

**FREE**

# The New Forest Essential Guide

to the National Park 2021

Maps  
Events guide  
Places to explore  
Walking & cycling

Front cover image by Nick Whittle

The New Forest Essential Guide  
is brought to you by:



Forestry England





# Welcome

The New Forest National Park is a spectacular, yet fragile landscape made up of a unique mix of forest and open heathland that's a haven for rare wildlife species - with a range of organisations working together to care for this special place.

Forestry England looks after 1,500 of the nation's woods and forests, including much of the best-known open land and productive woodlands in the New Forest. It works closely with other organisations in the area including Hampshire County Council, the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, the National Trust, New Forest District Council and the New Forest Verderers.

As guardians of the National Park the New Forest National Park Authority ensures this outstanding landscape has the highest level of protection to preserve it for the nation to enjoy for generations to come.

You can help nature and reduce your carbon footprint on your visit by walking, cycling and using the New Forest Tour as much

as possible, and by buying from local food producers.

The Forest is a special place that can be enjoyed all year round, but please help us look after it by following the New Forest Code.

[forestryengland.uk/newforest](https://forestryengland.uk/newforest)

[engnewforest](https://twitter.com/engnewforest)

[newforestnpa.gov.uk](https://newforestnpa.gov.uk)

[newforestnpa](https://twitter.com/newforestnpa)

### Follow the New Forest code

The New Forest is a unique place with rare wildlife and free-roaming livestock. Thank you for helping us care for this special place by following the simple New Forest code.

Keep your distance from the animals – don't feed or touch them

Keep dogs under control. Don't let dogs approach or chase any animals

Stick to the permitted cycle tracks

Take home litter and dog waste

Drive with care – animals on the road!

Help wildlife by keeping to the main tracks

No fires or barbecues

No wild camping

**Be Forest Friendly!**

## New Forest commoners

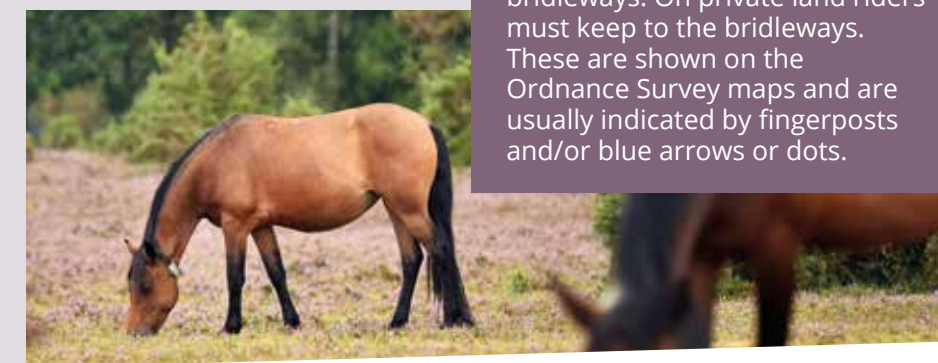


One of the first things you notice here in the New Forest are the free-roaming animals. The ponies, cattle, pigs, donkeys and, in certain areas, sheep graze and forage on unfenced open areas. These animals are owned by local families using their commoning rights.

The members of these families are called 'commoners' – ordinary people with an extraordinary commitment to this special place. They have commoning rights from land they own, rent or share that allows them to graze their animals on the Open Forest. All year round commoners have to tend to their livestock, so you might see them, with trailers, rounding up their ponies, or checking on their cows. It's all part of the New Forest's long history as a working forest.

The iconic New Forest ponies are the real architects of the Forest and

have helped shape the landscape for centuries. This traditional practice of commoning is vital in supporting our rare habitats which are a world capital for wildlife.



Horse riders have always enjoyed open access in the New Forest, which has lots of suitable tracks. When leaving Forestry England land, remember to use bridleways. On private land riders must keep to the bridleways. These are shown on the Ordnance Survey maps and are usually indicated by fingerposts and/or blue arrows or dots.



### How to report a problem with a Forest animal

Road traffic accident involving a pony, cow, pig, sheep or donkey call: **999**

Sick, injured or dead pony, cow, pig, sheep or donkey call: **02380 282 050** (office hours) **0300 067 4600** (after hours).

Please see: [newforestnpa.gov.uk/report-a-problem](https://newforestnpa.gov.uk/report-a-problem) for more information

Please **#BeForestFriendly** and follow the New Forest Code

**Sadly, many ponies and other livestock are killed or injured on the roads of the New Forest each year. Every animal killed is a great loss to the Forest, and to its owner, so if you enjoy seeing the animals in the National Park then please help us protect them through some simple actions:**

**1. Please #keepyourdistance** from the animals. However tame they may appear they are unpredictable, and can bite and kick. Take particular care around ponies and cattle with young, especially if you have a dog with you.

**2. Please don't feed the animals.** It is vital that they graze naturally, both for their own survival all year round and for the benefits grazing brings to the landscape.

**3. Please don't leave water out** for the animals at any time of the year. There is always natural water available, and it is important for the Forest that the grazing shifts naturally according to the weather.

