



NEWS RELEASE

2021 Snowdrop Festival celebrates the first signs of spring

Fresh air and the beautiful, faithful first signs of spring are a reminder of the changing seasons and the promise of what's to come. So, shake off the winter and a year like no other with the National Garden Scheme 2021 Snowdrop Festival. These glorious harbingers of the wonderful life of gardens to come can be viewed in 95 National Garden Scheme gardens throughout England and Wales during January, February and March.

On a wintry day there is nothing better than visiting a garden iridescent with one of the earliest flowering plants of the year. Whether you enjoy carpets of naturalised white in woodlands, meticulously grown rare varieties of snowdrops or gardens boasting a colourful mix of snowdrops, hellebores and other early spring flowers – there is something for galanthophiles and garden enthusiasts alike.

George Plumptre, Chief Executive of the National Garden Scheme, says:

“Over the last few years the National Garden Scheme’s Snowdrop Festival has attracted tens of thousands of visitors to gardens. Following the restrictions of 2020 there has never been a greater need to start the new year with the beautiful freshness of the first blooms of spring. But garden visiting at this time of year isn’t just for galanthophiles who are looking to discover a rare variety of snowdrop in gardens they may never otherwise find. Snowdrops are the perfect antidote to the winter blues and spending the afternoon at one of our Snowdrop Festival gardens is the ideal opportunity to get outside and enjoy some spectacular scenes at an otherwise gloomy time of year.”

Pre-booking is essential in 2021.

To find your perfect snowdrop garden and to book your ticket, visit ngs.org.uk/snowdrops or download the National Garden Scheme app.

Hi-Res snowdrop images are available here – please use the photographers credit at all times and only use in association with the National Garden Scheme Snowdrop Festival

<https://bit.ly/SnowDropsNGS2021>

- Ends -

Notes to editors

Snowdrop Festival Facts

- 95 gardens are opening for the National Garden Scheme Snowdrop Festival in 2021
- Many of the gardens feature Galanthus, hellebores and other early spring flowers
- 40 of the snowdrop gardens are also open and open by arrangement for groups
- Among the gardens opening a few are owned by snowdrop experts including: Higher Cerubeer, Devon; Knowle Hill Farm, Kent; Pembury House, East Sussex;
- Other stunning displays can be found at Spring Platt, Kent; Raveningham Hall, Norfolk; East Lambrook Manor Gardens, Somerset
- For romantics, Church Farm in Nottinghamshire and Goodnestone Park, Kent are among several gardens that open on Sunday 14th February
- A list of all snowdrop gardens is available via www.ngs.org.uk/snowdrops
- The festival runs between 1st-28th February, however a few gardens are open for snowdrops in late January and early March too
- Originally launched in 2016 to mark the Year of the English Garden, the National Garden Scheme has been championing the Snowdrop Festival ever since, creating a wonderful taster for the garden visiting year to come
- The snowdrop gardens attract high visitor numbers. The uncomplicated visitor experience - often accompanied by a warming bowl of soup or hot drinks - fresh air and the beautiful, faithful first signs of spring are a reminder of the changing seasons and the promise of what's to come

Visitor quotes:

"That first glimpse of the snowdrops lifts my heart after a long winter," Anna, Welford Park, Newbury.

"It's just so wonderful to get out, to see those fragile flowers push through the cold soil heralding the great things to come in our gardens," Sarah, The Old Vicarage, Washington, West Sussex.

About snowdrops – CEO, George Plumptre

What is it about snowdrops? Every year they reappear with unfailing regularity, popping up just as winter has got to the stage when we all long for it to end, to tell us that there really is something cheerful about February. And despite their apparent delicacy, small white flowers on short slender stems, they are unfailingly robust; often pushing through inches of snow and flowering for weeks on end, showing none of the weather-affected temperamentality that makes growing so many plants a nail-biting exercise.

They also provide one of the most memorable links between gardens and our natural landscape. Because of their ability to spread or 'naturalise' over large areas if left undisturbed, especially in favourable sites such as typical native English woodland, they can produce spectacular carpets of white that are made all the more enthralling by the starkness that surrounds them.

With such enticement, it is not surprising that people will put on hats, gloves and wellies and head out to enjoy such heart-warming pleasure at a time of year when often they have been confined indoors for weeks on end. And over the coming weeks there are gardens opening all over England and Wales, more than 95 in all, which will welcome you and enable you to enjoy one of our great garden-visiting treats.

Some of the gardens also cater for that particular group of devoted specialists, the galanthophiles. It's all in the name...Galanthus is the Latin name for snowdrop and virtually all snowdrops originate from a small number of wild species of which the most common is *Galanthus nivalis*. But snowdrops are also adept at producing numerous variants and so there are now literally hundreds of different ones, many of them rare and these are the treasures that a galanthophile will travel for hundreds of miles to see – sometimes paying hundreds of pounds to buy a single plant.

Whether you are a committed galanthophile or someone looking for the simpler pleasure of enjoying a gardening treasure-trove that just lifts this otherwise dead time of year, the gardens in the National Garden Scheme Snowdrop Festival offer the best array of snowdrops anywhere and many of them are only open to visitors for a day or so now to support the National Garden Scheme.

About the National Garden Scheme

The National Garden Scheme gives visitors unique, affordable access to over 3,500 exceptional private gardens in England and Wales and raises impressive amounts of money for nursing and health charities through admissions, teas and cake.

Thanks to the generosity of garden owners, volunteers and visitors we have donated over £60million to nursing and health charities. Founded in 1927 to support district nurses, we are now the most significant charitable funder of nursing in the UK and our beneficiaries include Macmillan Cancer Support, Marie Curie, Hospice UK and The Queen's Nursing Institute.

The National Garden Scheme doesn't just open beautiful gardens for charity – we are passionate about the physical and mental health benefits of gardens too. We fund projects which promote gardens and gardening as therapy, and in 2017, we launched our annual Gardens and Health Week to raise awareness of the topic.

To find your perfect garden, visit [ngs.org.uk](https://www.ngs.org.uk), download the National Garden Scheme app or purchase the National Garden Scheme's *Garden Visitor's Handbook*, which is published annually and available via [ngs.org.uk/shop](https://www.ngs.org.uk/shop) and at all good book retailers.

In 2021 all garden visits are by pre-booked ticket and subject to Government restrictions in relation to the Coronavirus pandemic. The National Garden Scheme website has up-to-date information regarding any restrictions to garden visits in England and Wales.

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www.ngs.org.uk

For more information or to arrange to speak to an expert or spokesperson please contact: