoaks

7 May
 TN13 3DH

Orchids at Yockletts Bank and Park Gate

14 May and 21 May
 CT4 5PZ

Spring at Cromers Wood

15 May
 ME9 8AD

Spot the signs of spring that can be found in this special woodland.

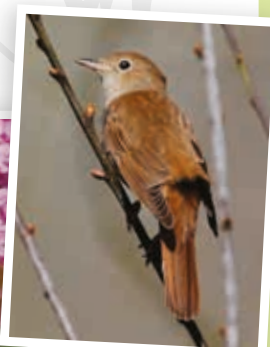
Dawn at Holborough Marshes

9 May
 ME6 5FB

It's dawn chorus season, so enjoy the lovely soundtrack of nature whilst on a guided walk of the marshes.

Spring at Marden Meadows

12 June
 TN12 0JQ



PLEASE NOTE

Fees or donations apply per person and booking is essential for all events.

STUDY DAYS AND COURSES

© TERRY WHITTAKER

Attend a Study Day or course to increase your knowledge and enjoyment of Kent's wildlife. Please note this is just a small selection of events we have available. Scan the QR code to view all our Study Days and courses and book, or visit kwtg.uk/study-days-spring

Beaver ecology and field signs

29 March and 5 April

Old School Hall, School Lane, Fordwich, CT2 0DG

Dive into the world of European beavers in the UK and transform your newfound knowledge into action during an outdoor beaver survey.

Bird Calls for Beginners NEW

26 April

Pegwell Bay

Why do birds sing? Join us for a fascinating insight into the world of bird song and discover how to identify birds by their songs and calls.

Introduction to Solitary bees

3 May

Tyland Barn, Maidstone, ME14 3BD

An introduction to the ecology and identification of solitary bees. Immerse yourself in a mix of classroom insights and outdoor exploration, where you'll uncover the secrets of these hardworking pollinators.

Responsible beginners' beekeeping

4 May

Tyland Barn, Maidstone, ME14 3BD

An introductory course for anyone interested in learning more about bees and the craft of beekeeping.

Broad-leaves trees in spring

11 May

Tyland Barn, Maidstone, ME14 3BD

Step into the vibrant world of spring. Learn to identify trees and shrubs by their blossoming flowers and fresh, budding leaves.

Scan this QR code to view all our events and book, or visit kwtg.uk/events-spring



Geology of Kent

16 May

Tyland Barn, Maidstone, ME14 3BD

An illustrated review of the geology of the Kentish landscape, from the oldest rocks to the youngest sediments.

Reptile Ecology and Survey Techniques

17 May

Tyland Barn, Maidstone, ME14 3BD

and Vinters Valley Nature Reserve
Discover how to identify reptiles and learn about their habitat requirements before searching for reptiles in a nearby nature reserve.

Beginners' Birdwatching

18 May

Tyland Barn, Maidstone, ME14 3BD

and Holborough Marshes Reserve
Learn how to identify birds on this introductory course. An indoor introduction will be followed by an outdoor session to look for birds of woodland and wetland.

Introduction to Orchids

28 May

Tyland Barn, Maidstone, ME14 3BD

and Ranscombe Farm Reserve

What do you know about wild orchids: their life cycles, where to find them, and how to identify them? Discover all this and more.

Beginners' Guide to Wildflower Identification NEW

31 May

Tyland Barn, Maidstone, ME14 3BD

Learn how to identify and classify flowers, how to use botanical keys and gain a better understanding of botanical terms.

Gift guide

Adopt a Species

Our adoption packs mean you can champion Kent's most iconic species. Will you choose between the playful beaver, majestic Highland cow, mighty European bison, vibrant red-billed chough or the graceful grey seal? Each adoption pack comes with a certificate, stunning photograph, facts sheet and the latest project updates. Plus, you'll receive a soft toy or unique lithograph to treasure!

kwtg.uk/adopt

Gift Membership

By giving the gift of wildlife, you and your loved ones can help weave wildness back into the fabric of our county across countless sites and reserves, and protect our communities, families and the Garden of England for future generations to come. They'll receive our brand-new welcome guide and all of the perks you enjoy. You can also include a personalised message to welcome them to the herd!

kwtg.uk/gift



Gift ideas for Mothering Sunday

With Mothering Sunday coming up, surprise your mother with our special gifts, made right here in Kent! Indulge her with irresistible chocolates, cozy wool creations from the sheep of Romney Marsh or relaxing lavender products from Castle Farm.



