

Guide 1 – Exploring the trees and gardens of Wakehurst

Take some time to explore the grounds and gardens of Wakehurst.

Look at the trees and other plant life. What season is it now? How would these trees look at a different time of the year?

Take some time to notice as many details as you can about the trees. Look for buds, leaves, and branches. Think about the colour of the leaves, and the spread and density of the leaves and branches. Notice shape and height.

What are the differences between trees? What are the similarities?

Did you know?

Many of the trees and shrubs have a rectangular black label on them that has their name and where in the world they come from. Use a tree identification key and/or the black labels to find out the names of some trees.

The FSC produce a good guide to identifying trees called 'the tree name trail' a key to common trees. It has lots of pictures and works on a simple yes/no to arrive at the possible tree ID. <https://www.field-studies-council.org/publications/pubs/tree-name-trail.aspx>

The Woodland Trust have a tree ID sheet of common tree species of the UK under their 'naturedetectives' banner
<http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/naturedetectives/activities/2015/09/leaf-id/>

This is an A4 sheet of leaf shapes to identify the trees. They also produce one showing the colours of those leaves in Autumn.
<http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/naturedetectives/activities/2017/10/autumn-leaf-identification/>

The last two are free to download and print.

Creative activity: photography

You will need: cameras

Try taking photographs of trees. Have a go at capturing different aspects of the trees from different angles. Maybe you could take a picture of the whole tree from a distance, or else take close-ups of bark, leaves, or buds.

How big are parts of the tree compared to parts of your body? Are the leaves as big as your fingers, or as big as your whole hand? What about the buds and flowers?

Get Into Heritage at Wakehurst Walk... talk... make



Next, find your way to the Walled Garden and take some time to explore, seeing how many different plant specimens you can find.

The Walled Garden at Wakehurst was designed during the Victorian period. Look out for the following Victorian architectural features.

- Symmetrical beds
- Hedged arches
- Water butts
- Sundials
- Gateways

How many of these features can you find?

Did you know?

Walled gardens were created for growing flowers for the house, and vegetables and fruit for the kitchen. The walls create a space that is protected from cold winds and frost. They may have begun hundreds of years ago as simple hedged gardens. By putting bricks or stone walls around the garden the temperature in the garden rises, which means that tender plants can be grown.

Sundials are a means of telling the time using the sun. By looking to see where the shadow from the gnomon (pointed central triangle) falls on the dial it is possible to see what the time is. What is the problem with telling the time with a sundial?

Creative activity: Looking, sketching, imagining

You will need: A4 paper, pencils, charcoal, pastels or coloured pencils, ideally with soft lead, clipboard (or cameras if your group prefers to take photographs).

Hedges, walls and gateways change how we see different parts of the Walled Garden. If we look from different angles, what can we see? What's hidden?

Find a place you like to be and make sketches (or if you prefer, take photos) of what you can see. If you took a 'bird's eye view' photograph of the walled garden, what do you imagine it would look like?

Examine the bud and petal shapes of the different flowers if you are visiting in Spring or Summer, or the seed head shapes if you are visiting in Autumn or Winter.

Try making close-up, detailed drawings of these buds, petals or seed heads (or take close-up photographs if you prefer).

Extended Activities relating to the trees and gardens

Collect leaves during your visit, and when you get back home (or back to the Day Centre) press these inside sheets of tissue paper, weighing them down under some books. You can use these to make a collage, or if you have printing equipment, create some leaf prints or postcards.

On a roll of lining paper, draw the waterways and ponds that you remember from your walks around Wakehurst. Stick down prints of the photographs that you have taken to create a map. Can you remember where you saw wildlife? Can you add these to your Wakehurst Map? How does your map compare to the Wakehurst map in your resource pack?

Guide 2 - Exploring the Mansion House and its history

Look at the map of Wakehurst. Can you find the Visitor Centre? Trace the path you've travelled to get to the Mansion.

Take some time to explore the Mansion. Look at the outside of the building, and then find your way to the Chapel, the Library and the Hall.

In each of the rooms you visit, talk about what you see.

What do you think happened in this room? Look at the size, ornamentation, shape and size of windows and doors. Is it light or dark in this room? Can you see carvings of plants and animals in the stonework, wood carvings, fabrics, tiles and ceilings?

Did you know?

The Culpeper family built the Tudor house. The fireplace shows the Culpeper's importance. It has small shields carved along the top. The ones on the right belong to the Culpeper family and the ones on the left to their powerful friends such as the Earl of Cheshire. His shield has three wheatsheaves on it. Can you find it in the big shield below the little shields?

The two figures either side are Charity and Peace, both carved with their foreheads shaved in the Elizabethan fashion.

