












# Your **EXMOOR** 2025



# YARN MARKET HOTEL DUNSTER

## Special Breaks programme 2025/26:

<p><b>Exmoor Churches and Villages break -</b> Monday 24th to Friday 28th February 2025—4 nights</p> 	<p><b>SOUTH WEST COAST PATH WALKING BREAK EXMOOR SECTION</b> MINEHEAD TO COMBE MARTIN Sunday 6th April to Friday 11th April 2025</p> 	<p><b>Dark Skies of Exmoor Stargazing Break</b> October 2025 (dates to be confirmed)</p> 	<p><b>Enticing Exmoor Guided Walking Holiday with WILKES WALKS</b> 7 nights Saturday 16th July to Saturday 2nd August 2025</p> 
<p><b>Yarn Market Hotel Choral Weekend Francis Poulenc - GLORIA</b> 25th - 27th April 2025 Led by Tom Newall Accompanist Rachel Fright</p> 	<p><b>Choral Singing weekend</b> Friday 31st October to Sunday 2nd November 2025</p>  <p>"All Creatures Great and Small" music inspired by animals Join Robyn Sevastos for a weekend of Choral singing</p>	<p><b>Choral Singing weekend</b> Friday 20th to Sunday 22nd February 2026</p>  <p>Join Robyn Sevastos for a weekend of Choral singing</p>	<p><b>SUMMER JAZZ WEEKEND</b> Friday 4th to Monday 7th July 2025</p> <p>3 nights stay with entertainment by <b>THE VINTAGE JAZZ TRIO</b> <b>JOHN SHILLITO'S RIVIERA RAMBLERS</b> <b>DEBS, MECS &amp; THE GANG</b></p>
<p><b>Christmas 2025 4 night break</b> from Tuesday 23rd December 2025</p> 	<p><b>Twixtmas</b> West Country Attractions Family Break 27th to 30th December 2025</p> 	<p><b>STOMP OUT THE OLD - SWING IN THE NEW!</b> <b>ANOTHER GREAT NEW YEAR JAZZ HOUSE PARTY WITH THE RIVIERA RAMBLERS</b></p> 	<p><b>Special Winter Breaks</b> Available 1st November 2025 to 28th February 2026 3 nights from £180 per person (Strictly limited availability - direct bookings only) (Not available during special breaks)</p> 

For all accommodation and special break enquiries, please contact:

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website: [www.yarnmarkethotel.co.uk](http://www.yarnmarkethotel.co.uk)



Welcome Welkom Bienvenido Bienvenue Willkommen

## Welcome to Your Exmoor 2025.



Sarah Bryan  
Chief Executive Officer  
Exmoor National Park Authority

Exmoor National Park is one of our 15 UK National Parks - places conserved for their natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage and where everyone is welcome to enjoy the beautiful landscape.

This year we launch our 2025 - 2030 Partnership Plan (see below) with a strong emphasis on nature recovery, climate resilience and access to the National Park for everyone. We can't achieve our ambitions alone, and we work closely with landowners, farmers, conservationists, businesses and everyone who has a role in securing a better future for Exmoor. There's lots more about our work in the following pages.

We are working on a host of ambitious projects you can read about, including initiatives with conservation groups to reintroduce species that once lived here, such as the Sea Eagle and the Pine Marten. We'll be sharing the highlights of our Moorland Bird survey, completed in 2024 and how we've been supporting 'Farming in Protected Landscapes' projects. Look out for our new **Exmoor Nature Festival** in the spring, the ever-popular **Dark Skies Festival** in Autumn and a host of opportunities all year round to get closer to nature, more involved with habitat improvement or just boost health and wellbeing. You'll find lots of ideas in 'Your Exmoor' for things to do, to get the best out of our beautiful moorlands, woodland and coast. Enjoy!

### Exmoor 'Partnership Plan' 2025-2030

One of our key roles as a National Park Authority is working with our many partners to develop a Partnership Plan for Exmoor every five years. The Partnership Plan explains how we will deliver our statutory National Park purposes, to conserve and enhance Exmoor's natural beauty, wildlife, and cultural heritage, and to promote understanding and enjoyment of these. From caring for our landscape and heritage, to challenges and opportunities in the local community, it sets out our vision and objectives. By collaborating with people and organisations who work across Exmoor, this is what we, as a partnership, will be focusing on over the next five years and beyond. You can find more on our Partnership Plan at [exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](http://exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)

**Cover image:** Looking inland from Porlock Hill towards Dunkery Hill by Dan James, Exmoor National Park Authority. Small photos by Jon Rowley, Shaun Davey and Jim Johnston photography.

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Find us on social media at 'ExmoorNP'



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# Walk this way: Exmoor's top walks

Dunkery Beacon  
(Exmoor Strolls walk no.4)



## Short walks, long walks and in-between walks.

Our dedicated webpages at [www.exmoorwalks.org](http://www.exmoorwalks.org) host details of 35 of Exmoor's top walks, aimed at helping as many people as possible to discover what makes Exmoor special.



Route guides can be bought online or through our National Park Centres and you can also find links to digital mapping, video guides and further information online.



15 short routes from 12 locations, these are our most accessible walks ranging from a third of one mile to 2½ miles. They're a great opportunity for people with a range of abilities and of all ages to experience the moors, valleys, and coast of Exmoor. They are graded using the **Miles Without Stiles** classification (see right) and many of them are suitable for buggies, pushchairs and mobility scooters.



A collection of 10 of our favourite shorter walks, ranging from 1½ to 5 miles. These easy-to-follow routes provide a sense of discovery and exploration for all ages. You'll walk through ancient woodland, alongside tumbling rivers and across open heather moors. Many of these routes have refreshments at the start/finish and good services, making them ideal for a half day family adventure.



Discover the heritage, wildlife, and communities of Exmoor through 12 of our favourite longer Exmoor walks from 4 to 12½ miles. Traverse our rugged coastline, cross wild, windswept moors and travel through valleys and combs, immersing yourself in all the elements of Exmoor.



Woody Bay and Hunters Inn  
(Exmoor Classics walk no.12)

## Miles without Stiles



**Access For All**  
Suitable for everyone, including pushchairs and people operating their own wheelchairs.



**Access For Many**  
Suitable for assisted wheelchair users and families with more robust, all-terrain type buggies.



**Access For Some**  
Strong and confident wheelchair users and helpers may find these routes within their abilities. May be suitable for off-road mobility scooters.

## Long Distance Trails

multi-day adventures

Some of the UK's finest long distance routes pass through Exmoor National Park. These well planned and waymarked trails are perfect for exploring in sections or as part of a longer walking trip and include:

The **Southwest Coast Path** (forming part of the King Charles III England Coast Path),

The **Coleridge Way** (walking in the footsteps of the Romantic Poets) and

The **Two Moors Way** (linking Exmoor with Dartmoor National Park, with the option of creating a Coast to Coast walk).

## The Exmoor Dark Sky Discovery Trail



### A nighttime experience

For something a little different follow our luminous way markers as you follow the Dark Sky Discovery Trail to the heart of Exmoor's Dark Sky Reserve. It's a 1-mile route each way with panoramic views of Exmoor's star filled skies (on a clear night!) amidst the evocative ruins of the former farm at Larkbarrow.

# Discover more of Exmoor...

### Plan Ahead

Route guides are available on a hardy water and tear resistant paper for the Strolls, Explorers and Classics from our online shop [www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/shop](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/shop) and at our National Park Centres (see below for details).

We also supply a range of other walking books and guides to help you discover more of Exmoor.

Discover more at [www.exmoorwalks.org](http://www.exmoorwalks.org).



Doone Valley  
(Exmoor Explorer walk no.1)



## National Park Centres Helping you find your Exmoor

Our award-winning National Park Centres provide expert advice and lots of inspiration and ideas to make the most of your time exploring the National Park, including local walks and things to do.



### Entry is free and they are accessible and dog-friendly. Find us at:

**Dulverton**  
Exmoor House, TA22 9HL.  
01398 323841  
[NPCDulverton@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](mailto:NPCDulverton@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)

**Dunster**  
Dunster Steep, TA24 6SE.  
01643 821835  
[NPCDunster@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](mailto:NPCDunster@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)

**Lynmouth**  
The Esplanade, EX35 6EQ.  
01598 752509  
[NPCLynmouth@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](mailto:NPCLynmouth@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)



New Location

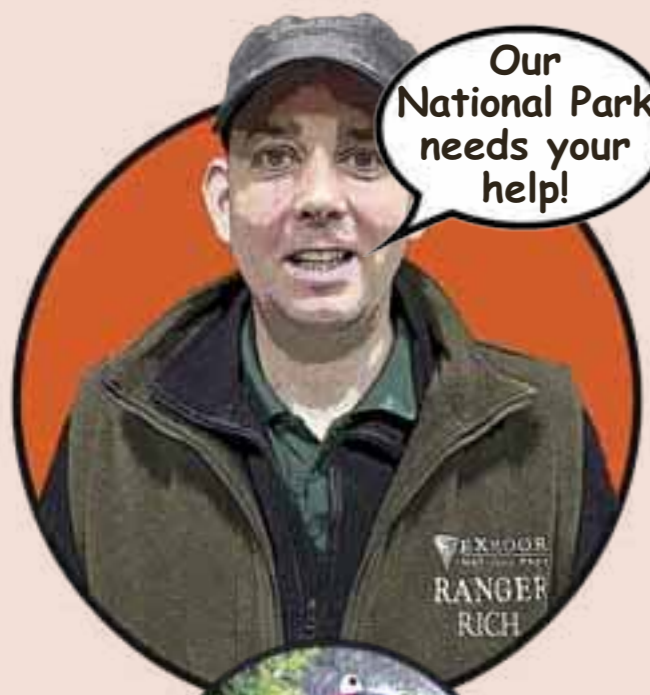


- Free publications and 'what's on' info
- Maps, books, local produce, outdoor kit and souvenirs for sale
- Zoom in on Exmoor with our state of the art digital microscopes
- Discover Exmoor's wildlife, heritage, landscape and dark skies through inspiring displays and interactive exhibits
- Exmoor films
- Telescope hire
- Exhibitions

Summer opening: all Centres open daily 10am to 5pm from 29 March to 2 November 2025.

Winter opening: see website. [www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/centres](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/centres)

Whether you want to plan ahead for your next Exmoor adventure or simply bring a little of Exmoor to your home you can also shop online: [www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/shop](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/shop)



# Be an Exmoor Park Protector

We love welcoming people to Exmoor, and we want to make sure you have a great time discovering this special place and doing your bit to look after it. An act of kindness can go a long way to help protect our Park and our own wellbeing.

Complete **6 or more** of these tasks, tick them off as you do them,  then head to one of our National Park Centres (see page 5) for a free certificate and sticker. Completion medals (below) can also be purchased for just £2. (subject to availability).

- Eye spy**  Increase your nature knowledge by downloading the iNaturalist App on your phone or using one of our free pocket guides to identify a new creature, tree, flower or plant that you don't know the name of. Find out how to join the Look Wild team at [www.nationalparks.uk/look-wild](http://www.nationalparks.uk/look-wild)
- Go bird watching**  Look up and see if you can identify a bird of prey - large predatory birds with sharp talons (nails) and hooked bills (beaks), such as: Hawks, Eagles, Falcons and Owls
- Explore in the rain**  Don't let the rain spoil your fun, zip up your coat or grab an umbrella and head out anyway. You can always find shelter in one of our three National Park Centres, with plenty to do and explore.
- Take a hike**  Go out on an adventure, long or short, up, down or flat, challenge yourself to take a hike somewhere new. You might even try and follow your hike on a map.
- Share your experience**  Find a way to share your experience on Exmoor with others. It could be on social media, using the hashtag #Exmoorparkprotector, a school project, or just over a smoothie with friends. We want more people to know how easy it is to be an Exmoor Park Protector.
- Get your feet wet**  Paddle in a stream or rockpool and see what kind of creatures live under the rocks. Don't forget to be gentle when moving anything, it might be someone's home! Be water safe and check the tides. Look out for our Rockpooling with a Ranger events, they are free of charge and all the kit you need is provided.
- Make a nature diary**  Create your own way to record what you see, hear, smell, touch and even eat while you are in the National Park.
- Nature Photography**  Document your time on Exmoor through a camera lens. Get up close and personal with some wild flowers, capture a soaring buzzard or a family photo at an iconic view. Keep your memories forever.
- Turn your lights off**  Exmoor is Europe's first International Dark Sky Reserve for a reason. Turn your lights off to see just how many stars are above us, you might even see the milky way. What else can you see or hear outside at night
- The colours of the rainbow**  Take time to look around you. Spend just 10 minutes and you will start to notice all the colours of Exmoor, from the big blue skies to the tiny purple wild flowers. Can you find all the colours of the rainbow?
- Natural art**  Get creative with what you can find, it might be shells and different colour rocks on the beach or sticks and fallen leaves in the forest. Create your own artwork, from sculptures, to treasure maps to self-portraits.
- Get to know a tree**  Exmoor is full of trees and our forests are growing. Common trees, rare trees, tall trees (England's tallest is at Nutcombe Bottom!) and short trees. Find your favourite - identify it, hug it, and do a bark or leaf rubbing

# Top tips to enjoy the countryside

The Exmoor countryside is a working environment that is home to a fantastic variety of wildlife. Please follow the Countryside Code and use these top tips to enjoy the countryside

On Exmoor, there are over 1000km of public paths that allow visitors to experience the immense variety of the National Park's natural beauty from woodlands and tumbling rivers, to open heather-covered moorland and coastal cliffs. These public paths are signposted by the National Park Authority using a system of colour coded way markers.

**Paths**

Status of Path:	Public Footpath	Public Bridleway	Restricted Byway
Who can use them:	Walkers only	Walkers Horse riders Cyclists	Walkers Horse riders Cyclists Carriage Drivers
Waymark colour:	Yellow	Blue	Red

All our wooden signposts are made using timber from sustainably managed woodland in Exmoor National Park

- Be safe, plan ahead and follow any signs.
- Leave gates and property as you find them.
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home. Did you know even a banana skin takes 2 years to biodegrade?
- Drive carefully and slow down to protect Exmoor ponies and livestock, they often may wander on to moorland roads.
- Don't approach or feed the ponies



## The Countryside Code:

The Exmoor countryside is a working environment that is home to a fantastic variety of wildlife. Please follow the Countryside Code:

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- Leave gates and property as you find them.
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
- Drive with caution to protect Exmoor ponies and livestock
- Don't approach or feed the ponies



### Access Land



On land mapped as 'access land', the public has a right of access on foot. Permitted activities include walking, picnicking and any other open air recreation on foot. Landowner permission must be sought before camping or parking up a campervan or caravan overnight.

### Be Tick aware

Like many places in the UK, Exmoor has ticks. As well as being an unpleasant nuisance, they can spread potentially serious illnesses such as **Lyme disease**. Remember that you could be exposed to ticks whenever you spend time outdoors.

