

COTTAGE GARDEN SOCIETY COTSWOLD GROUP MAY 2026 NEWSLETTER



SMALL GROUP GARDEN VISITS

Our first visit of the season was to Cotswold Farm in Duntisbourne Abbots, an Arts and Crafts garden designed by Norman Jewson in the 1930s. (He had already extended the house for the great-grandparents of the current owners.)



The various terraces have stunning, far-reaching views over peaceful rolling countryside. 12 different garden areas showcase a range of perennials, shrubs and trees, something for every season.

If you missed this visit, the garden is open again for the NGS on Saturday 30th and Sunday 31st May and Saturday 5th and Sunday 6th September.

We have other visits planned, including Moor Wood in Woodmancote, a garden specialising in rambler roses, but are awaiting confirmation of these, so will issue details by separate email shortly.

Meanwhile, Natalie and Robert are off to Somerset on 2nd May to visit East Lambrook, the garden which used to belong to Margery Fish, to further their research into this pioneering gardener and plantswoman. We aim to create a display focusing on Margery and her plants for next year's Malvern Spring Show. Watch this space to find out how you can get involved!

After last year's strenuous – but very successful - efforts, we are taking a rest from exhibiting at Malvern this year, but will be providing a simple information stand about the Cottage Garden Society instead.

If you would like to help at either show, just contact Rob at robert@lestones.plus.com

DID YOU KNOW?

- **Sunday 3rd May is International Dawn Chorus Day.** Blackbirds, robins and thrushes will be some of the first to sing. www.wildlifetrusts.org/dawn-chorus-day
- **The Western Forest is the first national forest announced in over 30 years.** It covers 3,000 square miles and will link important tree and woodland habitats across Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and the West of England. The aim is to plant 2,500 hectares of trees and woodlands by 2030. Email info@westernforest.org.uk or visit www.westernforest.org.uk
- **The Bumblebee Conservation Trust has lots of useful information on its website about how you can help bees:** <https://www.bumblebeeconservation.org/>

LOCAL NGS GARDENS OPEN THIS MONTH

Things really get cracking on the National Garden Scheme front in Gloucestershire in May, with gardens all listed online (www.ngs.org.uk) and in our county booklets. If you have any difficulty finding the booklet, please contact the Gloucestershire county organiser, Vanessa Berridge (vanessa.berridge@ngs.org.uk).

The curtain-raiser for May will be the hilltop village extravaganza at **Eastcombe & Bussage**, near Stroud, GL6 7EB. Over 15 gardens will be opening on Sunday 3rd and Bank Holiday Monday 4th May (1-5.30pm) for the combined admission charge

of £10 (child free). Prepare to be inspired by an astonishing range of gardens, both large and small, many with spectacular views over the Toadsmoor Valley.

There are ideas for the smallest garden, as this Japanese-style garden at Hidcote Close shows:



Ahead of the main Stanton village opening on 14th June, two spring gardens will open their doors on 3rd May (combined admission, £10; child, free; 1-6pm).

The Old Bakehouse, High Street, Stanton, WR12 7NE, is a two-acre country garden with lawns, shrubs and seasonal flowers, and a vegetable garden and orchard. Nearby, the garden at **Warren Farmhouse** was originally a strip farm and is now divided into zones, with courtyard, lawns, vegetable garden and spring woodland.

Opening for the first time this year on 16th and 17th May for the National Garden Scheme is **Besom Cottage**, Lower Common, Aylburton, Lydney, GL15 6DU (Adult, £5; child, free; 1-5pm).

This is a landscape architect's garden, created from a former pub car park – à la Beth Chatto – and decorated with garden art. It's tiered and planted with ornamental and native planting around a circular lawn, stumpery and woodland fern garden.



It will probably be your last chance to see the wonderful and varied garden at **Charingworth Court**, Broadway Road, Winchcombe, GL54 5JN, as owners Susan and Richard Wakeford are selling up after many years of opening for the National Garden Scheme. Delights include beautiful and unusual trees in their spring finery, a Japanese-style pond right by the Georgian façade of the house and an extensive vegetable garden. Open on 16th and 17th May (Adult, £6; child, free; 11am-5.30pm)

NATURE IN ART

Nature in Art hosts many exhibitions and provides art and craft courses throughout the year, some with a botanic focus.

www.natureinart.org.uk/artcourses

For full details of the programme and to book go to www.natureinart.org.uk
A38 Twigworth Gloucester GL2 9PA **2 miles north of Gloucester on A38.SatNav**
Postcode: GL2 9PG. Tel. 01452 731422

From Tuesday 12th May until Sunday 21st Exhibition: June 2026, 'Crucifixion' from internationally acclaimed artist, Darrell Wenner, is a powerful - and at times uncomfortable - collection of natural history paintings that both mourn and celebrate the lives of the UK's native birds.