**4. Please help reduce animal accidents** by driving with extra care, particularly in poor visibility. Just **#add3minutes** to your journey across the New Forest to keep yourself and the commoners' animals safe [newforestnpa.gov.uk/add3minutes](https://newforestnpa.gov.uk/add3minutes).





# Walking in the New Forest

## Follow our waymarked walks and trails...

The following trails are marked on the ground by wooden marker posts with coloured bands. An overview map of each route is displayed at the start point in the car park. All routes are circular and will bring you back to your starting point. The numbers refer to map locations on centre pages.

### ② From Bolderwood car park

#### Deer Watch Trail 0.75km/0.5 miles

A short stroll leading you to a deer-viewing platform overlooking fields where wild herds of fallow deer are frequently seen. The path is a moderately smooth, gravelled surface with gentle slopes and benches along the way. The trail is accessed by a gate which has a low catch.

#### Jubilee Grove Trail 1.5km/1 mile

Including the deer fields, this meandering route leads you past some majestic trees, the oldest of which date back to 1860. Benches from which to admire their beauty can be found along the way. The path is a moderately smooth, gravelled surface with two short 'but fairly steep' slopes and frequent resting places. The trail is accessed via a gate which has a low catch.

#### Radnor Trail 3km/2 miles

A longer route which takes you into the heart of the Forest and across the Bratley Water stream. Benches and picnic benches are located along the trail. The path is a moderately smooth, gravelled surface with two short 'but fairly steep' slopes and frequent resting places. The trail is accessed via a gate which has a low catch.

### ⑥ From Blackwater or Brockhill car parks:

#### Tall Trees Trail 2.5km/1.5 miles

Follow the marker posts and you will be guided along a shady path beneath mighty Douglas firs and redwoods that were planted during the reign of Queen Victoria. The path has a fairly smooth, gravelled surface. The trail is flat with frequent resting places and no gates.

#### Blackwater Arboretum Trail 0.75km/0.5 miles

A circular route which leads you past tree species from around the world. By following the unique panels you can use your senses to discover the secrets that these trees hold. Benches are located along the walk. The path has a fairly smooth, gravelled surface with one very gentle slope.

### ⑦ From Whitefield Moor or Puttles Bridge car parks:

#### Ober Water Trails 1.5km/1 mile (red trail) 2.5km/1.5 miles (yellow trail)

Two circular routes follow the Ober Water midway between its source and the sea. Close to this meandering stream is the open grassy expanse of Whitefield Moor. The paths are moderately smooth, gravelled surfaces and compacted grassy ground with some gentle slopes and a few resting places. This trail can be muddy after wet weather.

### ③ Reptile Centre car park:

#### Reptile Trail 2km/1.5 miles

Enjoy a circular walk through the woods. The trail mainly follows a fairly smooth, gravelled surface.

### ⑧ Wilverley car parks:

#### Wilverley Wander 4.2km/2.5 miles

A longer and more informal trail which winds through this diverse and working woodland. The paths are moderately smooth, gravelled surfaces with some short, steep slopes. Please note that part of this trail is on a cycle route.

### ⑤ Knightwood car park:

#### Knightwood Oak Less than 0.25 miles

A short stroll to one of the most famous trees in the New Forest. Believed to have been planted before 1600, this tree is still going strong and is a spectacular example of the ancient practice of pollarding. Benches are located throughout. The path has a fairly smooth, gravelled surface.

**Miles of waymarked trails to explore!**



Learn more about the special qualities of the New Forest while enjoying a healthy stroll.

## Free walking routes app

There's an easy way for you to follow the best walking routes in the New Forest this year – the National Park's walking routes app.

Available for Android and iPhone, the app features 27 walking routes of various lengths from coastal strolls to woodland walks.

It makes following the routes easier than ever, with GPS navigation allowing you to see your location at all times. This removes the need to read a map or decipher written directions, making it perfect for the casual walker.

Each route on the app also features points of interest, where you can find out interesting history or nature facts along the way.

Download for free at [newforestnpa.gov.uk/walksapp](http://newforestnpa.gov.uk/walksapp)



**FREE Walking pack**  
Subscribe to our email newsletter at [newforestnpa.gov.uk](http://newforestnpa.gov.uk) and receive a free online walking pack of routes and ranger tips.

## No smartphone? No problem!

All walks are available to download and print at [newforestnpa.gov.uk/routes](http://newforestnpa.gov.uk/routes)

## Walking and Cycling Festival 2021



Learn more about the wildlife, history and culture of the New Forest during this popular festival.

As well as dozens of guided walks led by knowledgeable local experts, this year there'll also be guided rides to encourage responsible cycling in the National Park. Themes typically include birdwatching, fungi spotting, hidden histories, bark ranger walks for pooches and woodland wild play events for children. The Festival, which will return from 16 October to 7 November 2021, is sponsored by Hoburne Holidays, one of the south's largest and most successful family-owned tourism businesses with three wonderful family holiday parks local to the New Forest. [newforest.gov.uk/walkingfestival](http://newforest.gov.uk/walkingfestival)

**Hoburne Holidays**



### Welcome to your family's special holiday place

Imagine being able to get away and make special family holiday memories any time you want – all year round! When you've got your very own safe holiday place, it's so easy. Hoburne has brand new luxury holiday homes ready for 2021 to choose from, in and around the New Forest.