Gifts for Nature

Enhance your garden's biodiversity with our nature-loving gifts! Choose from our range of bird feeders, cosy nest boxes and charming insect hotels to create a haven for wildlife outside your window. We also offer wildlife-focused gift bundles, thoughtfully curated to bring nature closer to home.

kwtg.uk/shop-nature

Find your perfect fit

You can show your love for our county's wildlife with our printed-to-order clothing! From t-shirts and jumpers to hoodies, each piece showcases our local wildlife. You'll be wearing your passion proudly while supporting vital conservation efforts.

kwtg.uk/shop-clothing

From t-shirts and jumpers to hoodies



Ways to fundraise this Spring



Boost your fundraising!

Have you ever thought about match funding?

Most employers are ready to help you raise money for your favourite charity, you just need to ask! Speak to your manager or HR department to see if they can support you. If they want to know more about Kent Wildlife Trust and our work, we're happy to help!

You could also give your fundraising a boost by starting a JustGiving page or teaming up with friends through GiveMatch.

For support or to learn more about fundraising for us, contact us at fundraising@kentwildlife.org.uk

Why not start a JustGiving page

Challenge is running from 31 March - 13 April

Family fun this Easter

Could you take part in Hedgehog Walk – can you walk 3km over two weeks, the same distance a hedgehog can walk in one night? Plus, if you fundraise over £30, you'll win a prize! The challenge is running from 31 March to 13 April, and you can **sign up at** kwtg.uk/fundraise-spring

You could host a community easter egg hunt and donate your profits to Kent Wildlife Trust, or turn your spring clean green! Sell your unwanted items at a car boot fair or online and donate some of your earnings to help wildlife thrive.



DOWNLOAD our fundraising packs for even more tips and tools to help you FUN-draise this spring at kwtg.uk/fundraise-spring



Showcase your commitment with an onsite plaque

Could your company sponsor a reserve?

With over 90 reserves in our care, we're proud custodians of nature, and we're asking you to join us.

By sponsoring a reserve, whether through a one-off donation, choosing us as your Charity of the Year, or committing long-term, your company can secure its future.

Your support will unlock its wild potential, showcase your organisation's commitment with an onsite plaque, and give your team the chance to explore its magic on a guided tour with its dedicated warden.

Contact corporate@kentwildlife.org.uk to sponsor your reserve today.



A wild way forward with bison bridges

If you make a trip to West Blean and Thornden Woods soon, make sure you wander over the UK's first bison bridges! These impressive structures mark a major milestone in the Wilder Blean project, an ambitious wilding initiative transforming Kent's ancient woodland on the outskirts of Canterbury.

A bold vision for a wilder landscape

The bison bridges will allow the UK's first wild bison herd in thousands of years to roam across 200 hectares of the woodland, expanding from the initial 50 hectares where they have been thriving since their release in July 2022.

Construction of the first two bridges began in September 2023 and was completed within six months.

Ecosystem engineers

European bison are back at West Blean and Thornden Woods as part of a bold project led by Kent Wildlife Trust and Wildwood Trust. The goal? To boost biodiversity through the bison's natural behaviours, which shape the environment and help it become more resilient to climate change. Often called "ecosystem engineers," bison are experts in

maintaining and enhancing ecosystems. By stripping bark, bison create standing deadwood that supports insects, birds and bats. Their dust baths attract burrowing insects, and because of their size, they can push through dense vegetation, opening up light and space for wildlife to flourish.

The impact of bison on ecosystems is profound. In Romania, a similar project with a herd of 170 bison captured as much CO2 as 84,000 cars produce.