- Ticks can bite any warm-blooded animal including humans!
- You can prevent tick bites by walking on clearly defined paths, using insect repellent and performing regular tick checks
- Some tick bites can result in infection, so it is important to remove ticks safely and as quickly as possible
- The safest way to remove a tick is by using a pair of fine-tipped tweezers or a tick removal tool
- Contact your GP or dial NHS 111 promptly if you begin to feel unwell with flu-like symptoms or develop a spreading circular red rash. Remember to tell them you were bitten by a tick or have recently spent time outdoors

For more information, search on your web browser for **NHS ticks**.

### Dogs in the Countryside

Exmoor National Park is a great place to take your dog for a walk. Pop into any of our National Park Centres, where dogs are always welcome and we can give you advice on where to walk and the dog friendly places to eat and drink.

Please follow this advice for a safe and enjoyable visit to Exmoor.

- Keep your dog under close control so that it doesn't scare livestock, wildlife or other people. Not everyone likes dogs!
- Clean up all dog poo and dispose of it responsibly
- Dogs must be on a short lead between 1st March-31st July to protect lambs and young ground nesting birds.
- Regularly worm your dog and be aware of ticks, adder bites and heat stroke.



As per the manufacture's advice, please do not let your dog swim in rivers, or other water bodies, if you have recently used a skin applied flea or tick treatment. They have the potential to pollute water courses and kill sensitive insects and invertebrates.

When people think of the Exmoor landscape they often associate it with walking or horse riding, but all the things that make Exmoor such a special place to hike - the towering coastal cliffs, steep wooded valleys that straddle great rushing rivers, the rocky trails over open moorland - are the same features that make it a haven for surfers, kayakers, climbers and trail runners.

Exmoor National Park Ranger **Charlotte Wray** has been chatting to people enjoying all manner of adventures in the sometimes formidable landscape in which they work and call home.

**Dr Dan Osmond is a senior fisheries scientist for the West Country Rivers Trust and works on Exmoor helping to improve populations of Atlantic Salmon and Brown Trout with local landowners.**



I first read about Dan's successful attempt of the Exmoor Coast Traverse (ECT) in the UK Hillwalking magazine in 2024 and went down a bit of a rabbit hole researching more. As an aside, I am indebted to South West climber Martin

Crocker for his most excellent website which provides the great history of the ECT, along with some truly astounding photos. This infamous climb extends from Foreland Point to Combe Martin, 22.5 km along sandstone cliffs, and has been an elusive route for many, especially those trying to keep their feet dry! Clement Archer and Cecil Agar in the 1960s made gains, then Cyril Manning, Kester Webb and Terry Check improved upon the route, with Terry completing the first successful traverse in 1978 with three police cadets from Taunton. Flanked by the Bristol Channel, with the second highest tidal range in the world and the highest sea cliffs in mainland Britain, climbers are required to be amateur geologists, meteorologists, skilled climbers, self-rescuers and cold water swimmers (if things go wrong) on this multi-day expedition.

Dan has been abseiling steep-sided inlets, or 'zawns', and exploring cliffs since his days at university in Cornwall. His friend Jim first discovered the Exmoor Coast Traverse (ECT) in a 2009 TV show and was inspired to explore this mysterious world for himself. After a failed attempt in April 2022, September 2023 saw a team of five (Jim Blackford, Steve Gibbs, Dan Osmond, George Allen and Arthur Andrews) complete the ECT in 2 days.



The first Easter attempt wasn't easy, as Dan told me:

*"We hadn't done the middle section before and found it all a bit sketchy, so backed off that time. We reassessed the safety of the situation, all a little traumatised. Due to the nature of the climbing—in the low belt of rock that's regularly washed clean of loose material by the sea—you need the lows of the large 15m spring tides. Easter and September are the best times, the sea is much warmer in September. To use the window of climbing time during low tides means taking risks and being fast, if things don't feel right you need to stop. There are a few exits along the way – muddy guts and walk outs like Heddon's Mouth and Woody Bay. The only other alternative is swimming back.*

*"A year and a half later we tried again, waiting for that perfect set of conditions – Spring tide and high pressure – to bring an even bigger tidal range and more extreme low tides for the climbing window. We dropped food and water at Heddon's Mouth then set off. We had three windows for climbing at night and two in the day. Since our recce, one of the boulders had moved on a section which meant one of the team twisted their ankle. Luckily, after strapping it up and managing to rest for a short spell, the team were making good progress and amidst short stretches of sleep, bivvying on a big bluff, with the blood-red sunrise illuminating Wringapeak cave or on scree below Sherrycombe Waterfall, the team emerged at Combe Martin beach late one Sunday afternoon, 54 hours after they began."*

**If you would like to climb on Exmoor search for the 'Exmoor Climbing Club' on Facebook.**

**Verity Jones works in alternative education provision, engaging young people in outdoor activities on Exmoor and around Somerset. She lives in Exmoor and regularly kayaks the Exe and Barle as well as sea kayaking along the north coast.**



Given the high levels of rainfall, deeply incised valleys and large river catchments, Exmoor boasts some excellent kayaking rivers. With the Bristol Channel to the north and Wimbleball Lake to the south, there's something for every level of kayaker.

**How did you first get into kayaking?**

I first got into kayaking when I moved up to Exmoor which was about 10 years ago and I was trying to meet people in the area. I went along to Exmoor Canoe Club with a friend, starting off at Wimbleball Lake on flat water. It took me a little while before I was confident enough to get on anything more exciting.

**What do you enjoy about kayaking?**

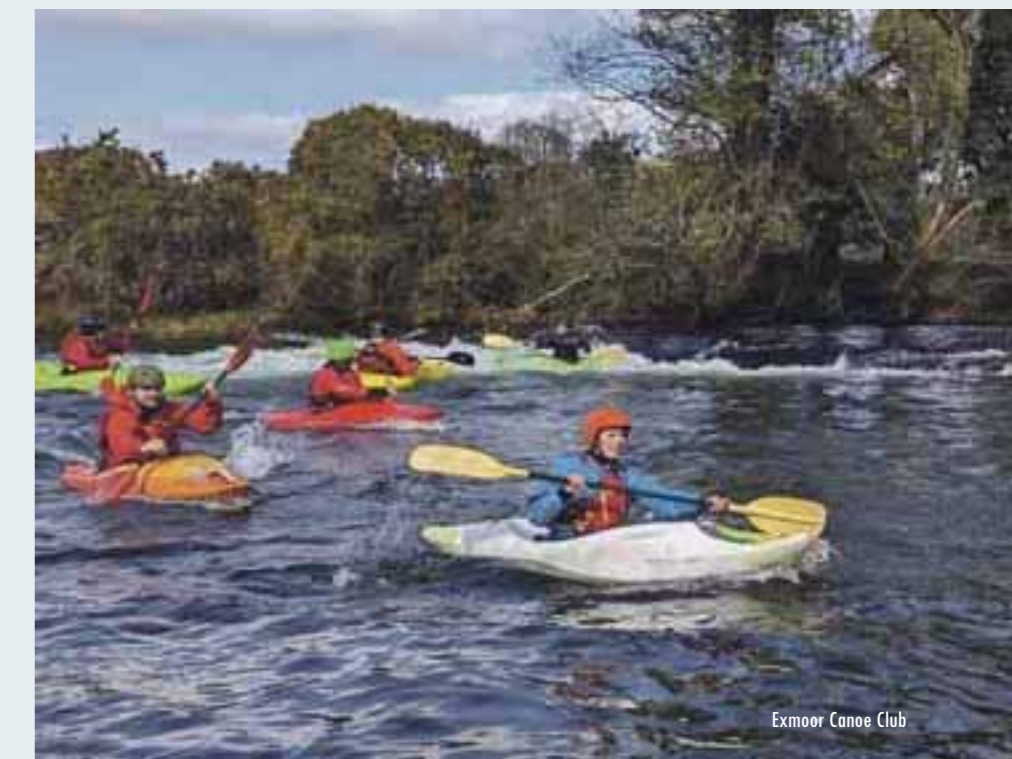
Since I started I've done white water kayaking and sea kayaking in lots of different locations. Kayaking takes you to some really beautiful, natural places and gives you a very different perspective when you are on the water. There's nothing better than being able to explore a sea cave, tunnel or beach which people on land can't get to or don't even know is there! There are endless amounts of interesting skills to learn such as white-water safety and rescue skills, or how to do tidal planning for a sea trip. And that's not to mention it being a great way to spend time, a nice way to meet some cool people and it can involve a bit of adrenaline!

**Where do you kayak on Exmoor?**

The Barle and the Exe during the winter months (there is not enough water generally in the summer). The Barle especially is a beautiful, natural river and you go through some lovely woodland and past Exmoor landmarks. The Exmoor Coast is also excellent for sea kayaking, the high and remote cliffs are amazing explored by kayak and it gives you a unique perspective. My favourite spot to sea kayak, would be keeping it local and going from Minehead along the coast to Porlock. It's incredibly quiet and really stunning with views out to Wales.

**Is Exmoor particularly special to kayak in?**

It's a secret gem of river and sea kayaking! You really appreciate the massive expanse of woodland that Exmoor has and how the woodland and moorland reach down to the sea. On the water you might see grey seals, porpoise, razor bills, peregrine falcon and I've heard about friends seeing sunfish which I am very jealous of. On the Exmoor rivers you can see otters, kingfishers and dippers.



**Interested in exploring Exmoor by kayak? Get in touch with 'Exmoor Canoe Club'. They're a friendly bunch and can help point you in the right direction.**





**Beau Bromham is a youth surf coach from Croyde who spends winters heading to Lynmouth in search of waves. Craig 'Barney' Berry is a surfer from Lynmouth who knows the waves inside out. Rob Whitney, also from Croyde, is a co-founder of the NDSR.**

Surfing might not be the activity that first pops into your head when you think of Exmoor, but Lynmouth on the northerly coast of the park is at the far northeastern end of the UK's first ever surf reserve. The North Devon Surf Reserve was designated by an international committee in 2022 and stretches from Lynmouth all the way down to Westward Ho! and includes other famous surf beaches like Woolacombe, Saunton Sands and Croyde.

Lynmouth was an important part of the designation, as Beau tells me; "Lynmouth is next level, you have three separate wave formations: one from the esplanade, one at the base of the river at high tide, with right-hander barrels allowing for some aerial surfing and a left hand point break".

Beau moved to Croyde as a teenager from Kent and has competed all around the world, but he says he still comes back to surf at Lynmouth. With the waves mostly suited to intermediate and advanced surfers the bay is rarely full.

Barney Berry is one of the few surfers who actually lives in Lynmouth and has been surfing the waves for nigh on 50 years, teaching his son Alfie to do the same from the age of six. He agrees that Lynmouth is a particularly old-school place to surf, which he puts down to it being 'nobody's home break'. Most surfers (bar him and Alfie) travel in from North Devon, North Somerset or even further afield, which means it's quiet, unpredictable and people are happy to be a part of that. He adds "it's the best point break in England, you can surf for 150 metres from the salmon traps right onto the beach, walk along the front, get back in the water and do the same again!"

Rob Whitney has worked tirelessly, with others, to have North Devon designated as a reserve, partly to reflect the existing community participation and to show others the importance of surfing to the local area: "Ultimately the goal is to protect the places we love and be representative of the surfing community. Whether it's campaigning on water quality, bringing surfing into local schools, or encouraging improved access to the waves, the surf reserve aims to provide waves for all, forever."

**Local surf schools can be found in Croyde or Saunton, Lynmouth is best suited to advanced or intermediate surfers given the boulders and technical aspects of the waves.**

**Aislinn Motaheddin-Fardo is a Ranger for the National Trust based at Holnicote, she also lives on Exmoor. Aislinn enjoys trail running across Exmoor using some of the 1000km of rights of way that crisscross the landscape.**

Never a big fan of running, Aislinn took it up through necessity when working as a ranger on Lundy - options for keeping fit are limited on an island three miles long and less than one mile wide. Aislinn doesn't log runs via Strava, or take part in organised events, but prefers to "just enjoy the run for what it is. I get to set my own pace, it's up to me how far I go and what I want to get out of my run that day."

*"For me the motivation is the process of running. I don't listen to music because I like to regulate my breathing, and on places like Exmoor it can be such an immersive experience, I can be out running and hear a stag bolting, or do a run before work and look down over Hurlstone Point and see a Harbour Porpoise."*

Running may be the most accessible of all the activities mentioned here, so I asked Aislinn about her favourite runs on Exmoor.

*"I like to park at the tank grounds on North Hill then run along the coast path to Hurlstone Combe. It's a really achievable even undulating run, with great views from Dunkery across the Bristol Channel and best done at the tail end of summer/into autumn. I also like Haddon Hill, great ups and downs out to Withiel Florey along Wimbleball Lake and along rocky tree-lined tracks."*



Given the location of her work, Aislinn also enjoys running on the many paths around the Holnicote Estate. From Webber's Post across Goosemoor, through ancient woodland, descending over 300 feet to Brockwell and back up Dunster Path. Exmoor isn't short of routes, and with over 1000km of rights of way you can find a run that suits your abilities.

**Channel Events based in Minehead organise trail running events throughout the year.**



Many of the activities mentioned are not for beginners, all of the people I have spoken to are knowledgeable and experienced in their sport. You can find more information on entry level activities from the organisations mentioned.

# Boost for active travel in Exmoor National Park

**Access and Recreation Manager Dan Barnett shares some good news for anyone wanting to improve health and fitness, and travel more sustainably across Exmoor**

With special government funding provided by Active Travel England, Exmoor National Park Authority will be exploring how to improve the infrastructure for walking, cycling and any active travel in and around the National Park. The funds can be used to consult with local communities and visitors. Following the consultation, we will develop some of the ideas and aspirations into detailed plans – ready to submit for future funding bids.



Active travel means using your own body to get around, instead of a car or bus, on foot, on a bicycle, using a wheelchair or even on horseback. Active travel can offer the health benefits of more exercise and reduce traffic and pollution.

We are interested in all kinds of journeys, whether going to school, the shops or the doctors, or visiting a popular spot to enjoy some leisure time. People may want to think about roads, paths within villages or our public rights of way network. We can look at ideas within the National Park and routes to the Park from nearby settlements.

We want to be sure that everyone who does, or might want to, travel around Exmoor gets the opportunity to feed in, regardless of their background or interests.

We have an online consultation running which you can find by searching 'Exmoor Active Travel Survey'. You can add ideas and suggestions to a map of Exmoor and complete a survey to share your thoughts. We will also be reaching out to specific groups to gather more feedback and consult on the emerging ideas.

We will report on our findings this year and hope to have a collection of projects for which we can seek funding to make reality.



Engine House  
Harvey Grenville

Exmoor National Park was officially recognised and certified as the first International Dark Sky Reserve in Europe in 2011. The incredible landscape combined with minimal light pollution provides the perfect combination for stargazers to see thousands of stars, planets and even the Milky Way. Visitors travel from across the globe to experience the stunning Dark Skies of Exmoor in one of the many recommended locations throughout the National Park. There are a number of Dark Sky Discover Hubs across Exmoor. These can provide perfect venues for group activities, presentations and events and all offer something different.

**Wimbleball Lake**



Situated in one of the best stargazing spots on Exmoor overlooking the lake, this purpose-built stone platform allows visitors to lay back and watch the skies. Astrophotographers can delight in the moon and stars reflected in the lake whilst others can watch and listen to the nocturnal wildlife. A stunning location in Exmoor National Park.