To find more about holiday home ownership, visit

[hoburne.com/ownership](http://hoburne.com/ownership)

Hoburne Limited. Registered Office: 10 Hoburne Lane, Christchurch, Dorset, England. BH23 4HP. Company Number: 1102096.

**Hoburne**  
Holiday Home Ownership



# Are you ready to ride?



## Explore the National Park by bike with over 100 miles of family-friendly cycle routes.

The off-road routes are marked with numbered wooden posts. You can navigate your way around the tracks by referencing these numbers to our cycle trail map or following the Ordnance Survey grid references also on the markers.

The network is easily accessible from railway stations at Ashurst, Brockenhurst and Sway and links the main New Forest villages.

Visit: [newforestnpa.gov.uk/routes](http://newforestnpa.gov.uk/routes) for all the best trails.

Please follow both the Highway Code and the **New Forest Cycling Code**: [newforestnpa.gov.uk/cycling](http://newforestnpa.gov.uk/cycling)

**Off-road cycling is only allowed on the waymarked routes.** It's important that cyclists stick to marked trails all year round.



## Adventure cycling

For more adventurous cyclists, there are purpose-built mountain bike skills circuits at **Moors Valley Country Park**, Ringwood. Here you will find a network of forest road graded trails, as well as blue graded single track. A cycle map is available from the visitor centre on-site.

## Cycle code and map

Grab a cycle trail map before heading out on your adventure. It shows both off-road and road-based cycle networks across the New Forest, plus details of bike hire outlets.

Available to pick up at outlets across the New Forest National Park, including local information points.



# Forest plant life

Thank you for helping us to protect the New Forest's habitats from the damaging impacts of parking along road verges.



The New Forest is home to many wild plants and flowers that provide food and nectar for insects. If you tread carefully through the Forest in spring and summer you'll find it's bursting with colourful wildflowers, including foxgloves, bog asphodel, wild gladioli, different species of orchids and many more flowers. Remember that these flowers are protected by law and should be left for everyone to enjoy.

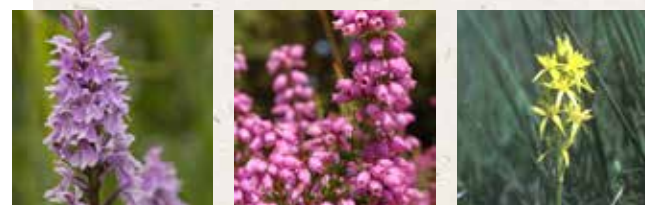
You'd be forgiven for not noticing the Forest edges as you drive through the landscape. They often look like muddy or grassy areas that simply link the Forest to the road. In fact, these verges are incredibly important habitats supporting many different plant species such as chamomile, harebell, small fleabane, field gentian and pennyroyal.

We urge drivers not to park on the verges of the Forest, as this can really damage the Forest as the vegetation gets worn away, tree roots become exposed and the ground impacted. Over time, this starts to reduce the footprint of the Forest, gradually eroding and reducing it.

### The common dog violet (*Viola riviniana*)



Thrives in sunny sites and like other small plants that grow in the woodland areas, are helped by hungry ponies grazing on the competing vegetation. This means that the violet can bloom and set seed, which is good news for the rare pearl-bordered fritillary butterfly whose caterpillar feeds only on the leaves of violets.



Early purple orchid/bell heather/bog asphodel



# See the best of the Forest

View the New Forest National Park from a different perspective this summer. Experience the best views of the Forest on the open-top New Forest Tour and hop on and off where you like.

## Where to stay?

For more information on where to stay, what to see and do in the New Forest visit: [thenewforest.co.uk](http://thenewforest.co.uk)

## New Forest Tour

**The New Forest Tour gives you the best views of the New Forest National Park and is the perfect excuse to leave your car at home.**

The Tour offers unrivalled treetop views of free-roaming ponies, ancient forests and picturesque villages. There are three beautiful routes to choose from: red, green and blue – and you can hop on and off where you like and switch routes – all on the same ticket.

Well-behaved dogs are welcome and you can even bring your bikes (carried free). Listen to audio commentary that brings the history and characters of the New Forest to life.

The perks don't stop there, as you can enjoy a free ferry ride from Southampton to Hythe, as well as great discounts at attractions including New Forest Wildlife Park, Ringwood Brewery and Beaulieu National Motor Museum.

The Tour runs hourly seven days a week in peak season. See [thenewforesttour.info](http://thenewforesttour.info) for dates and times. Take a look at the map on the centre pages of this guide for routes.

### Tour information

[thenewforesttour.info](http://thenewforesttour.info)

[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [newforesttour](#)



By donating to the New Forest Trust, you're supporting conservation, education and communing projects to help secure the future of the New Forest.