Meeting challenges with innovation

The bridges address a unique challenge. UK law classifies European bison as dangerous wild animals, so 43 kilometers of fencing surround the bison's habitat to keep them separate from the public. However, this fencing cut across a network of footpaths that crisscross the woodland. The bridges provide an innovative solution. Visitors

can now stroll safely above while bison roam freely underneath, giving them more space to fully inhabit their rewilded home. The bridges also provide an elevated viewpoint, giving visitors the chance to spot these majestic animals in their natural habitat.

A collective effort

The £1 million cost of the bison bridges was made possible through generous funding from a range of sources. The National Lottery Heritage Fund contributed nearly a quarter of a million pounds, with additional support from the National Highways Environment and Wellbeing Designated Fund under the Network for Nature programme. Contributions also came from The Michael Uren Foundation, Veolia Environmental Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation, and private donors.



© RUSSELL PERRY VISUAL STUDIO



**BISON
BRIDGES**
*Opening
2025*

© RUSSELL PERRY VISUAL STUDIO



Visitors will be able to stroll safely above while bison roam freely underneath.

A transformative project

The Wilder Blean project, led by Kent Wildlife Trust and Wildwood Trust, is more than just a conservation project – it's a proof-of-concept initiative showing how we can tackle the biodiversity crisis using nature-based solutions.

Simon Bateman Brown, Head of Land Management at Kent Wildlife Trust summed up the excitement:

"Our wildlife is in trouble, and we need to think differently about conservation. While the need for fencing and bridges presents challenges to rewilding projects, they allow us to demonstrate what can be achieved and advocate for change. Bison are no more dangerous than domestic cattle and, in other parts of the world, roam freely in public areas.

In the future, we hope to use electric fencing to manage the herd. But for that, we need UK laws to adapt to the realities of rewilding."

What's next for nature?

The completion of the bison bridges is a significant step towards realising the Wilder Blean Initiative. This collaborative

effort, involving landowners, conservationists, and organisations like the Woodland Trust and RSPB, seeks to secure the wider Blean complex's future as a haven for wildlife and a destination for visitors to enjoy its scenic beauty. By harnessing natural processes, the Initiative aims to create a thriving ecosystem in one of England's most densely populated regions.

The bison bridges symbolise what can be achieved through innovation, collaboration and a shared commitment to nature. They're an invitation for other groups to think boldly. For visitors, the bridges offer an extraordinary chance to connect with nature, witness the transformative power of wilding and catch a glimpse of these wonderful animals in action.



FIND OUT MORE about the Wilder Blean Initiative at kwtg.uk/initiative-spring



The return of the red-billed chough to Kent

Once extinct from Kent's skies, the red-billed chough is making a triumphant return. Known for its vibrant red beak, glossy black feathers and impressive aerial acrobatics, this striking bird has returned to the White Cliffs of Dover after two centuries of absence. Thanks to two successful releases as part of a groundbreaking reintroduction project, the chough is becoming a more familiar sight, bringing joy to locals and birdwatchers alike.



A huge thank you
to our members and
Wildwood who supported
our recent appeal
- we were overwhelmed to
raise £24,371 towards the
next release.

Reaching Greater Heights

The comeback is supported by the “Reaching Greater Heights” initiative, a National Lottery Heritage-funded project that is restoring 80 hectares of precious chalk grassland. This collaboration between Kent Wildlife Trust, English Heritage, White Cliffs Countryside Partnership, and the Western Heights Preservation Society will run until December 2026. Together, we are creating vital habitats across Dover Castle and the Western Heights for rare species like the early spider orchid, lesser calamint, and Adonis blue butterfly, while providing the perfect hunting ground for the chough.

Chalk grassland, often called the UK’s rainforest, is an incredibly rare and important habitat. It can support as many as 40 species per square meter and hundreds of invertebrates, many of which are vital to the chough’s diet. For over 40 years, we have worked with partners to restore chalk grassland through conservation grazing with organic livestock, ensuring these habitats remain rich with insects.



