

PRESS RELEASE

This Sunday - Specialist Plant Day Celebrates Plant Diversity at Pensthorpe

Some of Norfolk's top Nurseries will all be in one place and giving expert gardening advice as the annual **Specialist Plant Day** returns to Pensthorpe Natural Park on **Sunday 10th September between 10am and 5pm** .

Organised in conjunction with the Norfolk Nursery Network, visitors will be able to purchase rare and unusual plants alongside traditional favourites, as well as getting inspiration from Pensthorpe's own stunning gardens.

In addition, the day provides the perfect opportunity for visitors in need of an autumnal pick-me-up and garden refresh to get advice from Norfolk's top garden experts. Deb Jordan, Co-Owner of Pensthorpe Natural Park comments: "We're delighted to host this event for the Norfolk Nursery Network again this year. They will be ready to give visitors a helping hand and offer their advice alongside our own Head Gardener, Jonathan Pearce, so it's the perfect opportunity for garden lovers to get some top tips from the professionals. Take advantage of our reduced entry offer so you can get inspired by our gardens too and take home some special and unique plants for you to allow your own gardens to flourish".

The event also offers the chance for guests to experience Pensthorpe Natural Parks famous **Millennium Garden**, designed by **world renowned plantsman Piet Oudolf** , in full autumn colour. Sue Tuite, of West Acre Gardens says: "Pensthorpe is an excellent venue for the event because it has wonderful gardens planned to look superb in autumn, giving inspiration for anyone looking for ideas to keep their garden looking good right through the season. All the grasses in the Piet Oudolf garden look their glorious best at this time of year. The visitors to Pensthorpe are interested in nature, so the event fits well with the nature park. On a practical note, it is central and the show area is outside of the main park, enabling visitors to choose whether they attend just the plant fair or make a day of it and visit both the event and the nature park".

Entry to the plant fair is **£1 per person** (children free/small donation) with money raised being donated to The Escape Project – Family action. Those attending the fair can also take advantage of a **£2 reduced admission into the reserve*** and a **£2 reduced admission for anyone wishing to hop on the Pensthorpe Explorer ‘behind-the-scenes’ tour***, which makes for a perfect day out for garden lovers and wildlife enthusiasts.

Sue Tuite explains the Norfolk Nursery Network’s decision regarding The Escape Project being their chosen charity this year: “The Escape Project is a small local charity run by Family Action. They do excellent work in promoting wellbeing through community gardening and have allotments and an orchard in Swaffham where people can make friends and gain confidence whilst learning new gardening skills. It is the sort of small charity that makes a big difference in the local community and some extra funds make a real impact, every penny going to fund the project”.

Attendees from across the region include: Walnut Tree Nursery (NNN member); West Acre Gardens (NNN member); Creake Nursery (NNN member); Hoecroft Nursery (NNN member); Norfolk Herbs (NNN member); Dover Farm Plants (NNN member); Natural Surroundings (NNN member); Peter Beales Roses (NNN member); Riverside Bulbs (bulb grower); Panache Plants (exotic plants); Predator Plants (insectivorous plants); Jelly Cottage Nursery; Wootens of Wenhaston and Escape Project (vegetable plants).

Visit www.pensthorpe.com for more details.

*Visitors must show their Plant Day ticket to Pensthorpe admission team to qualify for the discounted entry into the Park or Pensthorpe Explorer.

-Ends-

Editor’s Note – The Gardens at Pensthorpe

Pensthorpe offers garden lovers the wonderful year-round display of structural beauty, foliage, natural habitat and meadows bursting full of colour and texture. The award winning stunning site offers both serious and amateur gardeners inspirational and naturalistic style gardens.

The **Millennium Garden** was first launched in 1999, an important example of **Piet Oudolf's** work and the first of his gardens in the world to be redesigned. Following a series of re-planting, the garden was re-launched in 2011. The re-planting included an additional eight new species of grass such as *Arunus*, *Inula* and *Penstemon*, 28 perennials and two new grasses (*Panicum Shenandoah* and *Sporobolus heteroolopsis*) adding to the stunning area of over 100 different species of perennials, over 20 types of grasses and six types of shrubs.

As well as the Millennium Garden there is also the lush and prosperous **Wave Garden**, designed by the **award-winning Julie Toll**, the garden is an example of dry shady planting and has important structural elements such as yew hedging which forms the backdrop to the spring-flowering garden of *Brunnera Langreets*, *Primula* and summer bulbs of white Lilies and *Alliums*.

The **Wildlife Habitat Garden** encourages colourful insects and butterflies to populate, with water as the main focus of the garden. Pensthorpe aims to help visitors to attract wildlife to their own gardens and a walk round the Garden can highlight how best to create different habitats to encourage a range of wildlife. These habitats vary from Dragonflies and Amphibians; Bats and Moths; Beetles; Garden Birds; Butterflies; Reptiles, and Bees. The Wildlife Habitat Garden incorporates places for shelter in colder months and in the summer months reptiles and bugs can bask on rocks.

And for a more natural garden Pensthorpe is also home to the **Wildflower Meadow**. As one of the largest in the county and set on the flood plain of the River Wensum, the Meadow plays an important role in the local ecology. The Meadow is traditionally managed; flourishing with orchids in the summer months including Common Spotted (*Dactylorhiza fuchsii*) and Southern Marsh Orchid (*Dactylorhiza praetermissa*) and other wildflowers before it seeds and is grazed in the autumn.

Pensthorpe's Admission Prices

£11.95 for Adults, £10.95 for Seniors and children aged 3-16. Under 3's Free.

Where?

Pensthorpe Natural Park is on the A1067, one mile from Fakenham. Open all year round, except between Dec 24th -26th. The Courtyard Café serves home-cooked breakfasts, lunches and delicious afternoon teas; The Pensthorpe Gift Shop is one of the largest gift shops in North Norfolk. Pensthorpe is also home to **WildRootz** and **Hootz House** – outdoor and indoor adventure play, to encourage and inspire the next generation of nature lovers. Free parking. Tel 01328 851465, www.pensthorpe.com

Pensthorpe is the multiple WINNER of Norfolk's Best Large Attraction (EDP Norfolk Tourism Awards) – a well-earned recognition of the overall experience offered to visitors and the commitment of staff.

For More Press Information / Pictures contact:

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Images of our famous Millennium Garden, designed by Piet Oudolf can be downloaded from our DropBox folder:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/i76sphnjwidcy9w/AADQqZYiKTCZvcDg9woGIXQia?dl=0>

Please credit the photographer if their name appears in the file name of the images you choose.