**Poltimore Inn, North Molton**

Situated in the village of North Molton the Poltimore Inn has its own purpose-built observatory with a wide range of



astronomy equipment that can be booked. To enhance your experience, why not book a telescope course or stargazing evening with Astronomers Jo and Pete Richardson of 'Space Detectives'.

**Exford Bridge Tea Rooms**

In the heart of Exford, a traditional Exmoor Village, is the Exford Bridge Tea Rooms. Hosted by 'Wild about Exmoor', each month they offer Stargazing Suppers comprising home cooked food, an informative presentation and a short walk to immerse yourself in the Dark Skies of Exmoor using lasers and computer guided telescopes.

For more information and to book an evening visit [www.wildaboutexmoor.com](http://www.wildaboutexmoor.com)

**Dark Sky Discovery Trail**



Not far from Exford in the heart of the National Park, is the Exmoor National Park Dark Sky Discover Trail; a self-led walk in a remote rural location that offers stunning stargazing opportunities. The two mile 'there and back' route is very easy to navigate and offers 360° views of the night sky in one of the best locations on Exmoor. You can watch a short film and find out more about the trail online, or pick up a guide from our National Park Centres or online shop.

**National Park Centres – Telescope Hire**

Visit one of our National Park Centres at Lynmouth, Dulverton or Dunster where telescopes can be hired and a range of stargazing material purchased. Visit



[www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/stargazing](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/stargazing) for more information including details of our Dark Sky Friendly Accommodation providers across Exmoor.

There are also a range of free leaflets available from the Centres including the 'Dark Skies Pocket Guide' which offers top tips on when, how and where to stargaze, and Star charts giving guidance on what to look for.

**Exmoor Dark Skies Festival 2025**



The annual Exmoor Dark Skies Festival offers a vast range of events for all the family including E-bike night rides, Dark Sky Supper and Talks, Planetarium, Ranger led night walks, children's craft and painting sessions and much more. This year Virtu Bridgwater BMW are supporting the festival as the headline sponsor.

Pick up a printed programme from one of our National Park Centres or download online from August.

**Dark Skies Writing Competition 2024**

The 2024 Exmoor Dark Skies Writing Competition saw an incredible number of entries and a fantastic standard of writing. Vivienne Rambe was the winner of a Celestron Telescope for her story 'Huggalumps of the Hills' and Rebecca Needs won a DryRobe for her story 'An Unbreakable Bond made on an Exmoor Night'.

Finlay Richardson was the winner of the 'schools' prize and won an afternoon with an Exmoor National Park Officer to learn all things Dark Skies with his school friends.

Huge thanks and well done to all the children that took part and submitted entries. Keep your eyes peeled in Autumn for our 2025 Dark Skies Children's Competition launch.



Top: Rebecca Needs with judge Davina Jelley from Seven Fables Bookshop in Dulverton.

Below left: Vivienne Rambe Below right: Finlay Richardson

You can find the winning stories and wealth of information on stargazing, including 'An Astronomer's Guide to Exmoor' - a downloadable guide for all you need to know to get started at: [www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/stargazing](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/stargazing)

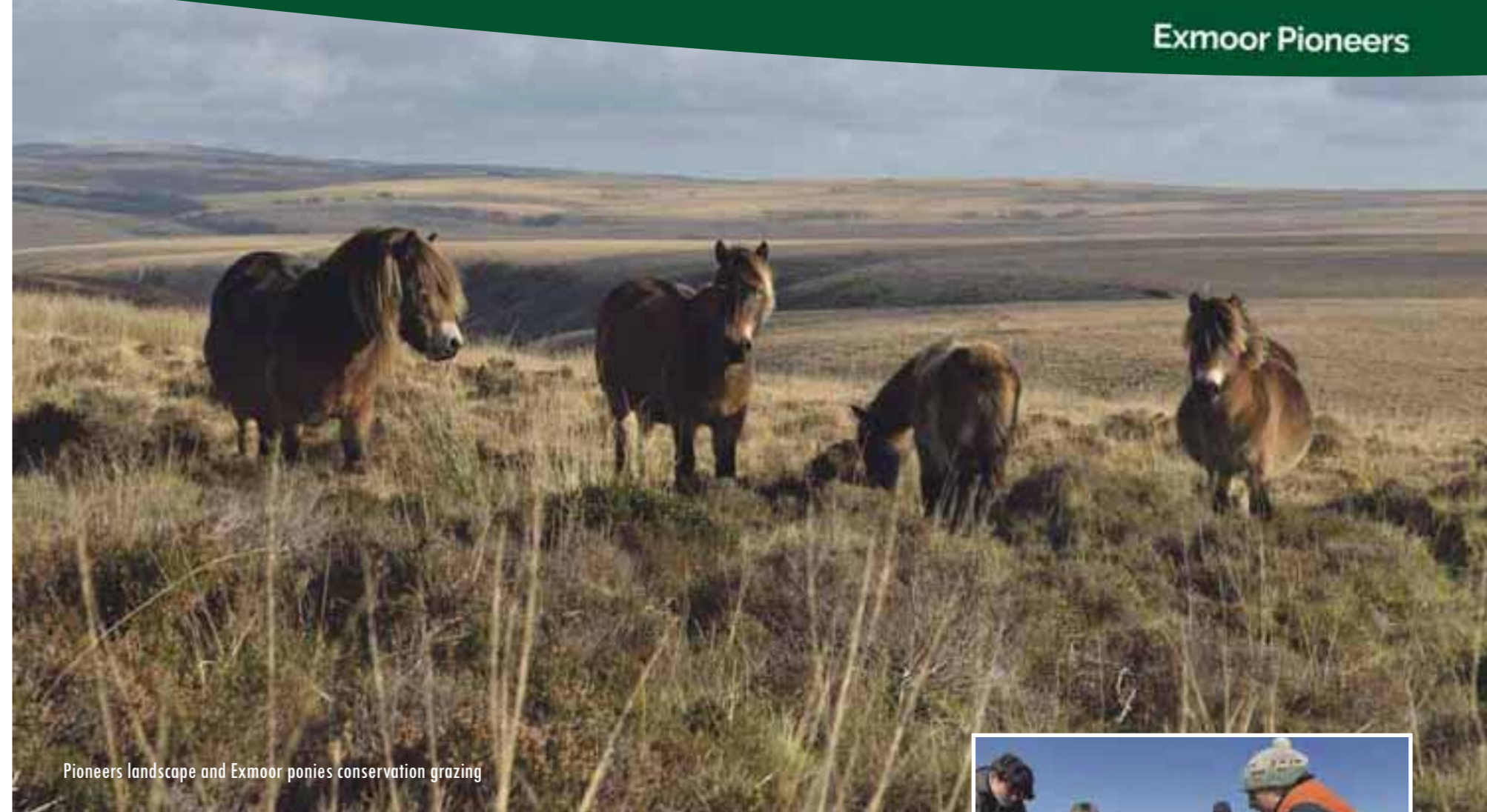


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Pioneers landscape and Exmoor ponies conservation grazing



Young Rangers Skills Day

## Rob Wilson-North shares the history behind an exciting new 'Exmoor Pioneers' project

Exmoor is one of the smallest National Parks, and yet it's made up of an incredible variety of landscapes. Coast, marsh, cliffs, moorland, wooded valleys, farmland - it often seems bigger than it really is - the 'Tardis' of National Parks.

At the heart of Exmoor, around the tiny village of Simonsbath, is one of those landscapes. Wild moorland, deep combs and rushing streams, it seems somehow wilder and set apart from other parts of the National Park. This wildness is partly because the area was a royal forest for well over 1000 years, from Anglo-Saxon times until 1815, a treeless waste, grazed in the summer, empty and desolate in the winter. It was uninhabited, without proper roads, unfarmed and not within a parish. This quirky history means that an ancient, prehistoric landscape of standing stones and old burial mounds has survived down the millennia for us to see today.

After 1815 the land fell into private hands and was 'reclaimed' to make it fit for farming. Hundreds of labourers made roads, built farms and turned moorland into fields. But the old landscape did not yield easily and

much of the work of the 1800s was transient. Today it can be seen as ruined farmhouses on high moorland, old hedgeless field banks, abandoned railway lines and old mines strewn over the moorland. These stand as reminders of the countless families who struggled against the moorland weather around 200 years ago.

The stories of this landscape and its remarkable people will be explored and told over the next four years thanks to a grant of £1.25 million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Called 'Exmoor Pioneers', we aim to share this beautiful place, progress work on our new temperate rainforest, expand our tree nursery at Exford and deliver a range of other nature projects. We will also protect the important heritage of this area as well as discovering more of its secrets. We also want to ensure we retain the skills needed to care for such a special place and we'll launch initiatives aimed at enabling people to develop those skills.

Within the area of the old royal forest is one of the farms that was built in the 1800s, which is now owned by Exmoor National Park Authority. Driver was built in

1847 and has survived very much unchanged since then. The land around the farmstead stretches away from soft valley meadows up on to the bleak blanket bogs of the Chains at 487 metres (just under 1,600 feet) above sea level. Also, within the land holding is Pinkery, our outdoor education centre, where 2500 school children experience the outdoors each year.

This year we're refurbishing the farmhouse at Driver, making a range of other improvements to the infrastructure and starting work on nature projects and other activities there. We hope you'll join in some of the Exmoor Pioneers events and discover for yourself this unique and remarkable place and the people who have called it home over the last 8000 years.

We are delighted to acknowledge that Exmoor Pioneers is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, supported by the Cynthia Hadley legacy via Caremoor, and by BMW.







White-tailed Eagle photos by Jacqui Leeming

## Zoe Smith from Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation tells us why White-tailed Eagles love Exmoor

The White-tailed Eagle or Sea Eagle is the UK's largest bird of prey, with a huge wingspan of up to 2 and a half metres. It was once widespread across the UK, and formerly bred on the Exmoor coast, but was persecuted to extinction across the country. Since the 1950s, conservation efforts have attempted to restore the species to its former range and, following successful releases in Scotland (1975) and Ireland (2007), their numbers are beginning to increase. From 2019 onwards there's been a White-tailed Eagle project based on the Isle of Wight, run by Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation and Forestry England under licence from Natural England and NatureScot. The birds released there are fitted with satellite tags to enable the team to follow their movements. This has shown that Exmoor has become a White-tailed Eagle hotspot, with seven of the released eagles visiting since 2019.

### Where can you spot them?

White-tailed Eagles prefer wetland habitats, such as estuaries and coastlines, but they can also be sighted in quiet areas away from water, particularly when they are young. You'll have to look carefully though, tracking data has shown they like to spend 90 per cent of their time perched!

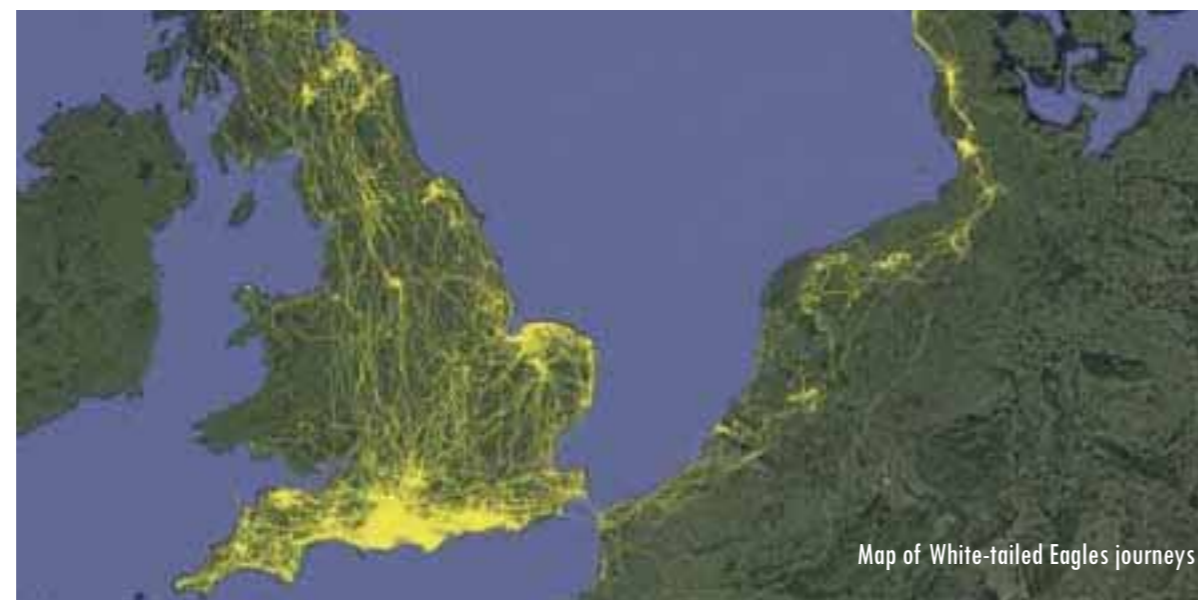
### What do they look like?

Their wings are very broad and look more

rectangular than those of a golden eagle, with fingered tips. As the name suggests, they have a white tail with a distinctive wedge shape, but it's ridged with black in young birds. The head and neck are pale, almost white in mature birds, although the young eagles are dark brown and don't attain full adult plumage until 4-5 years of age. They have a hooked yellow beak, yellow legs and talons and piercing golden eyes.

### What do they eat?

White-tailed eagles favour fish, but take a variety of other prey including birds, such as corvids, small mammals and carrion (dead animals). For young eagles, carrion will make up a large proportion of their diet, but by their third year they gravitate



Map of White-tailed Eagles journeys

towards wetland sites and become adept at catching fish. They are opportunistic and will often steal food from other predatory birds. The diet of the White-tailed Eagles released on the Isle of Wight has been studied in detail since 2019, which has shown they love seasonally abundant marine fish, such as grey mullet. They also regularly predate carrion crows and other corvids, with younger eagles often feeding on rabbits in inland areas.

### Could they prey on young livestock?

There have been no cases of livestock predation in England since the Isle of Wight project began in 2019.

### Reproduction

Eyries, the special name for a bird of prey's nest, are built in the mature trees and cliff ledges, made from sticks. They can become huge structures, more than 2 metres wide and deep. 1-3 eggs are laid in late March-early April and incubated for 38-40 days, predominantly by the female. For the first three weeks after hatching the male does all of the hunting and after that, both adults provide for the young. The young fledge after 11 weeks and remain reliant on their parents for 6 weeks or more. Young White-tailed Eagles often roam widely in their first few years of life, before returning close to their natal area to establish a breeding territory. They can live to over 20 years of age.

Spotted a White-tailed Eagle on Exmoor? tell us about it at this email address: [seaeagle@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](mailto:seaeagle@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)

Find more information on White-tailed Eagles and how we plan to work with the Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation and Forestry England to help to reinforce the population in South West England here:

[www.roydennis.org/white-tailed-eagle-reintroduction-in-southern-england/](http://www.roydennis.org/white-tailed-eagle-reintroduction-in-southern-england/)

## Field Officer Ali North updates us on the restoration of pine martens to the South West of England



Karl Franz

In the last few years the Devon Wildlife Trust, with the support of numerous other organisations, undertook a major feasibility study to see if pine martens could be returned to Devon and Somerset after a 150-year absence. Hundreds of sites were surveyed for their suitability, while the views of local people were collected. In September 2024, 15 pine martens were translocated from healthy wild populations in Scotland and released at suitable woodland sites on Dartmoor. The releases were done under licence by Natural England, NatureScot and, with support from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, a similar pine marten translocation is planned for sites in Exmoor National Park.