© LIZ CORRY

The Chough Reintroduction Project

Since 2022, Kent Wildlife Trust and Wildwood Trust have worked together to restore the red-billed chough to Kent. Following the second successful release season in summer 2024 alongside the first wild chough chick hatched in over 200 years, attention now turns to raising the next generation of birds to bolster the free-flying population.

To fund the 2025 release, we launched an appeal last winter, and the generosity of supporters has ensured the project’s continuation for another season.

What’s next?

Dover’s chalk grassland restoration forms part of a larger network of interconnected habitats across the south coast. The project aims to release between 30 and 50 choughs in Kent over the five-year project, but the road to a self-sustaining chough population is a long one. We are continuing to work with landowners and partners to ensure the landscape can support the chough’s needs. Meanwhile, Wildwood Trust focusses on breeding, hatching, hand-rearing, and training the birds for life in the wild.




Nationally, the Kent population serves as a model for future reintroduction efforts along the south coast, potentially creating stepping stones to link fragmented populations. A Southern England steering group, including Natural England and leading conservationists, is facilitating these efforts.

Kent’s chough population is setting the stage for future reintroductions along the south coast, helping to bridge gaps between fragmented groups. A Southern England steering group, made up of Natural England and top conservation experts, is driving these efforts forward.

Paul Hadaway, Director of Conservation for Kent Wildlife Trust:

“The red-billed chough reintroduction project in Dover demonstrates that, even with the perilous state of nature in this country, it is possible to restore ecosystems and bring back missing species. This project is built on decades of science, feasibility studies, and habitat restoration.

“This reintroduction is already inspiring further conservation efforts, ensuring the red-billed chough’s story of recovery continues. With every soaring chough and every milestone achieved, Kent takes another step closer to a wilder, more vibrant future for its iconic landscapes.”

 **FIND OUT MORE** about the Chough Reintroduction project at kwtg.uk/chough-spring

Share your sightings

Please do share reports of sightings of choughs foraging and soaring over Dover Castle – it’s an image us conservationists have long envisioned!



Discover your



Bugs
Matter



© SIMON MUNNERY

Bugs Matter is going global!

Kent Wildlife Trust was awarded the 2024 Amazon Web Services (AWS) Imagine Grant at the end of last year. This grant will propel us into a new chapter for Bugs Matter, our pioneering citizen science project run with Buglife, allowing us to roll out the app on an international scale to take this vital study global.



The Bugs Matter survey has been running in the UK since 2021 and compares data to a baseline survey run by the RSPB in 2004. By counting insect splats on vehicle number plates after car journeys, citizen scientists help us monitor flying insect populations.

This simple but powerful method has revealed alarming decreases in flying insect abundance, with the latest survey showing insect splat rates across the UK plummeting by 78% between 2004 and 2023. Invertebrates are the unsung heroes of our ecosystems, pollinating crops, controlling pests, recycling nutrients, and maintaining soil health. Without them, life on Earth wouldn't be possible.

Thanks to AWS's funding, cloud computing resources, and technical expertise, we can now start developing collaborations in the US, Australia, France, the Netherlands, and Ireland to generate a global dataset, shining a much-needed spotlight on insect populations worldwide. This groundbreaking step will empower conservationists everywhere

to address insect declines, advocate for better policies, and challenge harmful pesticide use.

The AWS Imagine Grant celebrates innovation in using technology to tackle pressing global challenges. Being named a winner in the 'Go Further, Faster' category is a testament to the impact of Bugs Matter and the potential it holds for global conservation efforts.

We're calling on you to be part of this vital mission! The 2025 Bugs Matter survey season will soon be kicking off on 1 May in the UK. By joining the survey, you can contribute to this crucial effort to better understand the insect abundance. Download the free app, start monitoring, and help us create a wilder future. Every journey counts!

 **FIND OUT MORE AT**
kwttg.uk/global-bugs



FLYING CARDINAL BEETLE, COELIOXYS BREVIS © STEVEN FALK

inner scientist

MyWilderKent: A Digital Gateway to Green Communities



POWERED BY
Kent
Wildlife Trust

Disclaimer: Logo & Prototype imagery currently in development & subject to change.