You can do this by choosing restaurants and hotels which support the charity; through local donation boxes; or by donating online at: [newforesttrust.org.uk/donate](http://newforesttrust.org.uk/donate)



# The sign of true local produce



## Look out for the New Forest Marque on:

- Forest-reared meat
- Local cheeses
- Seasonal fruit and veg
- Beer, cider, gin, wine and soft drinks
- Cakes, pastries, pies and other sweet and savoury treats
- Jams and chutneys
- Artisan-produced soaps and skincare products
- Bespoke hampers
- Woodcrafts
- Paintings and photography
- Handcrafted gifts, jewellery and knitted goods
- Accommodation and food outlets

## When you're in the New Forest, look out for the New Forest Marque which is the sign of true local produce.

Everything you see with the distinctive blue logo has been grown, brewed, reared, produced, or made right here in the New Forest.

Not only will you be getting fantastic local produce, but you'll be supporting local businesses and ensuring New Forest traditions continue to thrive.

You'll find the stamp of approval on cosy pubs, quaint tea rooms, and high-end restaurants – all offering a selection of menus bursting with locally-sourced ingredients.

Looking for a place to stay? All the New Forest Marque members look forward to welcoming you

throughout the year. There are campsites, self-catering establishments, family-run bed & breakfasts, boutique guest houses and larger hotels all proud to support local produce.

Many retail outlets stock fantastic local eats, drinks and treats so you can take a taste of the New Forest home with you or enjoy it during your stay.

Not forgetting beautiful arts and crafts such as photography, textiles and paintings inspired by the New Forest, as well as woodcrafts using local sustainable timber.

There are also no less than five vineyards in the New Forest, as well as beer brewers, cider makers and gin distillers.

There's so much to choose from! Visit [newforestmarque.co.uk](http://newforestmarque.co.uk) to see the fantastic array of produce on offer.



**Shop local  
Eat local  
Stay local  
Give local  
Enjoy local**

[newforestmarque.co.uk](http://newforestmarque.co.uk)  
[Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [@NewForestMarque](#)



# Discover the New Forest

## Moors Valley Country Park and Forest is close by

Explore waymarked footpaths and cycle routes, hire a bike or bring your own. For a more leisurely journey take a trip on the narrow-gauge steam train. Children will love the adventure play areas and the 'Play Trail' with its huge wooden play structures.

If you'd rather live life more adventurously why not try Go Ape's new Nets Adventures at Moors Valley? It's a wonderworld of treetop nets, trampolines and netted tunnels. With Treetop Challenge,

Treetop Adventure+ and Forest Segway all thrill-seeking, family entertainment boxes are firmly ticked. And, when you're feeling hungry after all of that, you can enjoy delicious food in Seasons restaurant.

Moors Valley is open all year round, with a full programme of events for adults and children. Disabled access and facilities are provided including wheelchair and mobility scooter hire.

For more info visit [moors-valley.co.uk](http://moors-valley.co.uk) follow us on @MoorsValley

## The Gruffalo

Discover our beautifully carved wooden Gruffalo sculptures, one for each lovable character from the popular children's story and see the Gruffalo brought to life in the Forest through a new augmented reality app.

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## Finding out more...

**Lepe Country Park**  
[hants.gov.uk/lepe](http://hants.gov.uk/lepe)  
**New Forest Heritage Centre**, Lyndhurst  
[newforestheritage.org.uk](http://newforestheritage.org.uk)  
**The National Park Mobile Information Unit**, various locations  
[newforestnpa.gov.uk/visiting](http://newforestnpa.gov.uk/visiting)  
**New Forest Reptile Centre**, Lyndhurst  
[forestryengland.uk/new-forest-reptile-centre](http://forestryengland.uk/new-forest-reptile-centre)  
**Bolderwood Information Unit**  
[forestryengland.uk/bolderwood](http://forestryengland.uk/bolderwood)

**St Barbe Museum and Art Gallery**, Lymington  
[stbarbe-museum.org.uk](http://stbarbe-museum.org.uk)  
**Ringwood Gateway**  
[Ringwood.gov.uk/gateway](http://Ringwood.gov.uk/gateway)  
**Fordingbridge Information Centre**  
[fordingbridge.gov.uk/fordingbridge-information-office](http://fordingbridge.gov.uk/fordingbridge-information-office)



Lepe

For a map of all Forestry England car parks visit:  
[forestryengland.uk/newforest](http://forestryengland.uk/newforest)



The New Forest's free tap water refill service, across the Forest. Download the Refill app, bring your own water bottle, look out for the window stickers and get a free tap water refill.  
[refill.org.uk](http://refill.org.uk)



## Local Information Points

- i** **Bashley**  
Hoburne Bashley Holiday Park
- i** **Beaulieu** New Forest Activities Booking Centre
- i** **Brookenhurst** Cyclexperience
- i** **Burley** Shappen Stores
- i** **Hythe** Herald Publishing
- i** **Landford** Landford Village Stores
- i** **Milford-on-Sea** The Village News
- i** **Minstead** Community Shop
- i** **Sway** Deli and Coffee Shop
- i** **Woodgreen** Community Shop and Post Office