### What is a pine marten?

They are mustelids, a family of animals which also includes weasels, stoats and otters. Pine martens are the size of a small cat, have brown fur and a distinctive creamy-coloured chest known as a 'bib'. They are expert climbers which makes them ideally suited to living in woodlands. Pine martens were once common across England, Wales and Scotland, but large-scale losses of woodlands over centuries saw them decline. Hunting and persecution also meant that by the late nineteenth century pine martens were extinct in most regions including the South West of England. Today they are still critically endangered in England and Wales. With the help of local volunteers, project partners and landowners we're continuing to make plans for improving habitat for our new woodland neighbours. One of our current tasks is to provide den boxes in woodland sites where natural denning sites are scarce. These will be a useful monitoring tool and the boxes may also act as maternity dens when the females give birth on Dartmoor in March.

These will be the first pine martens to be born in Devon for more than a century.

### What will be the impact of pine martens' return?

Pine martens are a native species, adapted to living in the South West's countryside and with local wildlife. They are largely solitary and live at very low



A pine marten takes first step into the wild (Devon Wildlife Trust)

densities. They are also mainly nocturnal and very elusive, which means few people ever see them.

These creatures play a vital part in the life of our woodlands. Known as 'opportunistic omnivores', they will eat what is plentiful during each season and their wide diet includes field voles, grey squirrels and fruit. They play a pivotal part in balancing woodland food webs and spreading seeds. Research has shown that the risk from pine martens to rare species such as dormice and pied flycatchers is low.



Karl Franz

### What's happening on Exmoor?

Later this year, the project plans a similar release of pine marten's into the wild on Exmoor so it's an exciting time. We'll be engaging with local communities on Exmoor, listening to their views and ideas and working alongside our project partners like Exmoor National Park and the National Trust, to make sure we choose the most suitable woodlands for the animals.

If you're interested in learning more about the Two Moors Pine Marten Project, you can find lots more info and contact details at [www.twomoorspinemartens.org](http://www.twomoorspinemartens.org) plus a comprehensive list of 'Frequently Asked Questions'.

# Exmoor Community Projects

We've been working with farmers and land managers to support their valuable contribution to our National Park and environmental improvements, running hand in hand with agriculture, education and heritage.

These are just some of the projects that have been awarded funding through the 'Farming in Protected Landscapes' programme, provided by Defra.

## The Exmoor Game School



Our mission is simple, to equip children, families and communities with the knowledge and skills they need to ask better questions about their food and understand where it comes

from. By providing practical, hands-on experiences, we aim to reconnect people with the land and foster a deeper understanding of how food production is intrinsically linked to nature, sustainability, and local farming practices.

We run a range of educational programmes, designed to break down the barriers between people and their food. Adults gain skills needed to prepare both small and large game meats. Our butchery courses allow individuals to get hands-on with their food in a way that might sound daunting to some, but it's an incredibly empowering process. Not only do participants learn practical skills, but it fosters a new level of respect for the animals they eat and a greater understanding of the natural cycles that sustain us.

Our free children's sessions have benefitted from FIPL funding support and the advice of the National Park and we've been overwhelmed with offers from local venues, many of which are farms, to host our sessions. This gives children the invaluable opportunity to visit working farms, learn about the link between game meat and farmed meat, and hear directly from farmers about their work.

By embracing sustainably produced game meat and other local produce, we're not just feeding our communities - we're helping to restore the vital connection between food, nature, and community!

Darren Sherwood from The Exmoor Game School CIC

## Exmoor Farm School

"FIPL funding and the support from the Exmoor National Park has allowed us to work towards our mission to teach as many children and adults as possible the links between farming, conservation and food production, using our Exmoor farm as a classroom. The financial support has enabled us to invite more groups onto the farm as well as contribute to equipment and facilities to enhance the accessibility at Farm School Exmoor as well as the safety of our visitors. To date we are working with seventeen schools and eighteen different organisations, who are delighted with the equipment aimed towards the size and ability of the children, our accessible facilities and the fact that children get to experience farm life on a working farm."

Serena Colwill - Farm School Exmoor



## Great Nurcott Farm Tree Pasture

Wood pasture is great for wildlife and for returning more livestock forage. Cattle and sheep farmer Mark Broadwith from Great Nurcott Farm near Winsford, explains why planting trees and shrubs on grazing land can boost revenue and nature.

Wood pasture provides a rich habitat for wildlife, but it's expensive to establish. Currently under the ELMS scheme, 'Creation of upland wood pasture' pays £544 per hectare annually over the ten-year agreement period. The aim is to end up with one third open grazing, one third shrub cover and one third tree cover. With the National Park's support, FIPL funding helped me to make a flying start with a Cactus Guard trial.

Cactus Guards are a key affordable means of establishing substantial numbers of trees and shrubs on grazing pasture. They can be formed and erected within minutes and have proven to be one hundred percent stock proof on my farm.

When boosting forage output and nutrient profile for grazing livestock, whilst improving drought resilience and increasing biodiversity, the current trend is towards reseeded grassland with 'herbal leys'. It's a quick but expensive and temporary fix, however, that begins to fall off in performance from year three. Wood pasture, on the other hand, is a semi-permanent, low maintenance solution achieving the same ends. It's best for steep ground that is difficult or impossible to work, yields badly and suffers gorse and bracken encroachment.

There is a saying on Exmoor that 'sheep can't eat trees', but cattle and sheep can take up to fifty percent of their daily intake as browse if it's freely available. Tree and shrub leaves have high protein content, and a usefully different nutrient profile to that of grass. Willow is a rich source of tannin and acetylsalicylic acid (aspirin) loved by livestock. What we are really talking about isn't a field full of trees and scrub, but something more akin to a traditional Georgian working landscape rich in production pollards, useful shrubs, with groves of trees that might be felled for valuable saw wood in the distant future.

It is estimated that an ancient, pollarded oak supports up to two thousand other species of plant, invertebrate, mammal and bird life, yet the humble pollarded willow which was once common to our landscape and which can be achieved in one hundredth of the time span,



follows very closely behind. Whilst sweet chestnut pollards might yield useful fencing material within a generation, pollarded oaks are an investment for the future. Willow on the other hand should start to produce useful forage within the decade. It is simply a matter of lopping off the vigorous regrowth on a rotational basis and letting it fall to the floor for the livestock. Managing the stocking density will determine the extent of ground cover occupied by shrubs and scrub, as it too is freely browsed. Large woody shrubs like hazel can also be pollarded.

Other substantial benefits of wood pasture come through the autumn leaf drop which helps build soil organic matter content, improvements to soil hydration, and last but not least a substantial enhancement of ecosystem function.

Mark Broadwith  
from Great  
Nurcott Farm



## Dulverton Weir & Leat Conservation Trust

We're delighted to have been able to carry out this important work on a key part of Dulverton Leat as it's a key wildlife, historical heritage and tourism asset for the area. Previously the wall was in danger of collapsing, impeding the passage of wildlife as well as being a hazard to pedestrians and cars. Funded by a grant from the FIPL scheme, with support and advice from Exmoor National Park Authority, it's now been repaired by local crafts people.

Philip Hull,  
Dulverton Weir & Leat Conservation Trust



## Exmoor Sowing the Seeds Project



To donate to the 'Sowing the Seeds' project visit [exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/caremoor-for-exmoor](http://exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/caremoor-for-exmoor)

Over the last few years we've been working with 74 meadow owners, community groups and schools, with over 400 hectares of wildflower meadows restored, rejuvenated, or created, across Exmoor National Park so far. Our meadow owners range from small holdings to extensive nature reserves and we've harvested and donated over 105 kilograms of wildflower seed.

We've now sown seed on our own land at 'Driver', an Exmoor National Park heritage farm site that's being restored to create over 50 hectares of species rich meadow habitat. Volunteers and school groups have been joining us for some great seed sowing sessions.

We ran several events to inspire and educate communities on how valuable meadows are, including botanical drawing and wildflower identification workshops.



We look forward to seeing the meadows develop and supporting landowners across the park to restore more wildflowers in grassland habitats across Exmoor.

Lucy Cornwall



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Image © Jackie Morris

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11



This map is only intended as a guide. More detailed maps are available from our three National Park Centres in Lynmouth, Dunster and Dulverton or online at: [shop.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](http://shop.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)


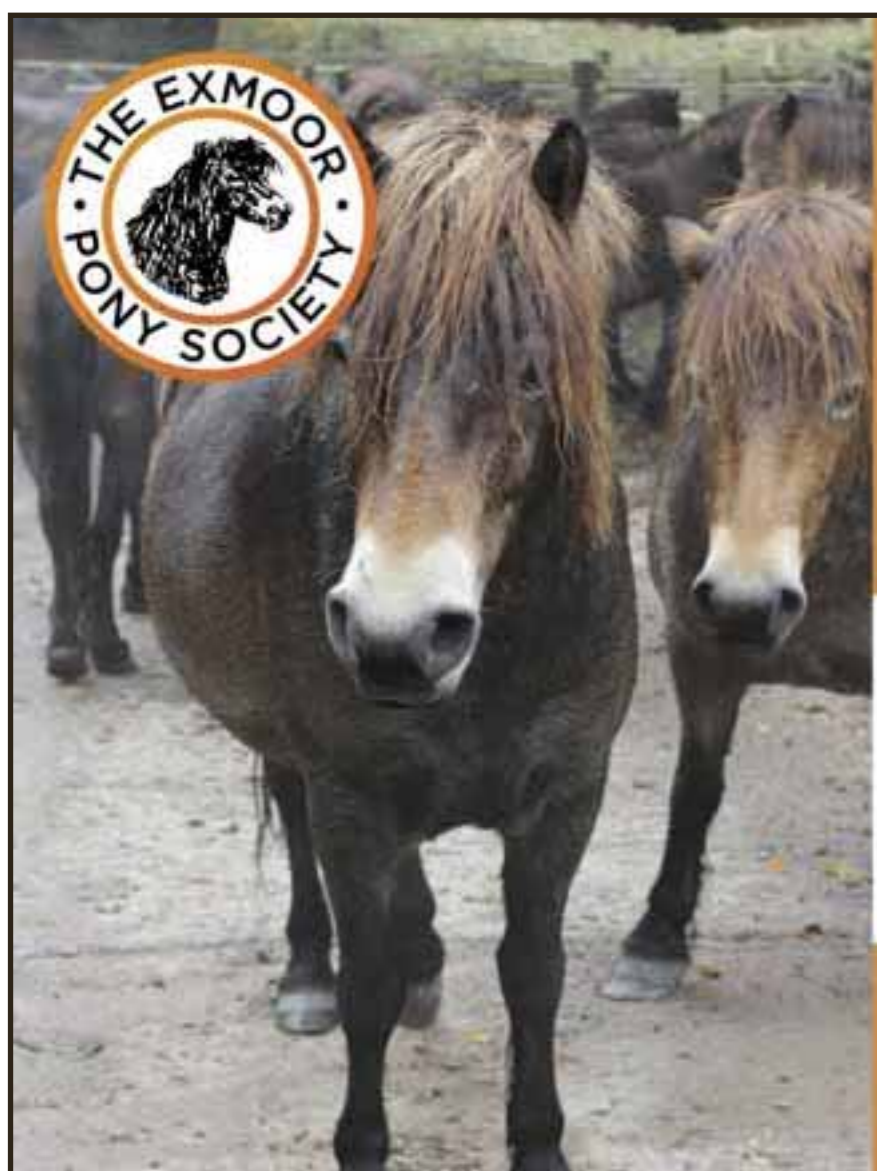


**Travel Information**  
 Enjoy a car free, care free Exmoor.  
 For up-to-date travel information including links to public transport timetables please visit [www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/explore-moor](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/explore-moor).



**Key**

- |  |                      |   |                             |                                 |                                    |  |
|--|----------------------|---|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| National Park Centre                         | Car Park             | Carnegie Site                                 | House of Interest           | Easy Access Trail               | A Class Road                       | Lake/Reservoir                               |
| Tourist Information Centre                   | Youth Hostel         | Camping Site/Barr                             | Castle/Abbey Ruins          | Suggested Star Gazing Locations | B Class Road                       | Woodland (within Exmoor National Park)       |
| Exmoor National Park Local Information Point | Exmoor Pony Herd     | Field Study Centre                            | Cycle Trails                | Wharfedale Aquarium             | Minor Road                         | Long Distance Paths                          |
| Toilets                                      | Exmoor Pony Centre   | Petrol Station (if not in Somerset and Devon) | Museum                      | Exmoor National Park Boundary   | County Boundary                    | Coleridge Way (Exmoor National Park)         |
| Accessible Toilets                           | Riding Establishment | Picos Site                                    | Residential Centre (groups) | Railway with Station            | River                              | Two Moors Way (Exmoor National Park)         |
|  |                      |   |                             |                                 | Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty | South West Coast Path (Exmoor National Park) |
|  |                      |   |                             |                                 | Braunton Burrows Biosphere Reserve |  |

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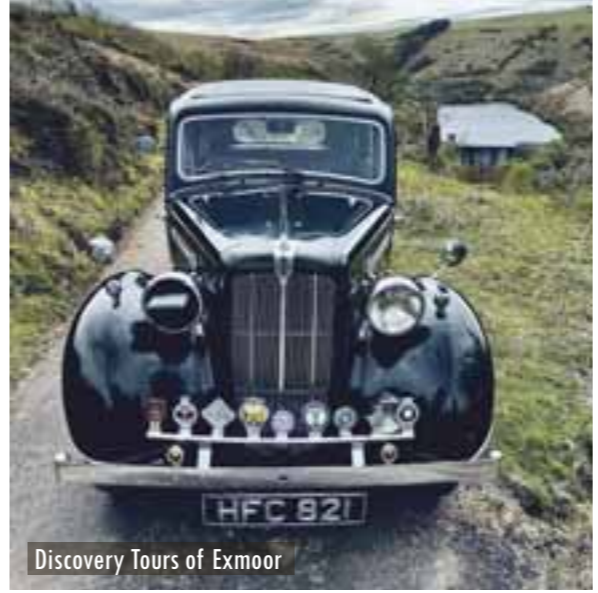
\*When single ticket is purchased. Please just mention *Exmoor Magazine*. Same day only.

# Plenty to do...

We hope Your Exmoor provides lots of inspiration to get outdoors and enjoy the landscapes and nature of Exmoor. Below we list some of the main attractions and activities on offer across the area. Use the grid references to find places near to you using the grid squares on the map in the middle pages, then check the websites to find more precise location and directions. For detailed listings go to [www.visit-exmoor.co.uk](https://www.visit-exmoor.co.uk) or visit one of our **National Park Centres** (see page 5) for expert advice and great ideas.