After months of development, our MyWilderKent platform is in its final development stages and is set to launch in time for summer.

I've always been passionate about the power of individual action to drive larger conservation efforts. But barriers, like knowing where to start or understanding the impact of your efforts, can be discouraging especially in the face of increasing development threats and climate change. My late mother loved wildlife gardening, but finding the right actions and understanding their benefits was a constant challenge. For those with limited mobility or access to information, taking action to contribute to local biodiversity, for example by arranging a hedgehog highway or finding community gardens, can feel out of reach.

MyWilderKent aims to change that by bridging the digital gap between people and nature. This innovative app, developed in collaboration with our Digital Development team and the wider Trust, provides a simple, user-friendly platform to help individuals, groups, and businesses visualise their meaningful contributions towards nature recovery across Kent.

Through the app, users can discover nature actions already underway across Kent and access resources on how to take part, as well as see their own impact. Your profile will showcase your contribution, whilst also providing a fantastic reward system and allowing you to follow along with the impacts of other users in your local area.

Throughout 2023 and 2024, we've had some exciting community feedback and user testing by communities and individuals across Kent to build something truly great together. Whether it's creating a wildlife pond, reducing water usage, or joining a beach clean, MyWilderKent will be your digital companion, fostering greener communities and enhancing biodiversity.

We can't wait to share the app with you later this year and see all your amazing actions for nature!



Dean Ashby
Digital Engagement & Efficiency Manager and
MyWilderKent project lead

Dean drives digital innovation and streamlines processes across Kent Wildlife Trust as part of the Digital Development team. With a background in both the Conservation and IT sectors, Dean is passionate about the valuable role of individuals in citizen science and building digital bridges to help make nature more accessible for everyone.

Show us your

WILD SIDE!



Volunteer Spotlight



Helen Gibson

Tyland Barn Nature Park
and Garden Volunteer

Helen began volunteering in March 2022. During the COVID-19 pandemic, she decided to pursue a career change and was drawn to the work of the Trust, which inspired her to get involved as a volunteer. Her first day was spent assisting with a pond-dipping session during an open day at Tyland Barn, and she has been volunteering there every Monday since. Helen also volunteers at Leeds Castle as a habitat management volunteer and has recently completed a degree in Horticulture!

Volunteering highlights

Helen takes great pride in the team's achievements at Tyland Barn, especially in the Plant, Sow, Grow area and the Hibernaculum and watching these spaces transform season after season. Recently, Helen has delighted in spotting orchids emerging and, for the first time in her experience at Tyland Barn, grass snakes - a wonderful reminder of the positive impact their efforts are making.

Helen's top tips

Helen's advice is simple: "Just go for it." Whether you thrive in group settings or prefer working independently, there is a volunteer role to suit you. The fresh air and sense of community can also provide a fantastic boost to your mental wellbeing. Helen especially appreciates the welcoming environment, where there is no pressure to conform - you can just be yourself.

Making an impact towards a Wilder Kent

The team manages the gardens in a nature-friendly way by using organic practices, creating sheltered areas, removing weeds manually and establishing designated off-limit areas to allow nature to thrive undisturbed.

Helen is passionate about conducting surveys around Tyland Barn to track how the team's efforts are increasing biodiversity. A major win is the significant increase in reptiles sighted at Tyland Barn over the years!



Shoresearch
St. Margarets Bay



© MAX RENTON



Darland Banks
Medway



Shoresearch
St. Margarets Bay



© DAVID WILLIAMS

Want to get involved? Here's a few roles looking for volunteers...

Darland Banks Practical Team Volunteer

Join our dedicated team in the heart of the Medway Towns and help with removing scrub and improving the chalk grassland for butterflies and wildflowers. In the summer, take part in counting one of the biggest populations of man orchids in the country.

Weald Area Practical Team Volunteer

This is a great opportunity to discover new habitats and hidden gems across south-west Kent. Woodlands, meadows, heaths, ponds: volunteers go out every week and get stuck into a wide range of practical habitat management activities such as coppicing, scrub clearance, ride cutting, raking and fencing.

