

UN 2010 International Year of Biodiversity

Delve underneath the beach towel to discover nature's diversity

Nationwide, July–September 2010

Wherever nature lovers are holidaying in the United Kingdom this summer, there are a host of opportunities to celebrate biological diversity, whatever the weather. Hundreds of events are being planned across the country by IYB-UK partners to help people get to know their local wildlife during the International Year of Biodiversity.

From seashore rambles to art activities, canoe safaris to beach barbeques and wildlife cruises to comedy shows, there is something memorable and enjoyable on offer during the summer for children, families and adults. Many of the events are totally free, too.

In the UK, more than 400 organisations ranging from museums to theatre companies have come together for IYB-UK to promote the rich tapestry of life. Partners hope that if people have the chance to get to know and appreciate wildlife at first hand, there will be greater incentive to help preserve it in the future and stem species loss across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The following is just a small selection of the range of activities on offer. Full searchable listings can be found at www.biodiversityislife.net, the official website for the International Year of Biodiversity in the UK.

July

Puffin Island wildlife cruises – Beaumaris, Wales

Until 22 August

Puffin Island is a protected seabird colony where visitors can see wild puffins and experience the sights and sounds of thousands of birds in their natural habitat. Hop aboard a wildlife cruise, see the grey seals on the far side of the island and maybe glimpse bottlenose dolphins and harbour porpoises. RSPB Cymru will be on board to point out wildlife, and discuss the history of the area and answer any questions.

Cruises leave at 10.15, 12.00, 13.45 and 15.30, and last 1.5 hours

Admission cost: £10 adults, £8 children, concessions and RSPB members

Contact: RSPB Wales Headquarters 029 2035 3008 www.rspb.org.uk/datewithnature/sites/puffinisland/index.asp

Fowey VMCA Rockpool Ramble – meet at Spit Beach, Par, Cornwall

17 July, 10.30–12.30

Join marine experts for a rock pool ramble and search for the micro beasties of the shallows such as starfish and crabs.

Admission cost: free to all Friends of Fowey Estuary members, otherwise £1.50

Contact: 01872 240777 ext 214 or 07917 765581 www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/whatson/events_calendar

Explore! Summer Club – Scottish Seabird Centre, North Berwick, East Lothian

20–23 July and 27–30 July, 10.00–16.00

Explore! the natural world with the Scottish Seabird Centre's 2010 Summer Club. Get out and about with the team for a week of fun-filled activities and games including rock pool rambles, castles in the sand competitions and the take flight challenges.



Admission cost: £25 per day

Contact: info@seabird.org www.seabird.org

Footpaths, Steps, Ragwort and Fencing – Western Heights, 76–78 St David's Avenue, Aycliffe, Dover, Kent

21 July, 10.30–16.00

Join the White Cliffs Countryside Partnership for a variety of activities at this lovely part of the reserve, including a flora and fauna search. There are spectacular views of the Heritage Coast from the top of the hill. Please bring a flask.

Admission cost: free

Contact: 01304 241806 www.whitecliffscountryside.org.uk

Living Seas Summer Trail – NWT Cley Marshes, Cley, Norfolk

24 July – 31 August, 10.00–16.00

Explore the Norfolk Wildlife Trusts' Cley marshes on this self-guided trail. Learn about the wonderful marine world just off shore and what strange creatures live in the sea next to Cley.

Admission cost: £1 per child

Contact: 01603 598333 gemmaw@norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk

Jewels of the Air – meet at the duck pond car park, Chapel Brae, Braemar, Scotland

28 July, 13.30–16.30

Help the Cairngorms National Park record butterflies, moths, dragonflies and damselflies on a five kilometre easy walk. Bring binoculars if you can.

Admission cost: free, but booking is essential

Contact: 01467 681470 www.cairngorms.co.uk

Bats, Broads and Biomanipulation at Barton Broad, Norfolk

30 July, 19.30–22.00

See and hear some of the protected creatures that are special to the Norfolk Broads. Come bat hunting with the Broads Authority and explore Barton Broad by twilight on the Ra solar boat. Light refreshments provided. Suitable for wheelchair users.

Admission cost: £9.50 adult, £7.50 child, £30 family, booking is essential

Contact: 01603 756097 / 01603 782281 hovetonTIC@broads-authority.gov.uk

www.broads-authority.gov.uk

Wildlife Watch Explorer Day – Ecos Nature Park, Kernohans Lane, Ballymena, Co Antrim, Northern Ireland BT44 7QA

31 July, 14.00–16.00

Join the Ulster Wildlife Trust to discover the wonders of wildlife on your doorstep with a fun-filled afternoon of activities. From bird watching and pond dipping to butterfly hunting, there will be plenty to keep the whole family entertained.