## Activities & Experiences

- Brendon Manor riding A5**  
[www.brendonmanor.com](https://www.brendonmanor.com)
- Burrowhayes Farm Stables, West Luccombe B7**  
[www.burrowhayes.co.uk](https://www.burrowhayes.co.uk)
- Channel Adventures, Minehead A9**  
[www.channeladventure.co.uk](https://www.channeladventure.co.uk)
- Dean Riding Stables, Parracombe B3**  
[www.deanridingstables.co.uk](https://www.deanridingstables.co.uk)
- Discovery Tours of Exmoor A7**  
[discoverytoursofexmoor.com](https://discoverytoursofexmoor.com)



- Dulverton Angling Association D8**  
[www.dulvertonanglingassociation.org.uk](https://www.dulvertonanglingassociation.org.uk)
- Elsworthy Hill Farm Experience E9**  
[www.elsworthyfarm.co.uk](https://www.elsworthyfarm.co.uk)
- Exmoor Adventures, Porlock Weir A7**  
[www.exmooradventures.co.uk](https://www.exmooradventures.co.uk)
- Exmoor Coast Boat Trips, Lynmouth A5**  
[www.theglenlyngorge.co.uk](https://www.theglenlyngorge.co.uk)
- Exmoor Distillery Tours, Brushford E8**  
[www.exmoordistillery.co.uk](https://www.exmoordistillery.co.uk)
- Exmoor Photography Courses (Jack Clegg)**  
[www.exmoorphotography.co.uk](https://www.exmoorphotography.co.uk)
- Exmoor Photowalks**  
[exmoorphotowalks.com](https://exmoorphotowalks.com)
- Exmoor Pony Centre, near Dulverton D7**  
[www.moorlandmousietrust.org.uk](https://www.moorlandmousietrust.org.uk)
- Exmoor Riding Centre, near Lynton A4**  
[www.exmoorcoastholidays.co.uk](https://www.exmoorcoastholidays.co.uk)
- Exmoor Wildlife Safaris**  
[www.exmoorwildlifesafaris.co.uk](https://www.exmoorwildlifesafaris.co.uk)
- Horner Farm B8**  
[www.horner-farm.co.uk](https://www.horner-farm.co.uk)
- Lynmouth Putting Green A5**  
[www.holein1lynmouth.co.uk](https://www.holein1lynmouth.co.uk)
- Minehead Eye Skatepark A9**  
[www.mineheadeye.co.uk](https://www.mineheadeye.co.uk)
- Moor Wild Experiences**  
[www.moorwildexperiences.co.uk](https://www.moorwildexperiences.co.uk)
- Osprey Sea Fishing trips, Minehead A9**  
[www.ospreycharter.co.uk](https://www.ospreycharter.co.uk)

- OSKC, Combe Martin (kayak hire) A2**  
[www.oskcwatersports.co.uk](https://www.oskcwatersports.co.uk)
- Pine Lodge Riding, Nr Dulverton D7**  
[www.pinelodgeexmoor.co.uk](https://www.pinelodgeexmoor.co.uk)
- The Observatory At The Poltimore Inn D5**  
[www.thepoltimoreinnnorthmolton.co.uk](https://www.thepoltimoreinnnorthmolton.co.uk)
- Porlock Weir Charters A7**  
[www.porlockweircharters.co.uk](https://www.porlockweircharters.co.uk)
- Red Stag Safaris**  
[www.redstagsafari.co.uk](https://www.redstagsafari.co.uk)
- Seven fables Book Shop, Dulverton D7**  
[www.sevenfables.co.uk/seven-fables-events](https://www.sevenfables.co.uk/seven-fables-events)
- Riverside Project, Brompton Regis D8**  
[www.riversideproject.org](https://www.riversideproject.org)
- Surfside Kayak, Combe Martin A2**  
[www.surfsidekayakhire.co.uk](https://www.surfsidekayakhire.co.uk)
- Teddie Boy Cruises, Minehead A9**  
[www.teddieboycharters.co.uk](https://www.teddieboycharters.co.uk)
- Unity Dips & Trips**  
[@unity\\_dipsntrips](https://@unity_dipsntrips)
- Wellhayes Vineyard, near Bampton E9**  
[www.wellhayesvineyard.co.uk](https://www.wellhayesvineyard.co.uk)
- West Ilkerton Farm Tours, Barbrook A5**  
[www.westilkerton.co.uk](https://www.westilkerton.co.uk)
- Wimbleball Lake, near Brompton Regis D8**  
[www.swlakestrust.org.uk](https://www.swlakestrust.org.uk)
- Wild About Exmoor C7**  
[www.wildaboutexmoor.com](https://www.wildaboutexmoor.com)

## Attractions

- Arlington Court B3**  
[www.nationaltrust.org.uk](https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)
- Butlins, Minehead A9**  
[www.butlins.com](https://www.butlins.com)
- Cleeve Abbey B10**  
[www.english-heritage.org.uk](https://www.english-heritage.org.uk)
- Combe Martin Wildlife & Dinosaur Park B3**  
[www.cmwdp.co.uk](https://www.cmwdp.co.uk)
- Dunster Castle, gardens and watermill B9**  
[www.nationaltrust.org.uk](https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk)
- Exmoor Zoo, Bratton Fleming C4**  
[www.exmoorzoo.co.uk](https://www.exmoorzoo.co.uk)
- East Quay Gallery, Watchet B10**  
[www.eastquaywatchet.co.uk](https://www.eastquaywatchet.co.uk)
- Glen Lyn Gorge, Lynmouth A5**  
[www.theglenlyngorge.co.uk](https://www.theglenlyngorge.co.uk)
- Greencombe Gardens, Porlock A7**  
[www.greencombe.org](https://www.greencombe.org)
- Ilfracombe Aquarium A1**  
[www.ilfracombeaquarium.co.uk](https://www.ilfracombeaquarium.co.uk)
- Lyn Model Railway, Lynmouth A5**  
[visitlyntonandlynmouth.com/visit/lynmouth-model-railway](https://visitlyntonandlynmouth.com/visit/lynmouth-model-railway)
- Lynton Toy Museum A5**  
[www.lyntontoy museum.co.uk](https://www.lyntontoy museum.co.uk)
- Lyn Valley Arts & Crafts Centre, Lynton A5**  
[www.facebook.com/lynvalleyartandcraft](https://www.facebook.com/lynvalleyartandcraft)
- Lynton and Lynmouth Cliff Railway A5**  
[www.cliffrailwaylynton.co.uk](https://www.cliffrailwaylynton.co.uk)
- Quince Honey Farm, South Molton D4**  
[www.quincehoneyfarm.co.uk](https://www.quincehoneyfarm.co.uk)



Yoga retreats • Botanical workshops  
Game school • Fungi walks  
Wild foraging

[rootproject.co.uk](https://rootproject.co.uk)  
[@rootprojectuk](https://@rootprojectuk)

- RHS Garden Rosemoor E2**  
[www.rhs.org.uk/gardens/rosemoor](https://www.rhs.org.uk/gardens/rosemoor)
- Torre Cider Farm, Washford B10**  
[www.torrecider.farm](https://www.torrecider.farm)
- Tropiquaria Zoo, Washford B10**  
[www.tropiquaria.co.uk](https://www.tropiquaria.co.uk)
- West Somerset Railway, Minehead A9**  
[www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk](https://www.west-somerset-railway.co.uk)
- Woody Bay Train Station A4**  
[www.lynton-rail.co.uk](https://www.lynton-rail.co.uk)




## Museums & Heritage Centres

- Allerford Museum A8**  
[www.allerfordmuseum.org.uk](https://www.allerfordmuseum.org.uk)
- Bampton Heritage Centre E8**  
[www.bampton.org.uk](https://www.bampton.org.uk)
- Combe Martin Museum A2**  
[www.combemartinmuseum.co.uk](https://www.combemartinmuseum.co.uk)
- Doverly Manor Museum, Porlock A7**  
[www.doverlymanormuseum.org.uk](https://www.doverlymanormuseum.org.uk)
- Dulverton Heritage Centre and Model Railway D8**  
[www.dulvertonheritagecentre.org.uk/](https://www.dulvertonheritagecentre.org.uk/)
- Dunster Museum and Dolls Museum B9**  
[www.dunstermuseum.co.uk](https://www.dunstermuseum.co.uk)
- Exmoor Natural History Centre, Porlock Weir A7**  
[www.enhs.org.uk](https://www.enhs.org.uk)
- Lyn & Exmoor Museum, Lynton A5**  
[www.facebook.com/LynExmoorMuseum](https://www.facebook.com/LynExmoorMuseum)
- Minehead Museum A9**  
[www.mineheadmuseum.co.uk](https://www.mineheadmuseum.co.uk)
- Watchet Museum B10**  
[www.watchetmuseum.co.uk](https://www.watchetmuseum.co.uk)
- Watchet Boathouse Museum B10**  
[www.lovewatchet.co.uk](https://www.lovewatchet.co.uk)

Inclusion in this list does not infer endorsement or recommendation by Exmoor National Park Authority.  
If you are a local provider wishing to be listed in future issues please email [ruralenterprise@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](mailto:ruralenterprise@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)

# Exmoor Events Diary 2025

This is only a selection of events happening around Exmoor in 2025. To see more, go to: [www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/events](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/events)




**Snowdrop Valley - Wheddon Cross**

Snowdrop Valley is a privately owned remote valley in a hidden part of Exmoor. Maps of the walks will be available from the parking kiosk, staffed from 9.00 - 4.00 each day.  
07919001801 cutcombeclerk@gmail.com



**Exmoor Food Fest**

The Exmoor Food Fest is celebrating the best hospitality our region has to offer throughout February. Some restaurants are also putting on Tasting Dinners (dates to be found on the website [www.exmoorfoodfest.com](http://www.exmoorfoodfest.com))  
info@exmoorevents.com



**Valentines Weekend and Cream Tea Challenge**

A weekend of romance on the Cliff Railway! Featuring the couples cream tea challenge - can you eat one of our famous giant scone cream teas in the time it takes the lift to travel?  
The Esplanade, Lynmouth, EX35 6EQ



**Free Choral Concert**

The choir from the Yarn Market Hotel's choral singing weekend will be performing in Dunster's historic Tithe Barn at 2.30 pm. Admission is free and all are welcome to attend.



**Stargazing at the Poltimore Inn**

Stargaze with us and Space Detectives @ the Poltimore Observatory in North Molton. Experience the darkness of Exmoor skies and have the opportunity to look through and observe the heavens with the observatory telescopes  
01598 740338 spacedetectives@yahoo.com




**Wild about Exmoor Stargazing Event @ The Exford Bridge Tearoom Dark Sky Hub**

Exford Bridge Tearooms, Exford TA24 7PY  
07859066400 wildaboutexmoor@yahoo.com




**Stargazing @ Holworthy Farm with Space Detectives**

Stargazing @ Holworthy Farm with Space Detectives is a warm and welcoming event with a 2 course home cooked farmhouse meal.  
01398 371244 holworthyfarm@aol.com



**Chargot Woods Walk**

This is a one hour stroll to look at Langham Engine House, then a two hour walk down the steep miners' track to see Bearland Flue and other features connected with iron mining.  
01984 640892 drwthw@gmail.com



**Exmoor Pony Centre: Pony Ranger Day**

Come and spend the day with ponies! Learn about caring for them, undertake yard tasks and have a ride. Also on April 14.  
01398 323093 info@exmoorponycentre.org.uk




**Exmoor Pony Centre: Activity Afternoon**

Enjoy family fun meeting our ponies, pony grooming, pony rides, craft activities and refreshments. No booking required. Just turn up!  
01398 323093 info@exmoorponycentre.org.uk




**Lynnton and Lynmouth Cliff Railway Talk and Tours 2025**

Come and meet one of our engineers, hear about how the Cliff Railway works, find out when, how and why it was built.  
The Esplanade, Lynmouth, EX35 6EQ



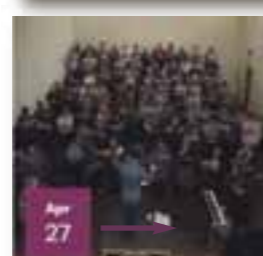
**Raleigh's Cross Short walk**

This is a three hour walk from Raleigh's Cross Inn, exploring old Brendon Village, the iron mines, the Winding house and the remains of the mineral railway still visible in the Brendon Hills. It includes part of the Incline: steep, spectacular, but optional. 01984 640892 drwthw@gmail.com



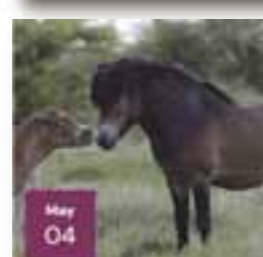
**The Lynnton & Barnstaple Railway: Postcode Week**

Are you resident in the TA or EX postcode areas? Bring along proof of your address on the day to display at our station shop and enjoy a relaxing train ride for just £2.00 per person.  
01598 763487 enquiries@lynton-rail.co.uk




**Choral Concert - Francis Poulenc - "Gloria"**

The choir from the Yarn Market Hotel's choral singing weekend will be performing Francis Poulenc's Gloria in Dunster's historic Tithe Barn at 2.30pm. Admission is free and all are welcome to attend.



**Exmoor Pony Society Stallion Parade and Spring Show**

Emmetts on Exmoor, Simonsbath, Somerset. TA24 7LD  
07376852090 Exmoorarearep@gmail.com

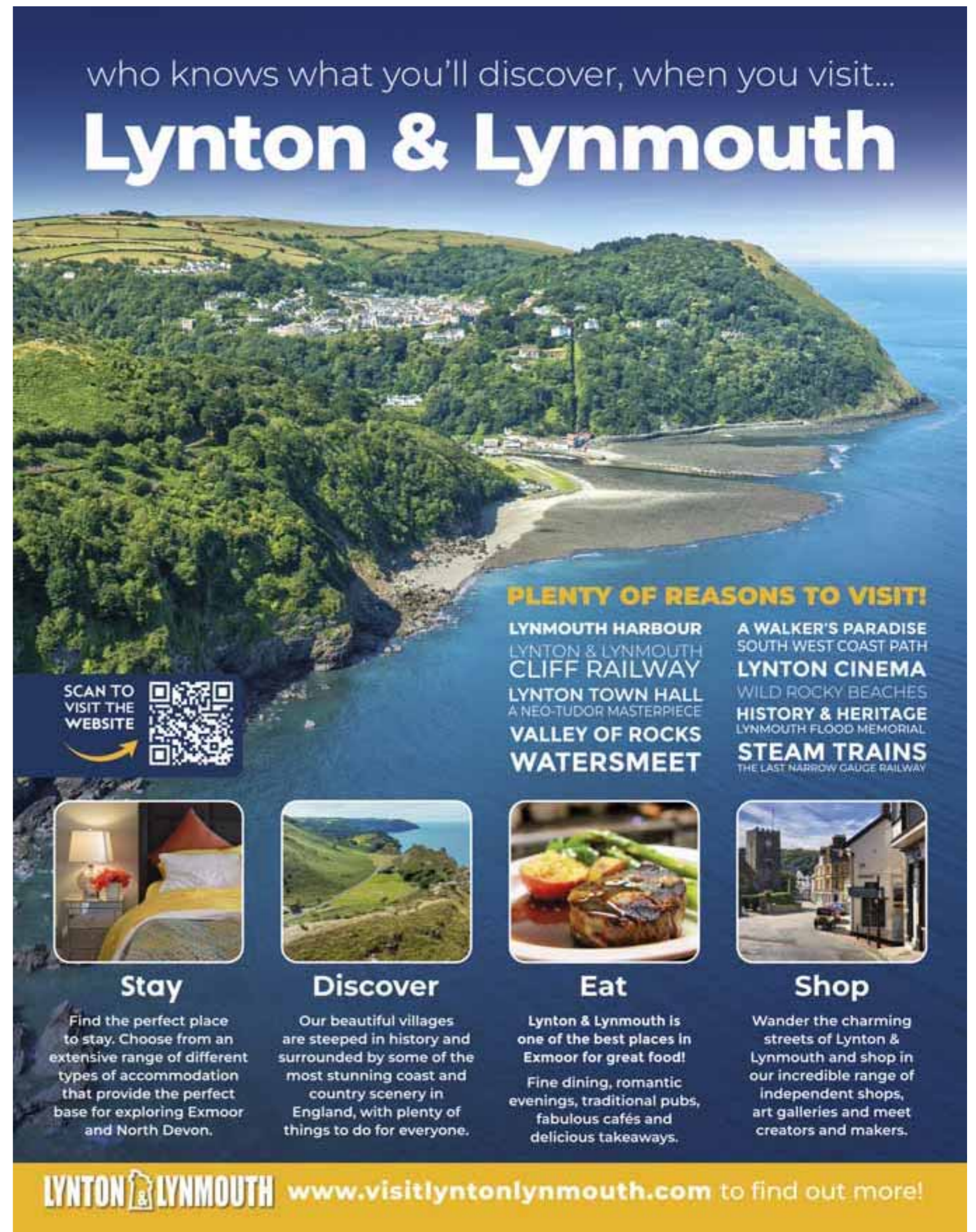


**Cliff Railway Day - Victorian & Steampunk Gathering**

A Celebration of the Cliff Railway, the largest Steampunk and Victorian gathering in Devon. A day of fun and laughter, suitable for the whole family. No need to book, just turn up.  
01598 753486 Contact@cliffrailwaylynton.co.uk

who knows what you'll discover, when you visit...