Shoresearch Volunteer

We're looking for citizen scientists to help us collect data across intertidal zones along the Kent coast to help provide invaluable insights into the health of our coastal ecosystems and the species that inhabit them.

Weekend tasks at Dover and Ashford

Help to restore rare and important habitats in either of these areas, both home to an incredible array of wildlife.



**VIEW ALL OUR CURRENT
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AT**
kwtg.uk/volunteer-spring



Volunteer Day
South Ashford



© IAN RICKARDS

6 actions you can take to make an impact for nature

1 Provide food and water for local wildlife

Our local wildlife will appreciate any support we can give them this spring. Some creatures, like hedgehogs, will be coming out of hibernation and will be looking for food and water. We can help them by leaving shallow dishes of water (remember that milk can make a hedgehog poorly) and meat-based hedgehog, dog, or cat food for our prickly visitors.

Birds will be grateful for topped-up bird feeders as they'll need lots of energy for raising their chicks. Having a shallow dish with some stones in will create an accessible drinking spot for many creatures!

© GILLIAN DAY



2 Keep it WILD

Would it be a wildlife magazine if we didn't suggest leaving patches of your space to grow wild? Leaving grass to grow longer as well as leaving 'untidy' areas of any green space (whether it's at school or at home) will give wildlife a safe place to shelter and eat. Plants like dandelions and clovers will have the chance to grow and provide very important food sources for pollinators! Log piles and 'dead hedges' are fantastic homes for minibeasts, so you'll be creating a great habitat whilst providing a food source for birds and other wildlife.

3 Get outdoors

Spending more time outdoors is a great thing for you and for nature. When we get outside to socialise, exercise, or relax, we boost our mental wellbeing and feel more connected to our environment. And when we gain more appreciation for something, we are more passionate about wanting to protect it!

Whether you're sending the kids off exploring while you enjoy a relaxing walk, or you're ready to discover a volunteering opportunity that might give you a renewed sense of community and purpose, the outdoors is calling!



© MATTHEW ROBERTS



4 Reduce your water usage

Where possible, installing a water butt in your outdoor space can help with reducing your water consumption. That way, you'll have stashed away a healthy supply of recycled rainwater, ready to use on your plants or for topping up your bird bath or pond in the summer, without the need to use the hose! As a bonus, your plants will prefer being watered this way because tap water is usually much colder than their surrounding environment.



© IMAGESOURCECURATED



5 Plant for pollinators

Whether you have a window box or a garden, we can all do our bit to help pollinators. We rely on honeybees for about a third of everything we eat, but it's not just bees that help us out: butterflies, wasps, bats, hoverflies and moths are also pollinators!

By providing them with tasty nectar and pollen in the flowers that we plant, it will keep them going this year. Great ones to plant this time of year include English bluebells, grape hyacinths, lungwort, primroses, and lavender. **Check out our 'Actions' page to find out how to create your own 'Nectar Café' at kwtg.uk/nectar-cafe**



6 Keep learning

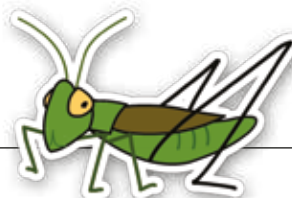
Nature is fascinating – I think that's something we can all agree on! How about taking a magnifying glass out on a walk with you to explore the worlds of lichen, moss and minibeasts? Or inspecting the fresh green leaves of trees as they unfurl...

You could get involved with local campaigns, attend one of our fascinating Study Days, or visit us at Tyland Barn for a fun-filled day of pond dipping! As you learn, your enthusiasm and passion will spark interest in others, helping to spread the word about how much we need nature.



FEELING INSPIRED?

Check out even more actions for nature this spring at kwtg.uk/action



Bella Sabin-Dawson, Education Officer

Bella creates resources and delivers education sessions at our nature reserves and across schools in Kent. With a background in environmental social sciences, she cares deeply about the relationship between people and nature, and how this can impact wildlife and the environment.