## Key to map

- i** Visitor information
- i** Local information
- A** Campsite
- W** Wildlife area
- W** Castle
- W** Toilets
- W** Accessible toilets
- W** Cafe
- W** Picnic area
- W** Play area
- W** Walking trails
- W** Cycle network
- W** Fishing (by permit)
- W** Fishing
- P** Car parking
- N** National Park

- N** New Forest Tour\* (see page 8)
- N** New Forest Tour\*
- N** New Forest Tour\*

\* The Tour runs hourly 7 days a week in peak season. See: [thenewforesttour.info](http://thenewforesttour.info) for dates and times.

Not to scale: This map is a representation of the New Forest National Park area and is not intended to be used as a sole means of navigation. Please consult relevant Ordnance Survey maps or visitor guides.



# Meet your New Forest Rangers

Both **Forestry England** and the **National Park Authority** employ rangers, who you'll often meet out and about in the New Forest. Here, you'll meet some of the team as they answer some of the most commonly asked questions by visitors to the New Forest.



## Can walking in the New Forest improve my mood?

Walking is simple, free and one of the easiest ways to get more active, lose weight and become healthier. Walking also does wonders for your mental health by reducing stress, reducing anxiety and releasing endorphins. If you join a walking group like Walking For Health or the Ramblers then you can socialise and meet some new friends along the way. Download our free New Forest Walking App and see what amazing walks await you.

**Adam Vasey, New Forest National Park Authority Access Ranger**



## Can we stroke and feed the New Forest Ponies?

The New Forest is famous for the ponies who roam freely here but many people don't understand that they are semi-wild and find all of the food they need on the Forest. Feeding them foods they do not eat naturally, even fresh vegetables or fruit (like apples and pumpkins) can make them really unwell and it also encourages them to come too close to people and roads. To keep them, and yourselves, safe please keep your distance and avoid feeding or petting them.

**Amy Howells, Forestry England Ranger**



## How can I help protect the coastline?

We've seen greater numbers of people from all walks of life being drawn to the coastline for a sense of space, freedom and an escape. However, many coastal habitats are fragile and easily damaged while wildlife can be frequently disturbed by us and our dogs. It's important to check where you can walk, swim, canoe, or launch a boat before you go. Please also take your litter home to dispose of responsibly.

**Gillie Molland, New Forest National Park Authority Lead Ranger**



## Is there a fire risk in the New Forest?

Fire is a major risk in the New Forest and is increasing each year, as we experience hotter and drier conditions, as a result of climate change. Wildfires can be devastating and quickly destroy huge amounts of forest and wildlife. A fire can so easily be started from a single spark, a careless action that could take many decades for nature to recover. We ask everyone visiting to help us reduce the risk of a wildfire by not using BBQs, campfires or fire of any kind on the Forest during their visit.

**Martin Rea, Forestry England Seasonal Ranger**

**Forestry England rangers**  
0300 067 4601/southern.enquiries@forestryengland.uk  
Forestry England, The Queen's House, Lyndhurst,  
Hampshire, SO43 7NH

**New Forest National Park Authority rangers**  
01590 646 600/rangers@newforestnpa.gov.uk  
New Forest National Park Authority, Lymington  
Town Hall, Avenue Road, Lymington SO41 9ZG



# The New Forest is one of the most important freshwater and coastal landscapes in the UK.

There are over a dozen individual rivers, streams and their tributaries flowing through the Forest on their way out to the Solent, Southampton Water and River Avon.

Across the Forest there are also several lakes, hundreds of ponds and a network of bogs that hold and store water. These boggy areas, or mires as they are known, are some of the last left in Europe. In fact, 75% of areas like this left in North West Europe are here in the New Forest.

The incredible plants and animals that live at the heart of the New Forest are all dependant on these different sources of fresh, clean water for food, shelter and as places to breed. These waterways also play a fundamental role in addressing climate change by storing carbon and preventing flooding for communities further downstream.

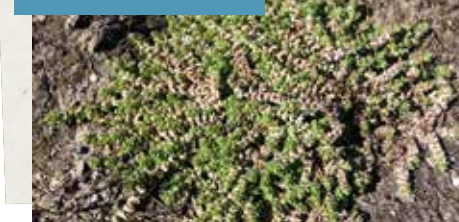
One of the most notable and well-known stretches of water in the New Forest is Hatchet

Pond. This small, shallow lake is the most wildlife rich of its kind remaining in lowland England, and home to almost 90% of the rarest wetland plants in the UK.

Unfortunately, this special place is now under threat from over-use and pollution. An action plan is in place to restore the pond and visitors are being asked to play their part in this.

To help protect streams and ponds in the New Forest please remember swimming and water sports are strictly prohibited and are much more suited to nearby beaches in the local area. We also ask that dogs are kept out of the water to avoid disturbing wildlife, stirring up damaging chemicals in the sediment, and carrying material into the water with may cause pollution.