Creative activity: sketching and making rubbings

You will need: A4 paper, coloured pencils or charcoal pastels

Choose a carving of a plant or animal in the stonework, wood carvings, fabrics, tiles or on the ceiling. Draw or sketch it, or if you prefer, take a photograph.

Don't forget to label where you found them.

Find your way into the Hall and look for the paintings of Sir Henry and Lady Price. What do you notice about what they are wearing and how they are sitting? When would you dress like this? What so you think this tells you about Sir Henry and Lady Price?

Do you notice what they are sitting on? Can you find these in the Hall? How different are they to the chairs you sit on? What do you notice about them?

Find your way into the Billiard Room. Can you find the photographs of the Wakehurst gardeners? How old do you think these photographs are?

Look at what the gardeners are wearing. Why do you think they wore these clothes? (Think about who they work for and who might be watching them at work.)

What would you wear gardening? What else can you see in the photograph? What tools can you recognise?

Did you know?

Gerald Loder bought Wakehurst in 1903. He was a barrister and became the MP for Brighton in 1889. He built up collections of beautiful and unusual plants in the gardens and within five years 3,000 different kinds of plants from all over the world were being grown here at Wakehurst.

It is said that Alfred Coates, who became his head gardener, was asked at his interview whether he preferred trees and shrubs or flowers; he replied, 'Trees and shrubs, sir,' and got the job as Gerald Loder preferred them too. One of the woods on the Wakehurst estate is named Coates Wood after him.

Creative activity: portrait photography

You will need: cameras

Try posing in different positions, perhaps alone or in pairs, while someone else takes your photograph.

Are you the Lord and Lady of the Manor House, or are you a gardener or another member of the staff?

What is similar to the portraits of Lord and Lady Price or the photographs of the gardeners? What is different about your portraits?

Extended activities

When you are back at home or at the Day Centre, take portrait photographs of a group gardening activity. Display a copy of the photograph of the Victorian gardeners at Wakehurst and your modern-day gardening photograph to show the differences.

Alternatively, you could make a 'living photo album' of movement to show the different people and activities at Wakehurst. You can do this by making some group poses and slowly moving from one image to another. You could give each pose a name or create a phrase which cues moving into the next pose.

Guide 3 - The Millennium Seed Bank

Take some time to look at the sculptures of seeds outside of the Millennium Seed Bank. Can you find the lotus seed pod near the steps? Look at the shapes and markings on them. Remember these are oversized representations - the real ones are just inside.

Once you are inside the Millennium Seed Bank, find the enlarged photographs of different seeds. What do you notice about them? Talk about their shapes and markings. What do they remind you of?

Look at the different seeds from around the world displayed in the glass cases. Are there any you recognise? Which ones grow into food? What countries do they grow in? Have you, or do you know someone who's visited that country? What things can be made from the plants of the other seeds?

Did you know?

The Coco de Mer is the largest seed in the world. Orchid seeds are the smallest seeds.

Creative activity: examining, drawing, photographing

You will need: Cameras, A4 paper and pencils

Look at range of seeds and seed pods. What do you notice about their colour, size, texture and shape?

Take some photographs of the seeds
or draw some of the seeds and seed pods that you have seen today.

Don't forget to label your drawings so you can remember which seed comes from which plant. Perhaps you could add some other information about the places this plant grows, and what it is used for.

Think about the scientists who work here at the Millennium Seed Bank and talk in your group about what they might do.

Scientists:

- Look after seeds
- Check for damaged and healthy seeds
- Store seeds securely in a vault
- Test seeds by growing them

See what you can find out about the work of these scientists from the display panels in the Millennium Seed Bank.

What can you discover about how seeds are collected? Who collects them and how are they brought to the Millennium Seed Bank? What happens to the seeds when they arrive at the Millennium Seed Bank?

Creative activity: investigating, imagining and inhabiting

You will need: A4 paper, pencils and lab coats

Look through each of the windows. What do you think is happening here? What can you see?

Write a list or draw the equipment that scientists use to do their work.

Imagine what it would be like to be a scientist working at the Seed Bank. Perhaps you could try to act out what you do as a scientist.

Did you know?

Seed bank scientists dry and clean the seeds. Then they store them in the vault under the ground in freezers at -20°C

Extended Activities

Inspired by the photographs you've taken and the pictures you've drawn of the seeds, make some clay seeds and seed pods to create your own seed bank. Perhaps you could think of some different ways to display these at your Day Centre, for example in boxes, glass jars or cases, or on trays.

Make sure you label each of the displays and provide some information about what the seeds are and where they can be found.

Carry out some research on the internet about different scientists and where they work. Think about the different equipment they would use and what they would be researching and exploring.