# Lynnton & Lynmouth




**PLENTY OF REASONS TO VISIT!**

- LYNMOUTH HARBOUR
- LYNTHON & LYNMOUTH CLIFF RAILWAY
- LYNTHON TOWN HALL A NEO-TUDOR MASTERPIECE
- VALLEY OF ROCKS
- WATERSMEET
- A WALKER'S PARADISE
- SOUTH WEST COAST PATH
- LYNTHON CINEMA
- WILD ROCKY BEACHES
- HISTORY & HERITAGE
- LYNMOUTH FLOOD MEMORIAL
- STEAM TRAINS
- THE LAST NARROW GAUGE RAILWAY


SCAN TO VISIT THE WEBSITE






**Stay**

Find the perfect place to stay. Choose from an extensive range of different types of accommodation that provide the perfect base for exploring Exmoor and North Devon.




**Discover**

Our beautiful villages are steeped in history and surrounded by some of the most stunning coast and country scenery in England, with plenty of things to do for everyone.



**Eat**

Lynnton & Lynmouth is one of the best places in Exmoor for great food! Fine dining, romantic evenings, traditional pubs, fabulous cafés and delicious takeaways.



**Shop**

Wander the charming streets of Lynnton & Lynmouth and shop in our incredible range of independent shops, art galleries and meet creators and makers.

**LYNTHON & LYNMOUTH** [www.visitlyntonlynmouth.com](http://www.visitlyntonlynmouth.com) to find out more!



# Come see the Greatest Show in Earth

Unwind in 65 acres of botanical beauty and woodlands within easy reach of Exmoor, the North Devon coast and Exeter. Curated to inspire, RHS Garden Rosemoor has year-round interest and comes to life with special events and family-friendly activities.

Great Torrington, Devon, EX38 8PH  
Your visit supports our work as a charity.  
[rhs.org.uk/rosemoor](http://rhs.org.uk/rosemoor)



## The Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Steam Trains from Woody Bay Station KIDS GO FREE (Under 15 years)

(Must be accompanied by a fare paying adult.)

- Two-Mile Round Trip
- Tickets Valid All Day
- Tea-Room & Station Shop
- First Class Upgrade
- Family Events Throughout The Year
- Group Booking Discount
- Dog Friendly
- Large Free Car Park



On the A39 between Lynton & Blackmoor Gate - EX31 4RA

[www.lynton-rail.co.uk](http://www.lynton-rail.co.uk)

Tel: 01598 763487  
[enquiries@lynton-rail.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@lynton-rail.co.uk)



Image Credit: Mike Lanning & Dave Hallett



## Exmoor Events Diary 2025 (cont)

Go to [www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/events](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/events) for full booking details and a greater selection of events.

Recurring event, happening more than once. See [www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/events](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/events) for more dates.



**Exmoor Nature Festival**  
Saturday 17th May to Sunday 1st June  
Wildlife & Wellbeing in the National Park  
[www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/nature-festival](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/nature-festival) for more details.



**Raleigh's Cross Long Walk**  
We visit Beulah Chapel, the old Brendon village and the Winding House. Then we go down the steep Incline to Comberow, through the woods to Leighland Chapel and circle back via a picturesque waterfall.  
01984 640892 [drwthw@gmail.com](mailto:drwthw@gmail.com)



**Brayford Duck Race**  
A fun day for all the family with cream teas, ice creams, hot dogs, plus various stalls as well as a Family Dog Show.  
1pm - 4pm. Brayford Village, EX32 7QH  
01598 710388 [janejejes@hotmail.com](mailto:janejejes@hotmail.com)




**Exmoor Pony Centre: Family Fun Extravaganza**  
Family fun with games and celebrations, stalls and all our usual Wednesday afternoon activities such as meeting our ponies, pony grooming, pony rides, craft activities and refreshments.  
01398 323093 [info@exmoorponycentre.org.uk](mailto:info@exmoorponycentre.org.uk)



**Brendon Gardens**  
4 gardens in Brendon opening for the NGS (National Garden Scheme) Lunches, homemade teas, plants and bric-a-brac for sale. Display of vintage telephones and toys. W.C. available.  
01598 741343 [lalindevon@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lalindevon@yahoo.co.uk)



**St Petrock's Patronal Festival**  
Village Festival with historical materials, tours, childrens activities in church field, BBQ and licensed bar. TA24 7TP.  
01643 841500 [marion@j-mail.org](mailto:marion@j-mail.org)



**Rockpooling with the Rangers**  
Join Exmoor National Park Rangers to explore the rockpools of Lynmouth. 2:30pm - 4:30pm. Lynmouth beach - meet opposite Lynmouth National Park Centre. EX35 6EQ  
07970099116 [cwray@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](mailto:cwray@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)




**Lyn Valley Classic Show**  
Over 400 cars will roll into town, super cars, classics, vintage, bikes and even tractors - vehicles for everyone. With stalls and activities for the family.  
10am - 4pm. Lynmouth Manor Green. EX35 6EN.  
01598 753777 [lynvalleyclassic@gmail.com](mailto:lynvalleyclassic@gmail.com)




**Stogumber Open Gardens**  
Around 15 beautiful gardens, large and small, will be open, along with plant stalls, bric a brac, an activity in the beautiful Grade 1 listed church, and fabulous food in the Village Hall served all day. This is its 44th year, and over that time it has raised many £1000s for charity. Stogumber, TA4 3TG



**Summer Solstice - Ponies & Wildlife Evening**  
Celebrate the longest day of the year with a family friendly evening meeting Exmoor ponies and finding out about Exmoor's wildlife at dusk including owls and moths. 5:30pm - 7:00pm  
01398 323093 [info@exmoorponycentre.org.uk](mailto:info@exmoorponycentre.org.uk)



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07970099116 [cwray@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](mailto:cwray@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)




**Lynton and Lynmouth Cliff Railway Talk and Tours 2025**  
Come and meet one of our engineers, hear about how the Cliff Railway works, find out when, how and why it was built.  
The Esplanade, Lynmouth, EX35 6EQ



**Carhampton Village Fete**  
Traditional village fete with craft stalls and country crafts on show, the West Somerset Morris Dancers will also be in attendance. Stalls of books, plants, raffle and produce etc.  
Carhampton Recreation Centre TA24 6LX



**Rails & Dinosaur Scales**  
Dinosaurs have taken over Woody Bay Station! Ruby the Megalosaurus and her baby dino friends will be exploring the station throughout the weekend! Woody Bay railway station.  
01598 763487 [enquiries@lynton-rail.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@lynton-rail.co.uk)



**Watercolour Class**  
All abilities and experience are catered for. Materials supplied, learn in a fun atmosphere Exmoor National Park Centre, Exmoor House, Dulverton, TA22 9HL. Booking essential. Please contact Chris Howe for more information and to book: 07969 388815 [chriswivey@hotmail.com](mailto:chriswivey@hotmail.com)




**Exmoor Pony Centre: Cream Tea with Ponies**  
Come and celebrate our 25th year with a family friendly afternoon meeting Exmoor ponies, minibeast safari and cream teas. Booking Essential.  
[info@exmoorponycentre.org.uk](mailto:info@exmoorponycentre.org.uk). 01398 323093

Photos are intended to be give a flavour of what you can expect and are not necessarily specific to the actual event.



**Rockpooling with the Rangers** 

Join Exmoor National Park Rangers to explore the rockpools of Lynmouth. 2:30pm - 4:30pm. Lynmouth beach - meet opposite Lynmouth National Park Centre. EX35 6EQ 07970099116 [cwray@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](mailto:cwray@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)



**Porlock Horse Show**

Horse and pony showing, Jumping, Gymkhana, Exmoor Horn Sheep show, Staghorn Show, Dog Show, Bar and refreshments. West Luccombe Farm, Porlock. TA24 8HT. [charmainora@icloud.com](mailto:charmainora@icloud.com). 07881406306




**Rockpooling with the Rangers** 

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**Brendon Gardens** 

4 gardens in Brendon opening for the NGS (National Garden Scheme) Lunches, homemade teas, plants and bric-a-brac for sale. Display of vintage telephones and toys. W.C. available. 01598 741343 [lalindevon@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lalindevon@yahoo.co.uk)




**Porlock Country Fair**


A fun day out for all the family with lots of entertainment and craft stalls, as well as information stands and a variety of catering. Porlock Recreation Ground 07799 250623 [porlockcountryfair@gmail.com](mailto:porlockcountryfair@gmail.com)




**Exmoor Mines Walk** 


A visit to some interesting mines on Exmoor. Bring your own car! Meet at Simonsbath car park. Explore Wheal Eliza and the Cornham Ford workings or others. [drwthw@gmail.com](mailto:drwthw@gmail.com). 01984 640892.



**Rockpooling with the Rangers** 

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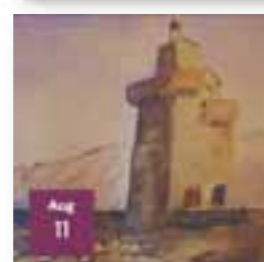
**Brompton Regis Village show and Gymkhana**


Brompton Regis Show is fun for all the family. 9am - 6pm Renford Knap, Brompton Regis TA22 9NJ. 07973 725848.




**Dulverton Family Dog Show**

An exciting new event for 2025 for Dulverton's dog-loving community and visitors! On the pretty Exmoor Lawns beside the River Barle in the heart of our charming moorland town. Exmoor Lawns, Dulverton TA22 9HL. [hello@visitdulverton.com](mailto:hello@visitdulverton.com)



**Watercolour Class** 

All abilities and experience are catered for. Materials supplied, learn in a fun atmosphere Exmoor National Park Centre, Exmoor House, Dulverton, TA22 9HL. Booking essential. Please contact Chris Howe for more information and to book: 07969 388815 [chriswivey@hotmail.com](mailto:chriswivey@hotmail.com)



**Dunster Show**

Dunster Show is the premier Agricultural Show in West Somerset and one of the major one day Shows of the West of England. Taking place on the lawns below Dunster Castle the dramatic backdrop is a perfect setting for a magical family day out. Dunster Showground. TA26 6NY



**Exmoor Pony Centre: Activity Afternoon** 

Enjoy family fun meeting our ponies, pony grooming, pony rides, craft activities and refreshments. No booking required. Just turn up! 01398 323093 [info@exmoorponycentre.org.uk](mailto:info@exmoorponycentre.org.uk)



**International Dog Day**

Dogs travel free all day, canine themed day with treats, fun dog show, doggy stalls and fun. Lynton and Lynmouth Cliff Railway, The Esplanade, Lynmouth, EX35 6EQ 01598 753486 [Contact@cliffrailwaylynton.co.uk](mailto:Contact@cliffrailwaylynton.co.uk)



**Exmoor Pony Centre: Activity Afternoon** 

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**Dulverton Farmers Market** 

A traditional farmers market where you will discover a whole host of artisans and producers from across Exmoor, Devon and Somerset, as well as hot and cold refreshments and live music! An unmissable monthly summer event. [hello@visitdulverton.com](mailto:hello@visitdulverton.com)



**EXMOOR PONY CENTRE**

**25 years of helping ponies**

**FREE ADMISSION TO OUR VISITOR CENTRE**

**VISITOR CENTRE**  
open from 12 noon to 4pm  
Wed, Thurs, Fri, Sat & Sun Closed Mon & Tues  
2nd April - 2nd November 2025

MEET THE PONIES | GIFT SHOP | DOGS WELCOME

**PONY RIDING**  
for experienced riders and beginners  
PRE-BOOKING ESSENTIAL  
T's & C's apply. Visit our website for details.

**ACTIVITY AFTERNOONS**  
family fun with pony grooming, pony rides, craft activities and refreshments  
NO BOOKING REQUIRED JUST COME ALONG!  
Wednesday 12 noon - 4pm  
9, 16 April, 28 May, 30 July,  
6, 13, 20, 27 August, 29 October 2025

**RIVERSIDE RIDES & PONY RANGER DAYS**  
FULL CALENDAR OF EVENTS AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE

[www.exmoorponycentre.org.uk](http://www.exmoorponycentre.org.uk) [info@exmoorponycentre.org.uk](mailto:info@exmoorponycentre.org.uk) 01398 323093  
Exmoor Pony Centre Dulverton Somerset TA22 9QE W3W /// [hindering\\_engages\\_beast](https://www.instagram.com/hindering_engages_beast)

Registered Charity No: 1116710  
The Moorland Mouse Trust and Exmoor Pony Centre working together to promote and protect the Exmoor pony. Licensed with Somerset Council LN/0001199



Come and explore **WIMBLEBALL LAKE** for a great day out!

Near Dulverton, TA22 9NU

walking • watersports • play area • cafe • wildlife  
cycling • running • high ropes • archery • canoeing

Visit our website for activities and camping availability

#ItsYourOutdoors  
01398 371460  
[wiakestrust.org.uk/activities](http://www.wiakestrust.org.uk/activities)



**Brendon Manor**  
5 star rated by Farm Direct Council

We welcome total beginners to advanced riders...open all year round!