Admission cost: free, but booking is essential

Contact: 028 4483 0282 events@ulsterwildlifetrust.org www.ulsterwildlifetrust.org

August

Atlantic Adventure Ocean Wildlife Rides – meet at Albert Pier, Penzance Harbour, Penwith, Cornwall

1–16 August, 11.30–13.00

Join this exciting marine wildlife trip organised by the Cornwall Wildlife Trust on a RIB where expert guides will point out cetaceans, basking sharks, seals, sunfish and seabirds. Wildlife boat safaris take place daily from Land's End to the Lizard (subject to weather). Booking is essential

Contact: 01736 811200 www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/whatson/events_calendar

Flint Fossil Foray with the Green Gang – Bay Hill, St. Margaret's-at-Cliffe, Dover, Kent

3 August, 10.30–12.30

Join a wander about the beach in search of natural treasures and discover fossils of ancient sea animals. Hear about the geology of chalk and flint and the formation of the English Channel. Bring a bag to hold your treasures and wear shoes or boots with good grip. The Green Gang is designed for children and their families.

Admission cost: donation appreciated

Contact: 01304 241806 Melaniewrigley@whitecliffscountryside.org.uk www.whitecliffscountryside.org.uk

Shoreline Ramble – Culzean Castle and Country Park, Maybole, South Ayrshire

7 August, 14.00–15.30

Come on a ramble along the Culzean shoreline with the National Trust for Scotland and see what lives in the sand and caves by the sea. Walking through wet and dry habitats and uncover all kinds of wildlife thriving in the country park. Bring along wellies or your feet will get wet.

Admission cost: normal entry prices apply

Contact: 0844 4932149 www.nts.org.uk

Carole Jahme is BioDiverse! – Edinburgh Festival Fringe at the Zoo Southside, Cabaret Bar, 17 Nicolson Street, Edinburgh, EH8 9ER

6–30 August, 19.45

A one-hour unique black comedy. Jahme is a humanzee – a half-human-half-chimpanzee hybrid – unable to find a mate due to habitat loss. The audience will be encouraged to regress to their primordial origins, get in touch with the ape inside and go wild. With theatrical trickery, a gorilla and an Australopithecine will be brought to life as we ponder biogenetic advances that really could bring our ape-man ancestors back – what might the ethical implications of this be? This new show is directed by award winning performer and director John Nicholson of Peepolykus fame.

Admission cost: previews 6–7 August £6, 8–30 August £8

Contact: www.edfringe.com

High Tide Watch and BBQ – WWT Llanelli, Penclacwydd, Llwynhendy, Llanelli, Carmarthenshire SA14 9SH

10 August and 7 September, from 18.00

Discover the amazing sights and sounds as the advancing evening tide pushes the birds closer to the hides at WWT Llanelli. Families welcome.

Admission cost: advance booking and payment essential, £20 adult, £15 child

Contact: 01554 741087 wwt.org.uk/llanelli

Evening Deer Walk – Meet at Ashcombe Car Park, Simonbsath, West Somerset TA24 7SH

10 August, 19.00

Join an Exmoor National Park Ranger for an evening deer search to try and locate the red deer of Exmoor. Walking boots and suitable clothing are essential, and please bring binoculars. No dogs.

Admission cost: £3 each, children under 16 and students in full time education go free

Contact: 01398 323841 www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk

Rockpool Ramble – meet at Mawnan Church, Falmouth, Cornwall TR11 5HY

14 August, 14.00–16.00

Investigate the fascinating rock pools at Prisk Cove, south of Rosemullion Head, and discover the hidden world of crabs, fish, sea anemones and strange shellfish with marine expert Ruth Williams.

Admission cost: free

Contact: 0771 095 6734 www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/whatson/events_calendar

Canoe Safari – WWT Welney, Hundred Foot Bank, Welney, Near Wisbech, Cambridgeshire PE14 9TN

14–18 August, 6.00, 10.00 and 14.00

Explore the hidden reaches of the WWT Welney reserve by canoe. Led by a professional, experienced canoeist together with the Welney reserve manager, you will see the habitats and hideaways of some of the area's more elusive wildlife on their level.

Admission cost: £25 each

Contact: 0845 409 1303 wwt.org.uk/welney

Wild About Art: Deep Sea Aliens – Scottish Seabird Centre, The Harbour, North Berwick, East Lothian, EH39 4SS

15 August, 14.00–16.00

Create some weird and wonderful deep sea aliens inspired by the crazy creatures that swim in the ocean depths. Make your creatures from household scrap materials with Alchemy Arts.

Admission cost: normal entry prices apply

Contact: 01620 890202 info@seabird.org www.seabird.org

Green Learning Day: Botany and Butterflies – Western Heights, 76–78 St David's Avenue, Aycliffe, Dover, Kent

24 August, 10.30–16.30

Explore the slopes of the nature reserve at Aycliffe with great views of the Heritage Coast. Search for plants, butterflies (some of the rarer species should be flying around this time) and other insects, birds and maybe add to the species lists. There is also footpath and step clearing work to be done as an alternative.