## Coral necklace



Coral necklace is a rare flowering plant with long trailing red stems and clusters of white flowers resembling beads threaded along a necklace. It can only be found in a few areas of the UK including here in the New Forest.

## Pillwort



Pillwort is a small creeping fern with grass-like leaves. In decline across Western Europe and lost from nearly half of its known locations in the UK, it is widespread in the New Forest making it one of the most important populations in Europe.

## Great crested newt



Ponds in the New Forest are home to great crested newts, the UK's largest newt species with adults growing up to 17cms long. Known as warty newts or little dinosaurs due to their distinctive crest, they are a protected and priority species across Europe.

## Medicinal leech



The mighty medicinal leech is found in just five water bodies in the New Forest. The largest of all leeches it can grow up to 20cms long. It uses its three jaws and 100 teeth to feed on amphibians and the occasional snack on a New Forest pony!



# An important place for wildlife

You can still find creatures here long since lost from many other parts of the UK and Europe. This is just one of the reasons why the New Forest has the highest possible conservation status and protections available.

From rare birds on the brink of extinction travelling here from Africa to breed, to Britain's largest mammal the red deer, calling it home, and all of the UK's native reptiles - the New Forest is truly a haven for wildlife.

**Curlew**



## Ground nesting birds

The New Forest is a Special Protection Area for birds, and one of the last places in the UK where rare and endangered species including the nightjar, woodlark, Dartford warbler, and the curlew - now globally threatened with extinction, come to breed.

These birds rely on the open, damp heathland and boggy areas of the forest. Nesting not in trees but on the ground, they are extremely vulnerable.

Disturbing them can highlight the location of the nests and cause the parents to flee exposing their eggs and chicks to predators.

Their nesting season runs from March through to the end of summer. During this time please help us protect them by staying on the main tracks and ensuring dogs do the same, using a lead where necessary to avoid them disturbing nests on the open areas of the Forest.

**Adder**



## Reptiles

The Forest is home to all six UK native reptiles: sand lizards, adders, slow worms, grass snakes, smooth snakes, and common lizards.

Sand lizards have been declining across the UK and are now one of its rarest reptiles - only found in a handful of places across the country. The New Forest is a stronghold for this species and an important breeding ground.

**Goshawk**



## Goshawks

Known as the 'phantoms of the forest', goshawks are one of the most elusive birds of prey. Once on the brink of extinction nationally, they are a real conservation success in the New Forest. With support from Forestry England Wildlife Rangers their population has grown from just two in 2002 to around 40 pairs of these amazing birds living and breeding here today.

These large hawks nest in the canopy of some of the Forest's tallest trees and often return to the same nest several years in a row. Their wings are tailor made for skilfully and silently flying through the woodland. They can be identified by the white feathers with horizontal grey stripes on their fronts and darker grey feathers on their backs and wings.

**Sand lizard**



As the weather improves the UK's only venomous snake can sometimes be spotted basking in the sun to warm up. A protected species, the adder can be easily identified by the distinctive zig zag pattern along its back and can reach lengths of around 80cms.

## Dragonflies and damselflies

The New Forest is home to 75% of all the species of dragonflies and damselflies, including the extremely rare southern damselfly only found in the New Forest and three other areas of the UK. Other species to look out for include the emperor dragonfly and the golden-ringed damselfly. The network of freshwater ponds, streams and boggy areas across the New Forest are essential breeding grounds for these beautiful creatures.

**Damselfly**





## Deer

First introduced for Royal hunting parties in medieval times, today there are around 3,000 deer roaming freely across the Forest. The five species found here are fallow, sika, muntjac and the only two species native to Britain – roe and red.

As Britain's largest mammal the male red deer can reach a height of 140cms and weigh as much as 190kgs! Their numbers have declined over the centuries, but reintroductions have ensured the future of the herds.

The Forest is a great place to see deer in their natural environment, but it is important to remember that they are wild animals and should be treated with respect. This is particularly the case during rutting season in the autumn when stags are fighting for territory, and in the spring and summer when mothers are with their newly born young. Throughout the year please do not allow dogs to chase or get close to deer.

## Red stag



## Livestock

There are of course some other very famous animals here in the New Forest...the ponies, cattle, donkeys, pigs, and sheep who roam across the landscape. Every one of these animals is owned by a commoner, people who exercise rights from their land to graze animals on the open forest. They are not pets and their behaviour can be unpredictable so please give them space and do not feed or touch them.

## New Forest pigs



# What's on? 2021

If you're looking for ideas to help you make the most of your visit, then go online and check out these events pages:

[newforestnpa.gov.uk/events](https://newforestnpa.gov.uk/events)  
[forestryengland.uk/new-forest](https://forestryengland.uk/new-forest)  
[newforestheritage.org.uk/events/](https://newforestheritage.org.uk/events/)



# New Forest woodlands

New Forest woodlands have impressive displays of vibrant autumn colours. Enjoy a walk in the woods and see what different types of fungi you can spot.

This is a wonderful place to see fungi, the New Forest is a stronghold for many rare and endangered species, and even some still being discovered that are new to science. Fungi are essential to the New Forest's ecosystem and 'web of life' – which is why we ask you not to pick fungi from this special place.

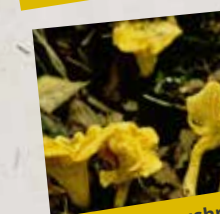
Besides being essential rotters and recyclers, they provide food for some animals and are vital to many insects, to enable them to complete their life cycles. Also, fungi are great to just admire and they are marvellously photogenic too.

## Fungi facts

1. Fungi cannot make their own food using energy from sunlight, but grow by absorbing food and water from their surroundings – most importantly from living and dead plants, and animals.
2. Many fungi live on the roots of trees and other plants. This is known as a mycorrhizal association (from the Greek 'myco', meaning fungus, and 'rhiza', root). The fungi help the plant take up more nutrients by increasing the effective surface area of the roots and in turn take sugars from the plant.
3. Woodland fungi such as types of amanita, boletus, lactarius and russula will only grow with certain trees (a helpful guide when identifying the fungi). It may surprise you to know that many trees grow less well without fungi supporting them.



Porcelain fungus



Chanterelle mushrooms



Stinkhorn fungus



Turkey tail fungus

Look but  
please  
don't pick



# More than trees

Trees help us to breathe, they're home to a wonderful variety of wildlife and they supply home-grown timber for the nation.

We love trees, they have a key role to play in addressing climate change, but of course planting them is only really a first step. All trees need to be looked after to ensure they can reach maturity.

Here in the New Forest, Forestry England's local teams tend to the young trees planted inside the inclosures, stopping them from becoming overgrown, ensuring they get the right amount of light, and guarding them against damage from deer, rabbits and other animals.

As our climate changes, the trees in our forests must be fit for the future and we are actively taking part in research to learn how to best help them to adapt. Our work doesn't stop there, ensuring healthy and resilient forests is about much, much more than just trees. It also means we must work hard to look after the wider nature and critical habitats they support.

Here in the New Forest, we have a unique landscape and mixture of habitats that are simply not found anywhere else on this scale. An incredible 75% of lowland heaths left in North Western Europe are here in this one small corner of the UK.

These open areas of the Forest often look bare and on first glance

it's hard to appreciate their value. In fact, our wet heathland stores carbon, reduces the impacts of floods, provides cleaner water and habitat for wildlife. If we don't protect these heathland areas as well, we will not only lose these remnant habitats from our landscapes, but also the nature they support.

Over many centuries some of these open habitats have become naturally colonised with trees. If we are to protect these precious open habitats and their unique wildlife, there will be times when trees that have encroached onto heathland need to be removed. In other areas we are encouraging greater number of trees and helping them become fit for a future climate. It's very much about the right tree in the right place.

Only in this way can we truly support a healthy forest that can thrive long into the future and help us all address the challenges of a changing climate.



## Visit the New Forest Heritage Centre

Sharing the history of the New Forest

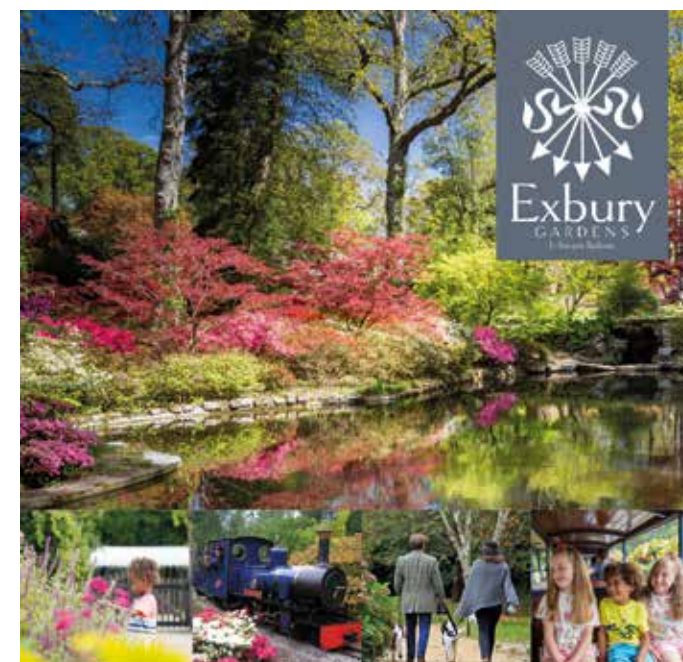


**Open daily • Dog friendly**  
**Free entry, donations welcome**

With our New Forest museum, family fun tree, special exhibition gallery and reference library - there's something for everyone!