**"The Best Access Onto Exmoor"!**

[www.brendonmanor.com](http://www.brendonmanor.com)  
01598 741 246  
[brendonmanortrekking@gmail.com](mailto:brendonmanortrekking@gmail.com)  
Between Lynton & Simonsbath on the B3223

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# A Truly Exmoor Experience at Holt Ball Farm

## Exmoor Pony Project



### Conservation & Connection

Enjoy 'Connecting With Exmoor Ponies & Yourself' workshops with Dawn Westcott, author of *Wild Pony Whispering*.



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### Wellness & Wellbeing

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## Exmoor Events Diary 2025 (cont)

[www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/events](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/events)

**Dulverton Trail Fun Run & Canicross**  
Now in its fifth consecutive year, join us for the popular Dulverton Trail Fun Run & Canicross – cross country running along 5km or 10km routes through the beautiful Exmoor countryside. 9am Exmoor Lawns, Dulverton. TA22 9HL. [hello@visitdulverton.com](mailto:hello@visitdulverton.com). 07785 901017.

Step 14

**Rail 200 Autumn Gala**  
Join us at the Lynton and Barnstaple Railway for our Autumn Gala! All engines in steam plus visiting engines. Visit our attractions marquee including stalls and entertainment throughout the weekend. See the Lynton & Barnstaple website for further details! [www.lynton-rail.co.uk/](http://www.lynton-rail.co.uk/)

Step 27 Step 28

**Cream Tea with Inspirational Women - A celebration of International Ada Lovelace Day**  
Five diverse women speakers. Porlock Village Hall, TA24 8QD. 01643 863117 [graham.haw@btinternet.com](mailto:graham.haw@btinternet.com)

Oct 11

**Exmoor Dark Skies Festival 2025**  
For the widest range of stargazing and night wellbeing events, late autumn could be the ideal time to visit Exmoor. Visit [www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/darkskiesfestival](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/darkskiesfestival) or pick up a printed programme, available from National Park Centres from August.

Friday 17th October to Sunday 2nd November

**Exmoor Pony Centre: Wildlife at Night**  
2 family friendly evenings meeting Exmoor ponies and finding out about Exmoor's wildlife at night. Hot chocolate and marshmallows/Drink and biscuits included. Booking Essential. 01398 323093 [info@exmoorponycentre.org.uk](mailto:info@exmoorponycentre.org.uk)

Oct 30 Nov 01

**Dulverton Exmoor Literary Festival**  
The Dulverton Exmoor Literary Festival is back for 2025 - its fourth year! This year's festival will again feature a great lineup of author talks across both days of the weekend. [hello@visitdulverton.com](mailto:hello@visitdulverton.com)

Nov 15 Nov 16

**Lynton & Lynmouth Christmas Shopping Weekend**  
Stay, Eat, Drink & Shop in Lynton & Lynmouth, including possibly Exmoor's Best Christmas market! [visitlyntonandlynmouth.com](http://visitlyntonandlynmouth.com)

Nov 29 Nov 30

**Dulverton by Starlight**  
Dulverton by Starlight is a magical event held every year on the first Sunday of December, open to all free of charge. [hello@visitdulverton.com](mailto:hello@visitdulverton.com)

Dec 07

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Retail & Enterprise Officer **Clare Weeks** shares how you can help conserve a national treasure



Clare Weeks with gate donor Brian Seward

CareMoor  
for Exmoor



Donate online today at  
[www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/caremoor](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/caremoor)

**Exmoor National Park is a tapestry of dramatic landscapes, rich biodiversity and sense of heritage. To help safeguard this natural wonder 'CareMoor for Exmoor' offers a number of ways you can support our projects.**

**Donate a Gate: Open Paths to Adventure**

A gateway to exploration, quite literally! The Donate a Gate scheme allows individuals, families, and organisations to sponsor the installation of accessible gates throughout Exmoor. This not only improves access for walkers but also helps protect the National Park's traditional dry-stone walls and hedgerows.

**Introducing: Signposts of the Future**

Launching this year, the **Sponsor a Fingerpost** campaign will help to restore and install iconic Exmoor wooden fingerposts. These charming wayfinders are a signature feature of the park, often weathered by time and the elements. Sponsorship helps maintain their historical charm, while supporting waymarking for visitors.

**Growing Exmoor's Future: Parkland Tree Planting**

Our tree-planting initiatives focus on

restoring parkland trees with both native and climate resilient species. Here nature recovery meets opportunities for public engagement. Your contributions help to provide habitats for wildlife, combat climate change and to keep Exmoor special for future generations.

As a donor, you can even personalise your tributes with a plaque, for a meaningful dedication or celebration.

**Why Your Support Matters**

Every penny raised by CareMoor goes directly into conserving Exmoor, enhancing visitor access and protecting habitats for species ranging from Waxcaps to Exmoor ponies. By contributing, you become part of



Parkland tree

Exmoor's story, ensuring it remains a sanctuary for people and wildlife.

**How You Can Help**

- Donate Online by contributing to appeals that resonate with you.
- Join volunteer tree-planting events or help maintain trails and heritage landmarks.
- Sponsor a Landmark: Whether it's a gate or fingerpost, your donation preserves tangible pieces of Exmoor's charm.
- Raise Funds: Host local events or challenge yourself with sponsored activities to support CareMoor.

# CareMoor for Exmoor Business Champions

The picturesque landscapes of Exmoor are more than scenic; they inspire a sense of community and commitment to preserving natural beauty and heritage. The CareMoor for Exmoor Business Champions scheme brings together businesses and individuals to support vital conservation and access projects. Their involvement helps fund projects like footpath repairs, tree planting, and habitat restoration.

Among the growing list of CareMoor Business Champions are the Exmoor Tea Company and the Cottage Beer Project. Both embody the spirit of local enterprise while giving back to the region they call home.

**The Exmoor Tea Company: Brewing Sustainability**



For founders Kenny and Rachel McDonald, CareMoor represents a way to "pay it forward" and connect with those who value the National Park. Exmoor Tea ensures its award-winning blends adhere to sustainable practices, from the ingredients they use to the biodegradable tea pyramids and packaging made from plant-based materials. Joining the CareMoor Business Champions programme was a natural fit for a business that "thrives on the beauty and tranquillity of the region".

**Cottage Beer Project: Crafting a Legacy**



Another standout CareMoor Business Champion is the Cottage Beer Project, a nano-brewery that crafts distinctive beers inspired by Exmoor's character. From sourcing local ingredients to embracing



eco-conscious production methods, the Cottage Beer Project is deeply invested in the land that inspires its creations.

Dan Clayton says becoming a CareMoor Business Champion was an extension of his philosophy that businesses should be active stewards of their local environment: "Every bottle of our beer is a celebration of Exmoor, and it's our responsibility to give back to this incredible place."

**A Shared Vision for Exmoor**

Through the efforts of champions like Exmoor Tea and the Cottage Beer Project, CareMoor is building a community-driven approach to conservation. Every blend of tea and every bottle of beer sold tells a story of collaboration, sustainability, and a shared vision for Exmoor's future.

If you're a business owner who feels inspired by the stunning landscapes of Exmoor, consider joining CareMoor and making a tangible difference. Together, we can ensure that the wild beauty of Exmoor remains a source of wonder and inspiration for generations to come.

**Meet Naomi Cudmore, editor of Exmoor Magazine - one of our National Park Partners**



I'm the editor of Exmoor Magazine and also owner with Elaine Pearce and Heather Holt. It's made with love right here, on Exmoor. Unusually for a 'glossy', it's not part of a chain and has worked hard to remain locally owned and completely independent ever since its launch in 1997.

After finishing my English degree in 1996, I

knew that I wanted to stay on Exmoor, but I also wanted to work in publishing. It seemed the only way to kick start my career was to go to London. I managed one long year in the big smoke before an opportunity arose to work for South West publishers David & Charles.

From there I progressed to an editing role at Halsgrove Publishing and this coincided with them setting up Exmoor Magazine, under the editorship of Hilary Binding, who had been my history teacher at school. Alongside my day job, I also freelanced for various magazines, including Exmoor, as a features writer, so I have written for the magazine from the start. I feel so lucky to have ended up as the editor of Exmoor Magazine – and also, since 2010, one of its owners. It is a real privilege.

If there is such a thing as 'slow publishing', this is it. Every issue is carefully crafted using a team of local writers – all specialists in their fields – and local photographers. Exmoor Magazine prides

itself on its original research and boasts an impressive archive of thousands of in-depth features covering landscapes, the environment, food and farming, flora and fauna, local characters, community endeavours, local history and much more.

Exmoor Magazine only exists because of its readers. I hope that we can continue to bring you truly local content for another few decades to come! Thank you for supporting your local magazine.

If you would like a slice of real Exmoor on your coffee table every quarter, whether you are reading this locally or from afar, then visit [www.exmoormagazine.co.uk](http://www.exmoormagazine.co.uk) to find out more and look out for it on your travels. Naomi and her team post on Instagram and Facebook daily and would love you to engage with their content.

Find free resources and more on how Exmoor National Park Authority's Rural Enterprise projects can support your local business at [exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/community/rural-enterprise](http://exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/community/rural-enterprise)

# National Parks Your Natural Health Service

Ben Totterdell looks at the health and wellbeing benefits National Parks can bring



Women walking day

Our National Parks, along with our National Health Service, were born in the period after the Second World War. The country, having been through a period of sacrifice, destruction, hardship and loss, was looking to build a brighter future. Fundamental to this was the vision of a healthier life, available for all, whether that meant being able to access a doctor or being able to freely enjoy the open air and beauty of our landscapes.

Lewis Silkin, the Minister for Town & Country Planning in 1949 said in debate on the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Bill: "with the increasing nervous strain of life it makes it all the more necessary that we should be able to enjoy the peace and spiritual refreshment which only contact with nature can give."

Today, with our increasingly crowded world and busy lives, the benefits that National Parks including Exmoor provide and the role that they can play, in working alongside our NHS to support the Nation's Health and Wellbeing, are even more important than when they were founded more than 70 years ago.

We know being outside in nature makes us feel better, but there's now increasing scientific evidence to back that up.

Alongside the cardio-vascular and physical fitness benefits walking and cycling the fantastic network of paths on Exmoor can deliver, we increasingly understand that being surrounded by, engaging with and being connected to nature can support measurable benefits to our mental health and wellbeing. These benefits can keep people healthier and happier, reducing admissions and saving the NHS millions of pounds on treatments.

### Research shows that being outdoors and connecting with nature can

- Reduce stress, anxiety, depression and fatigue.
- Boost our immune system
- Lower blood pressure and heart rate
- Make us feel happier

At Exmoor National Park we are committed to helping as many people as possible to explore and enjoy our beautiful moorlands, woodland, coast, and farmland and boost their health and wellbeing.

### Sow a seed for a healthy life

Our schools programme works with thousands of young people every year from a wide range of backgrounds. If we can give them an inspiring experience on



Young Volunteers

Exmoor and build their connection and confidence with the countryside, it helps to shape a stronger connection with nature that can last a lifetime and give them the tools to boost their health and wellbeing for years to come.

### Nature Prescriptions

Working with the RSPB and the Health Coaches Team at West Somerset Primary Care Network we developed a calendar of simple ways that people facing health challenges can use nature as part of their treatment.

### Welcome to Exmoor Days

We know that for some people there are real challenges in getting here and that the very people who really need a natural boost to their health and wellbeing are often those who find it hardest to get access to nature. Our welcome to Exmoor Days are designed to work with groups who may need more of a helping hand with transport and other support. Groups we have worked with include local families with young children, older people facing isolation due to lack of transport and groups from locally resettled communities from Afghanistan.



Welcome to Exmoor

### Volunteering - feeling better by getting involved

We are so grateful for the amazing work that our volunteers do supporting Exmoor - and hopefully many of them will feel the benefits. In a study by The National Council for Voluntary Organisations - Over three-quarters of volunteers (77%) reported that volunteering improved their mental health and wellbeing. This benefit was even more widespread than physical health benefits (53%).

# Volunteers are the backbone of National Parks

Jackie Kiberd catches up for a cuppa with some of the wonderful people who give their time to support our work on Exmoor.

### Julia, did you explore Exmoor much as a youngster?

I've always had a love for Exmoor. As a kid we'd go to Haddon Hill and Wimbleball Lake, have a picnic, look at the ponies.

### What prompted you to start volunteering?

It started when I did a bee keeping course. I'd love to have my own hives and bees are fascinating in their behaviour. That got me thinking about helping nature, as pollinator numbers are struggling. I also love walking so I signed up as a path watcher in the Exton area, my own patch on the moor was the perfect fit.

### Apart from helping us with Exmoor's path network, what other activities do you get involved with?

Invasive species like non-native crayfish, exploring parts of Exmoor you don't get to

see. The 100 mile 'Seashore Survey' at Heddon's Mouth - a stunning day and thoroughly enjoyable, we even spotted a peregrine falcon. I helped at the South Molton Planetarium for the Dark Skies Festival and a talk on Exo Planets. That was great fun!

The more I do, the more my eyes have been opened. I've gone for walks with my friends surprising them by pointing things out. Following my Wax Cap fungi surveying training, my sister and I went for lunch at a pub and found 25 varieties just in their grounds!

### What other benefits do you get from volunteering?

It's so important for my own mental health - the open spaces on Exmoor give me such a sense of freedom. You relax, tune into the birdsong and feel a whole lot better.



Julia was born and raised just outside Exmoor and fits flexible volunteering around working for an airline

### Finally, any thoughts on what you want to do next?

I want to do butterfly surveying and increase my wildflower knowledge, to help me with planting when I get those hives!



Bill 94, who volunteered with Exmoor National Park for 12 years, with volunteer friends David and Fran Plumb

### Bill you were Exmoor National Park's Authority's first volunteer

Yes, having recently retired from the Navy and later British Aerospace I met a group of the Rangers outside Exmoor House. I asked if they could make use of my skills and knowledge of Exmoor and I was 'adopted' as their first official volunteer at a Ranger team meeting the following Monday.

It turned out to be a role of infinite variety. I led guided walks, undertook tree work and helping to maintain rights of way. We'd go off for the day from the depot at Exford, armed with all the tools and materials we needed and I found the manual labour very enjoyable.

### David - how did yours and Bill's paths cross?

I retired from teaching and, after a lifetime working indoors, I wanted to get out into the countryside. I joined a work party at Simonsbath, where I met Bill. My first task was fencing but I was hopeless at DIY and Bill gave me the job of handing him tools! I felt privileged to be part of a friendly band of 6 volunteers, baking potatoes for lunch in the bonfire when we were out clearing paths for the day.

### How varied were the activities?

No two days were the same, we had lots of unusual tasks - searching for an injured pony, checking out a rare sighting of 'Ring Ouzels'. One occasion I went up the East Lynn River after heavy rainfall, to report on how much of the footpath was navigable. We got to meet Sir Ranulph Fiennes who spearheaded a national campaign for litter picking. He gave us our own litter pick kit and we've since done many beach cleans and litter picks. Marshalling the annual 'Exmoor Perambulation', was an annual commitment. My checkpoint was at Larkbarrow and my kit included a large letter H for helicopter landings in case of emergencies. One of the Rangers assisted on horseback, relaying messages and rounding up anyone lost or struggling.