© EMMA BRADSHAW

LOCAL NEWS



KENT UPDATE

A bold new chapter for the Jeffrey Harrison Visitor Centre



The Jeffrey Harrison Visitor Centre at Sevenoaks Wildlife Reserve is undergoing a transformative refurbishment to modernise facilities and improve visitor experiences. Located on Bradbourne Vale Road, the centre, named after the visionary behind the reserve, serves as a gateway to a thriving wetland and woodland habitat hosting over 2,000 species.

Planned upgrades include accessible blue-badge parking, improved toilets, and enhanced parent and child amenities. A new lake-facing deck with seating will offer stunning views of wildfowl, while a secure children's play area and resurfaced car park will improve accessibility and bring people closer to nature.

The energy-efficient renovation also includes an expanded café, retail space, and a flexible event area. Security measures, such as cameras, fencing, and lighting, aim to address recent thefts and anti-social behaviour.

The centre is temporarily closed, but the reserve remains open.

 **FIND OUT MORE**
kwtg.uk/sevenoaks-refurb

KENT UPDATE

Bradbourne Re-bourne



The restoration of Sevenoaks' historic Bradbourne Lakes is picking up pace with the appointment of a project manager for the £2.1 million "Bradbourne Re-bourne" initiative. This exciting collaboration between Sevenoaks District Council, Kent Wildlife Trust, South East River Trust, Mind, and Historic England aims to breathe new life into the 18th-century Lakes, originally created in 1740 as part of the Bradbourne Estate.

Plans include draining and de-silting the Lakes, repairing sluices, and using silt to create reedbeds to boost

biodiversity and water quality. There will also be improved accessibility, wildflower planting, new bat and bird boxes, and a natural play area to enjoy.

So far, the project has secured £253,000 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund grant and developer contributions, and now the Council is seeking the remaining £1.6 million needed to begin construction in 2026. Once complete, the restoration promises to be a win for wildlife and the community.

The end of London Resort

The £2.5 billion London Resort theme park, planned to develop on the Swanscombe Peninsula, has been officially terminated following a High Court ruling to liquidate London Resort Company Holdings (LRCH).

This decision ends a decade of environmental concerns over the ecologically vital area, which was designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) by Natural England in 2021.

We fiercely opposed this development alongside other conservation groups, including Buglife and the RSPB, who highlighted the Swanscombe Peninsula's importance as a haven for rare wildlife.

The High Court's ruling brings relief to local communities and ensures the protection of this biodiverse natural space. Thank you to everyone who spread the message to Save Swanscombe, joined us on the campaign or signed a petition.



READ MORE
kwtg.uk/swanscombe-saved

Kent Wildlife Trust wins gold at Beautiful South Tourism Awards



Kent Wildlife Trust has been crowned Gold Winner in the Ethical, Responsible & Sustainable Tourism category at the prestigious Beautiful South Tourism Awards, sponsored by VisitKent. The judges commended our outstanding efforts to champion wildlife conservation across the county while providing nature reserves that inspire and connect people with the natural world.



What's more, our Wilder Holiday Club earned a bronze award in the Learning Experience of the Year category. The judges praised the programme for sparking curiosity in young minds, offering hands-on wildlife experiences such as bug hunting and pond dipping, and fostering a deeper appreciation for nature.

We strive to create opportunities for both environmental sustainability and community engagement, inspiring the next generation of nature lovers.

Your Will

Could do wonders

Write or update your will today for FREE
Help Kent's wildlife thrive

Could you sow the seeds for a greener future?

Every legacy helps ensure Kent's wildlife and wild spaces are protected for years to come. We've partnered with expert will writers, Octopus Legacy, to make creating your legacy easy and free.

CLAIM YOUR FREE WILL TODAY



Online: Scan the QR code

Over the phone or in person:

Call 020 4525 3605 and quote Kent Wildlife Trust to make an appointment

**By giving a gift
in your will to
Kent Wildlife Trust,**

you can enable us to
campaign to safeguard
our green spaces.

kwtg.uk/leave-legacy



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