**newforestheritage.org.uk**

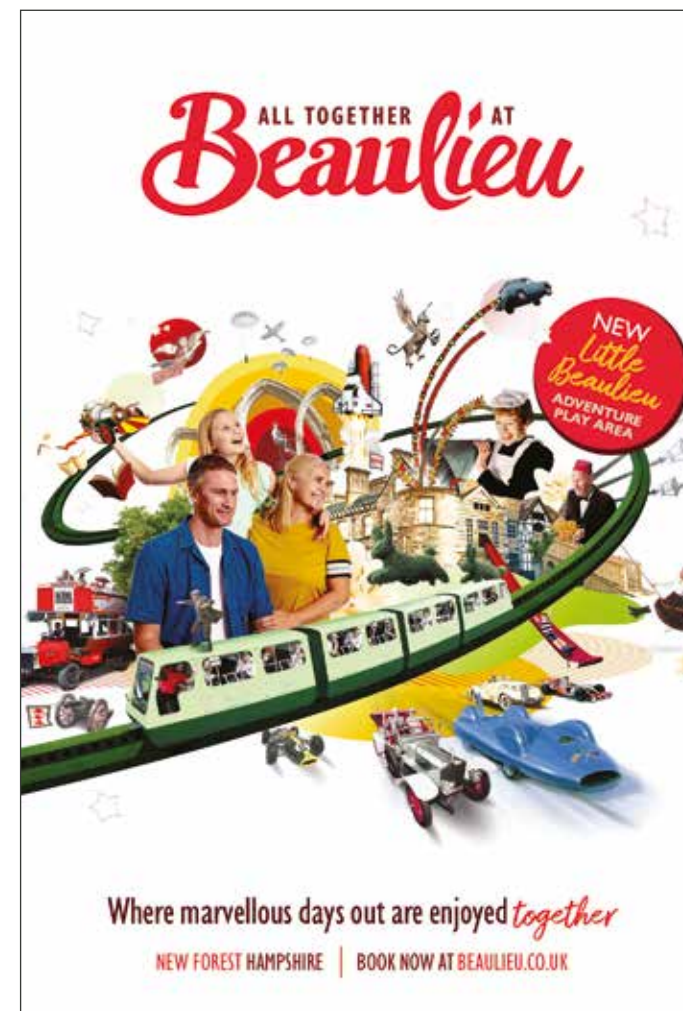
nfheritage newforestheritage newforestheritage



Exbury Gardens & Steam Railway is a spectacular 200-acre woodland garden and narrow-gauge steam railway located on the edge of the Beaulieu River.

World-famous for the Rothschild collection of rare trees and shrubs, Exbury is much more than a garden. Boasting an adventure play area, family wildlife trails and ponds teeming with fish. Plus art exhibitions, walking tours and a fantastic restaurant.

023 8089 1203 | www.exbury.co.uk | New Forest, SO45 1AZ





# Caring for the Forest



## Ponies, donkeys, cattle, pigs & sheep

For their safety and your own please leave the animals alone – although owned and cared for by local people called commoners, they are unpredictable and best treated as wild. Please don't feed or pet them; there is plenty of natural food and it's best that they don't come to rely on people's attention. They may look friendly but they can bite and kick, especially ponies with foals.



## Dogs

The New Forest is great for dogs but to minimise disturbance to wildlife, livestock and other people, please keep your dogs close by you and visible at all times – if necessary use a lead. Pick up after your dog, especially around car parks, on paths and where people play or picnic.



## Birds

To help ground-nesting birds rear their young safely, keep yourself, dogs and horses on the main tracks from the beginning of March to the end of July.



## Litter

Your food and litter could harm the ponies and donkeys. Please take your litter home if bins are full.



## Barbecues & fires

To reduce the risk of wildfires damaging the forest, no campfires, BBQs or stoves are allowed.



## Cycling

Cycling is allowed only on the waymarked tracks and other designated routes. When approaching people and animals, please call out a warning and pass slowly and wide. Try to leave gaps for overtaking vehicles and never ride more than two abreast. Keep to a safe speed, wear bright colours to be visible and always use lights in the dark.



## Fungi

Please leave fungi for other people to enjoy. Fungi are essential to the New Forest's internationally protected ecosystem. Foray leaders must apply for permission for educational excursions from Forestry England in advance. If you suspect or see commercial picking please call Forestry England on 0300 067 4600.



## Camping

Only use designated campsites with proper facilities. No overnight parking is allowed in the car parks and wild camping is not permitted in the New Forest. Litter left behind in the Forest, like glass bottles and plastic containers can cause real harm to local wildlife. And the human waste left by campers isn't good for the Forest either.



## Horse riding

Horse riders have open access to the New Forest, but to reduce damage to the ground please use tracks when it's wet.



## Ticks

Check your children, dog and yourself for ticks when you get back – they can lead to Lyme disease.



## Driving

The speed limits on unfenced roads greatly reduce the number of accidents involving animals. Slow down and give walkers, cyclists, horse-riders and animals a wide berth. Be especially careful at night.



## Parking

Please park only in designated car parks, not on a verge or in gateways. Lock your car, taking any valuables with you and leave Forestry England car parks by dusk.



## Unidentified objects

Areas of the New Forest were used to test bombs in World War I and II. Please keep away from objects that might be dangerous and notify the police immediately on 999.



## Working forest

Stay safe by obeying warning signs and keeping away from work sites and vehicles.