### Did your existing skills come in handy?

There's a lot of sharing of knowledge amongst the staff and volunteers. Bill taught

us map reading, setting orientation courses to test our skills. 'Ponies on starboard' Bill called out one day. I mistakenly looked to the left and failed the test!

**Bill:** I taught you how to use radios too. With my knowledge of naval ordinance, I was tasked with checking out reports of wartime ordinance on the moor, calling in the bomb disposal unit where necessary.

**David:** Being a former headteacher, I helped the Education team with school visits and talks about National Parks to sixth formers.

### You caught the volunteering bug too then Fran?

Yes, once our children had grown up, I got involved with dormice surveys (such sweet creatures) and I helped with Signal Crayfish monitoring in Exmoor's rivers. David and I are lucky that we've enjoyed volunteering together. We surveyed the national park boundary, scrambling across remote, beautiful parts of the moor. Nowadays, we enjoy helping at Ashcombe Gardens, at the tree nursery in Exford and on tree planting days. We love talking to members of the public who stop for a chat.

**David:** We're always learning. I attended a course on lichens, it was a bit technical, but I still love them! We feel very lucky and we've made some great friends, like Bill.

# Woodland management and native species

## What makes the cut?

Hawkcombe wood

Tree lovers are understandably passionate and often have strong views on what is native to our National Park, but how long does something have to be in the landscape before it's considered native? **Graeme McVittie** uncovers some fascinating tree truths – past and future.

English elm, once such a quintessential component of our landscape now sadly absent as a tree due to elm disease, was in fact introduced by the Romans from Lazio! Conversely sweet chestnut, so characteristic and widespread across parts of southern England and once thought to have been brought here by the Romans, has probably only been here since the mid-17th Century. Our beautiful, and indisputably native, oak is only so abundant because it was favoured as a 'coppice species'

Our Trees and Woodlands Team have been busy working with a diverse mix of woodland to maximise biodiversity, gathering seeds locally, planting native species like oak, blackthorn, hazel and field maple but also the trees that occasionally are seen as more controversial. Why is that?

With climate change and disease in the mix, we need to be flexible in our planting strategy. It's about planting the right trees in the right place. Trees that have regenerated over centuries, millennia even, and hold a unique genetic heritage, but also trees that can cope with and adapt to changes in conditions and climate. Interestingly some trees often seen as non-native, can be more local than we think.

Some foresters suggest we ought to be sourcing seed from trees growing in parts of southern Europe, which have climate similar to what the UK may have in 50 – 100 years, and that we should be assisting the migration of tree species north, faster than might happen naturally, to keep-up with the rate of climate change.

### Scots pine (UK native)

It's called Scots pine because it's now most commonly found in Scotland, but it's widespread and native right across Europe, and was certainly native in England following the ice age. It showed a decline in the bronze age but historical and archaeological records indicate that it survived in parts of Wales and England until about 300–400 years ago, indeed there are remnant populations now thought to be native.

There's no reason why it shouldn't be a more widespread native

species across England again. We have evidence of remnants of Scots pine in our Exmoor pollen records and Scots pine timber found in Exmoor peat.

It's been a part of the visual, cultural and historic landscape here for hundreds of years with its distinctive shape. It was eradicated 500 years ago but bounced back on Exmoor, particularly in places like Yarner Wood and Webbers Post where it was planted for aesthetic purposes. It's also a fine timber tree – the wood known as "red deal" to carpenters.

It's an important tree species for Wildlife especially native birds like crossbills, who love to prise open its pinecones to get at the seeds and hopefully one day red squirrels will once again be seen nibbling the cones. Moreover, it's an adaptable species, resilient to climate change and disease which is an increasingly vital consideration.

### Sycamore (UK Naturalised)

It's only a geological quirk of fate that the English Channel formed between Britain and France before sycamore had chance to naturally migrate further north and west, otherwise the Sycamore would likely now be officially native.

Ash Dieback is a big issue on Exmoor. No one species alone can substitute ash, however Sycamore (or Celtic maple) is one of the robust, 'naturalised' contenders that's been here certainly since the Middle Ages, maybe even those Romans again! When planted or managed as part of a mixture, many of the animal species that relied on ash also use sycamore, which can support some of the same specialist insects, mosses and lichens. Norway maple has a similar European distribution.



Scots pine  
Sarah Hailstone

### Woodland and Butterflies

We've been engaged in a long-term project to restore oak coppice in Hawkcombe Wood National Nature Reserve near Porlock to help the recovery of the rare Heath Fritillary butterfly, also traditionally known as the "Woodmans follower" because of its habit of occupying recently coppiced areas. It has been breeding successfully in Hawkcombe for a few years now. In 2023 they bred in large numbers which resulted in a "super-dispersal" which helped establish new colonies up to 10km away.



Heath Fritillary  
Jim Asher

### Hornbeam (South East England native)

Hornbeam arrived naturally in antiquity but its progress north and west was impeded as land was cleared for farming. It's one of those species that is currently not affected by pests and diseases (except grey squirrels) and with a warming climate we can assist its migration by including it in planting projects.

### Small and Large Leaved Lime (England native)

Both species of lime are native to England, however large leaved is now one of our rarest trees. They are largely free of pests and diseases and may benefit from a more "continental" climate and so may become more successful in the future.

### Italian Alder (southern Europe)

A highly adaptable non-invasive species which thrives on a range of soils. It is largely disease free, has few pests and will be well adapted to a warmer and drier climate. It also has the advantage like our native alder of being able to "fix" atmospheric nitrogen in the soil where it can become available to other trees. So, alders are excellent "nurse" trees helping longer-term trees establish and thrive.

### What is coppicing?

It's an ancient system of woodland management where trees are cut close to the ground on a regular cycle. They regrow from dormant buds at the base of the stump (known as the 'stool') to create dense stands of multi-stemmed trees. The new stems grow back faster to provide a sustainable timber supply, rather than harvesting more mature, thicker branches. Oak is coppiced on 30-year cycle, willow might be coppiced every year or 2, hazel every 7 years. Coppicing results in a woodland mosaic of different ages, heights and densities and is an incredibly rich habitat for birds, insects and plants.

## RACE TO ZERO

# How are we doing on Decarbonisation?

As a National Park Authority, we have halved our carbon emissions since a climate emergency was declared in 2019.

It's a timely achievement now that we've joined with other National Parks in the UK, in committing to the UN-backed 'Race to Zero' initiative. A recent report, published by Small World Consulting and led by world-leading carbon foot printing expert Mike Berners-Lee, shows that changes to reach net zero can deliver a wide range of environmental benefits, such as increased biodiversity and flood resilience, but also economic and social benefits.

UK National Parks are pledging to becoming beacons for a sustainable future, using our partnerships to help meet the UK's climate change targets, while also supporting thriving rural communities. Decarbonisation and tackling climate change can increase recreational value and investment in landscapes, offering new sustainable employment opportunities and healthier communities.

We are not only reducing emissions but helping to draw down excess carbon from the atmosphere, with numerous actions in answer to the climate crisis. We've added even more electric vehicles to our fleet and installed EV charging points across the National Park. In a move away from fossil fuels we're using more solar panels, a wind turbine and a biomass boiler powered by wood grown on our own estate.

Our Field Services Team use electric tools in producing Exmoor's locally made gates, stiles and iconic signposts, from wood grown from seeds nurtured in our tree nursery and used to stock our woodlands. The timber from these woodlands is processed using our local sawmill.

Our partnership working and funding from Farming in Protected Landscapes supports regenerative agriculture schemes. Wood-pasture, where livestock are grazed around trees to improve soil health, hedgerow planting to offer shade and browsing (extra fodder for livestock) and leat restoration to aid flood management. Mobile chicken housing helps fly control and fertilises the ground naturally, reducing reliance on chemical methods. 'Field to fork' farm education events encourage a transition to more locally grown produce, helping to support local business but also halving emissions from food eaten in National Parks.

We're working in partnerships such as the award-winning 'Southwest Peatland Partnership' to mitigate climate change and towards a more nature-rich Exmoor. Meadow creation as part of our 'Sowing the Seeds' project, also funded through Farming in Protected Landscapes, aims to revive and restore species-rich grassland across Exmoor. Temperate rainforest restoration is also a big part of our climate mitigation strategy.



Scots pine seedlings at our tree nursery

# Dr Lucy Shipley uncovers the story of Exmoor

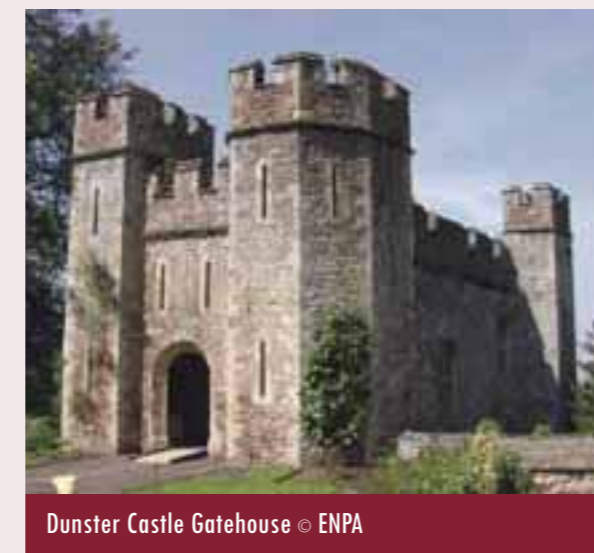
The Exmoor Historic Environment Record (HER) is a repository of information on historic sites, buildings and landscapes across Exmoor. That sounds dry and a bit dusty, a dour record of the nitty gritty details. But the Exmoor HER is far from dusty - it's filled with stories, fascinating figures and extraordinary events that are closely linked to Britain's past. From tiny echoes of people's daily lives in the past to vast transformations of the landscape, the HER is a place to spark ideas and pique your curiosity.



Some of the human stories hidden in the HER are heartbreakers- the children left in the care of the Dulverton Workhouse, or the young pilot from Singapore killed when his plane crashed in 1971. Some are inspirational- the paths and woods designed by William King and Ada Lovelace in Culbone Wood as a place to think and be inspired by nature, or the dreams of the Knight family as they sought to transform the moor to fit their futuristic vision. And some are mysterious- what is the purpose of the bizarre rows of concrete posts marching across Brendon Common, created as part of WWII military activity? Could Countisbury Castle really be the site of the Battle of Cynwit, where the men of Devon fought the Vikings- and won? It's also filled with fascinating facts- did you know that signposts became a legal requirement in the late 18th century? Or that Exmoor has its very own unique type of Neolithic monument site- defined as the Exmoor Minilithic?



The HER doesn't stand still- it is continually growing and shifting as we find more information about Exmoor's past. Sometimes that takes the form of new academic research- recently a thesis on different types of Nissen hut was incorporated into our records of WWI and WWII military buildings- and sometimes it is as a result of members of the public reaching out, as with the discovery of a new standing stone on Ilkerton Ridge last summer.



You too can be a part of the HER's mission to record and share Exmoor's past- the website has a fantastic map function so you can see all the sites near your area, or you can use the search tool to explore. And if you have any information, images or memories you'd like to share, please do get in touch - email at [her@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](mailto:her@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)

We are working to launch a new project to include more photographs of Exmoor's historic sites on the HER and will be asking for your help with this in 2025, so do get in touch if this is something you would be interested in.

To follow the story of Exmoor in Lucy Shipley's historical blog go to [exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/history-blog](https://exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk/history-blog)

# Moorland breeding birds What's thriving on Exmoor?



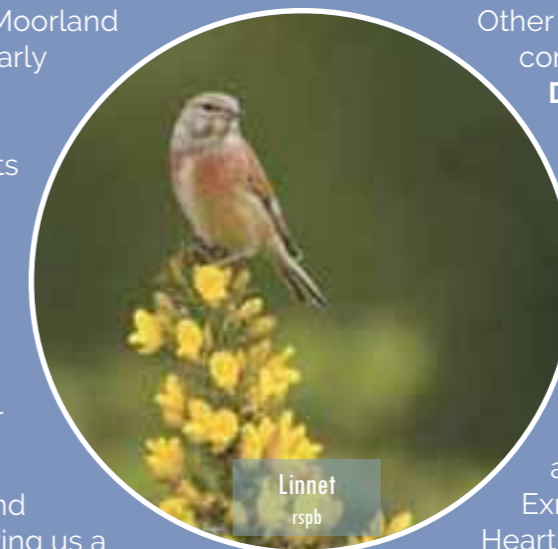
All photos © RSPB

Last year we led an extensive survey of Exmoor Moorland Birds covering the breeding season (between middle of April and July 2024). A team of four surveyors recorded species data across the whole area and assessed the condition of the vegetation, as this can affect breeding birds. Senior Conservation Officer **Ali Hawkins** shares what we've learnt so far.

We were so excited to lead the Moorland Breeding Survey, it's a particularly useful baseline for landscape scale projects across Exmoor moorland. Exmoor's moorland provides vital habitats for the upland and farmland birds that have suffered considerable declines in other parts of the UK. Amazing work was carried out by our brilliant moorland bird survey team, who were out every day before dawn tirelessly surveying across every corner of our moorland on Exmoor - that's 17,000 hectares!

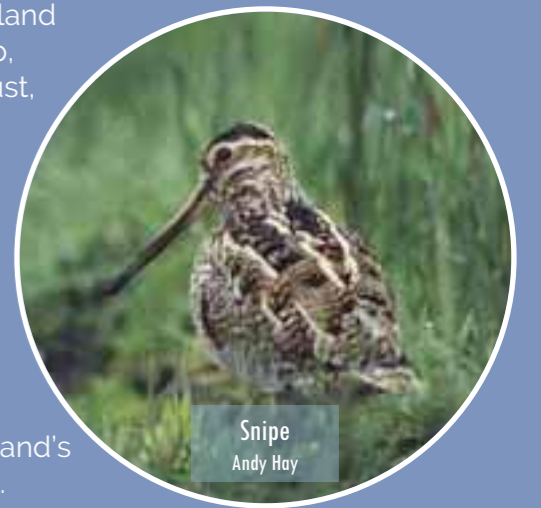
They have recorded over 30,000 birds and over 90,000 environmental variables, giving us a huge amount of useful habitat data and an invaluable picture of how our moorland birds are faring and the state of the moorland itself. We'd also like to thank landowners who worked with our rangers on access for survey work to take place.

Although Exmoor has lost many of its breeding waders, largely due to changes in climate, there have been some real winners particularly in response to the work of the Southwest Peatland Partnership, of which the National Park Authority is part. Restored peatlands on Exmoor have helped it remain a stronghold for important species, like **Grasshopper Warbler**, **Reed Bunting** and **Snipe**.



Other important species that recovered or increased compared to the previous Survey in 2014 were **Dartford Warbler, Linnet, Whinchat and Tree Pipit**.

We'd like to say a big thank you to partners such as the RSPB for supporting us. Funding for the survey, together with data analysis and reporting has been secured from organisations including the Exmoor Society, Natural England, South West Peatland Partnership, National Trust, Devon Birds and from the Exmoor Heartlands Landscape Recovery Project. It will provide valuable information for farmers entering new support schemes and contribute to Natural England's SSSI condition monitoring.



Keep an eye on our website and social media for more updates on what we're learning from the survey data [@exmoornp](https://exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)

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