Inspired by his experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic, where the artist was haunted by the deaths of birds caused by human actions or environments, he set out on a mission to record these beautiful deceased birds in watercolour, from the common blackbird to the secretive water rail, to raise awareness of the loss of avian life across the country due to everything from green belt development to apathy.



THE MUSEUM IN THE PARK, STROUD

The 88th Annual Exhibition of the Society of Wood Engravers is here from 5th May to the 21st June, showcasing the best contemporary work from international artists and displaying original prints.

Exhibition Opening Drinks, Sunday 10th May 2pm – 4pm. Enjoy drinks in the Gallery to celebrate this new exhibition of intricate and varied selection of prints by local, national and international wood engravers. All welcome. Prints for sale.

Outside the Museum building in its Walled Garden, volunteers have been exceptionally busy getting the garden ready for Spring and it is a feast of colours! If you haven't had chance to visit, there are some wonderful photographs in their latest blog along with pictures and news from the resident bee hives.

GARDEN DAY TRIPS

If you don't have transport or don't want to drive, don't overlook local coach firms such as Marchants of Cheltenham Tel. 01242 257 714 <https://www.marchants-coaches.com/>

Marchants 2026 Garden-Related Days Out include:

- RHS Malvern Spring Festival (10th May 2026)
- RHS Chelsea Flower Show(23rd May 2026)
- Birmingham Botanical Gardens (2nd June 2026)
- Stoke On Trent & Trentham Gardens & Shopping Village (18th June 2026)
- Blenheim Palace - Flower Show (20th June 2026)
- RHS Badminton Flower Show (11th July 2026)
- Sandringham House & Gardens (31st August 2026)
- Kew Gardens & Palace (12th September 2026)
- Malvern Autumn Show (26th September 2026)

COMING SOON

On Midsummer Day, Sunday the 21st June, 'Win Green Town' will be running the **Nature Garden Trail** again across Winchcombe.

At 5pm at the end of the Trail Day, there will be an event at Isbourne Arts: **The Ambassador's Garden by Stephen Crisp**. Local gardener Vanessa Berridge will be interviewing Stephen about his time as head of horticulture for the American ambassador in London. Stephen worked at Winfield House, the ambassador's residence in Regent's Park and helped design the new embassy garden at Vauxhall. He will also be talking about greening issues and adapting to climate change



**Winchcombe
Midsummer
Garden Trail**

Sunday 21 June 11am-4pm



**Garden Trail
Treasure Hunt**

**Izzy Hub
food & craft
stalls**

**Guest Speaker
& Social**
ticketed event

**Trail Maps at Isbourne Arts
£5 - kids & teens FREE**

WOODCHESTER PARK IS A FASCINATING AREA.

The valley is essentially a National Trust property, open daily with its own car park. Tinkley Lane, near Nailsworth, GL10 3UH.

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/gloucestershire-cotswolds/woodchester-park>

The unfinished Woodchester Mansion, owned by the Woodchester Mansion Trust, Nympsfield GL10 3TS is an amazing place. It opens regularly every Friday, Saturday and Sunday and on Bank Holidays until Sunday 1st November. Car parking is 3/4 mile from the house. There is a short inclined footpath, or alternatively a flight of rustic steps (neither made-up) from the car park to the minibus stop. The track down to the Mansion is a lovely walk, but is not made-up. Email info@woodchestermansion.org.uk What3Words nuns.skill.respected

The garden of Woodchester Park House will also be open this year on behalf of the National Garden Scheme on **Sunday 5th July from 12 noon to 5 pm**. It is a large garden with mixed planting. Teas are being provided by the local primary

school. Dogs on leads are welcome. The address is Woodchester Park House, Nympsfield, GL10 3UN.



Nan's pink bluebells

NB Photos in our newsletters are either from members or from the NGS. We would love more of your photos to use in the newsletter or in our show displays or information leaflets. Email them to Sue!

TO SEND ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER, IDEAS FOR VISITS OR SPEAKERS - OR WITH ANY QUERIES, call 01242 602384 or email:

Robert: robert@lestones.plus.com

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Or text 07796 106579 to join our **WhatsApp** group