Admission cost: donations appreciated

Contact: 01304 241806 Melaniewrigley@whitecliffscountryside.org.uk www.whitecliffscountryside.org.uk

Batty Night Out – Bog Meadows Nature Reserve, Milltown Row, Belfast, Co Antrim, T12 6EU

25 and 27 August, 20.00–22.00

Join the Ulster Wildlife Trust's bat expert, Robin Moffitt, for a talk and walk to find out more about these fascinating creatures ahead of European Bat Weekend. See and hear bats in their natural environment using special detectors, and learn how all those bat myths are just batty.

Admission cost: free, but booking is essential

Contact: 028 4483 0282 events@ulsterwildlifetrust.org www.ulsterwildlifetrust.org

Family Wildlife Walk – Burnham Beeches, Buckinghamshire

25 August

An event for families with young children, including nature games and a mini beast hunt.

Admission cost: free, but donations are welcome

Contact: 01753 647358 www.cityoflondon.gov.uk

HeARTwood Festival – Heartwood Forest, Sandridge, Hertfordshire AL3 6JB

28 August, 11.00–16.00

Spend a day in the Woodland Trust's Heartwood Forest with your family and take part in a host of activities, including a teddy bear's picnic, willow weaving, sculpture making, woodland arts and crafts, orienteering and much more.

Admission cost: free

Contact: www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/heartwood

September

Autumnal Migration in North Kent – Elmley RSPB Reserve and Oare Marshes, Faversham, Kent

10 September, 10.30–16.30

The autumn migration season is an unmissable opportunity to come and learn about the UK's waders and migrant birds. Oare Marshes and the Elmley RSPB reserve sites are a perfect setting to discover more about these spectacular birds. Led by warden Tony Swandale and ornithologist Rob Clements.

Admission cost: £25, see website for concessions

Contact: 01622 662012 info@kentwildlife.org.uk www.kentwildlifetrust.org.uk

Seashore Safari – St Abb's Head National Nature Reserve, Eyemouth, Scottish Borders

11 September, 11.30–13.00

Come and discover the weird and wonderful watery wildlife to be found in the rock pools of Scotland's only Marine Nature Reserve. This event is run by the National Trust for Scotland and is great fun for all ages. Wear footwear with good grip that you don't mind getting wet.

Admission cost: adult £2.50, child £1.50

Contact: www.nts.org.uk 01890 771 443

Blue Ribbon Village at the Mayor's Thames Festival – Potters Field Park and the Riverside Walkway between City Hall and Tower Bridge, London SE1 2AA

11–12 September, 10.00–22.00

Blue Ribbon Village is the interactive river and environment zone at the Mayor's Thames Festival. The village will feature information stalls and activities provided by a wide range of organisations promoting biodiversity within urban, rural and marine environments. From bee keeping to pond-dipping and wildflower cooking to amphibian and reptile conservation, there is lots to learn and try your hand at. An eclectic programme on the Blue Ribbon Bandstand, featuring brass bands, folk musicians and choirs, will provide a musical backdrop to this family friendly event.

Admission cost: free

Contact: www.thamesfestival.org

The Secret Life of Seals – meet at Driftwood Spa, Trevaunance Cove, St Agnes TR5 0RT

14 September, 20.00–21.30

Join the Cornwall Wildlife Trust for an illustrated talk by seal expert Sue Sayer from the Cornwall Seal Group, who will tell us all about these beautiful creatures that share our coastline in Cornwall.

Admission cost: free

Contact: 01872 240777 abby.crosby@cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk www.cornwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/whatson/events_calendar

Galapagos Day – Royal Geographical Society, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7

15 September, 18.00

Galapagos Day is the annual public event organised by the Galapagos Conservation Trust, the UK's only charity dedicated to raising funds and awareness for these islands. The guest panel of speakers includes travel writer and conservationist, Stanley Johnson (father of the London mayor), His Excellency, the Ambassador of Ecuador, Mrs Ana Albán Mora (great great granddaughter of Charles Darwin), Dr Sarah Darwin and Executive Director of the Charles Darwin Foundation, Dr J Gabriel Lopez. The panel will talk about their different experiences of one of the world's most iconic natural wonders and their thoughts on the future for the islands. Following this, Stanley Johnson will open the discussion out to the audience.

Admission cost: £30

Contact: 020 7629 5049 www.savegalapagos.org

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Notes to editors

UN 2010 International Year of Biodiversity

The United National General Assembly has declared 2010 as the International Year of Biodiversity. The celebrations and events across the world will act to highlight the loss of biodiversity, which, as a result of human activities, is estimated to be as high as 1,000 times the natural rate, and is expected to rise further as a result of the impacts of climate change. In October 2010, world governments will set new targets and steps needed to address biodiversity loss for the decade ahead, and it has been acknowledged by governments and the Convention for Biological Diversity that the original targets set after the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 have not been met.

For more information or pictures, please call Marie Clements on 020 7942 6655, or email m.clements@nhm.ac.uk

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