

29 November 2011

## GREAT BRITISH INSECTS: NATIONAL INSECT WEEK RETURNS

25 June - 1 July 2012

[www.nationalinsectweek.co.uk](http://www.nationalinsectweek.co.uk)



The Royal Entomological Society will be celebrating all that is 'great' about British insects next year with the return of National Insect Week 2012.

Next summer's National Insect Week will take 'Great British Insects' as its theme drawing upon the celebrations around the Olympic Games and the Diamond Jubilee of the Society's Patron HM The Queen.

2012 will be the fifth time the Royal Entomological Society has celebrated National Insect Week, the biennial initiative to promote awareness of the value of a diverse insect world to the environment. Through a high profile launch and a nationwide programme of interactive fun events and activities for all the family, National Insect Week brings the insect world to life.

An interactive website [www.nationalinsectweek.co.uk](http://www.nationalinsectweek.co.uk) gives visitors all the information they need to get involved, from finding out more about events taking place locally to a photography competition and advice on bringing more British insects into our gardens.

Supported by more than 50 national partner organisations concerned about natural history and biodiversity, National Insect Week first took place in 2004 and has built year on year. In 2010 alone the initiative reached an audience of over 104 million people through high profile media activity and over 200 events across the country.

Luke Tilley, National Insect Week coordinator, said: "We already have some exciting plans in the pipeline including an initiative to create a 'dream team' of Olympic insects including the fastest, highest jumper and best swimmer. We'll also be working with a high profile chef to create some insect-themed menus to promote insects as a sustainable food source here in the UK. We will be marking the Diamond Jubilee of our Patron, HRH The Queen, by presenting her with specially bound copies of the Society's definitive guide to British insects which is being published in 2012."

"As usual, there will be a whole host of activities for kids including the gruesome, yet fascinating 'Crime Scene Insects' to get children interested in forensic entomology. Local and regional wildlife organisations will be hosting their own events up and down the country to allow children and adults explore the wonderful world of insects for themselves."



To learn more about National Insect Week and to get inspiration on how you or your organisation can get involved, please visit

[www.nationalinsectweek.co.uk](http://www.nationalinsectweek.co.uk). You can also register your own National Insect Week event through the website - just click on 'What's Going On'.

All National Insect Week enquiries to Jane Chamberlain or Annabel Hutchison at Cicada Communications on 01423 567111 or [jane@cicada-comms.com](mailto:jane@cicada-comms.com) / [annabel@cicada-comms.com](mailto:annabel@cicada-comms.com)

## Fascinating Insect Facts: Did You Know?



- There are about 100,000 known species of insects in Europe and a quarter of those are found in the UK.
- Most unique insect? The Lundy Cabbage flea beetle lives only along a strip 1½ miles long, 30 yards wide on the island of Lundy in the Bristol Channel and nowhere else in the world.
- Most travelled? Painted Lady butterflies fly each year from North Africa to the UK. Occasional monarch butterflies and American Painted Ladies make it to the UK across the Atlantic. Billions of ladybirds cross the English Channel and North Sea from France and Holland to the UK - in some years the strandline is made up of millions of dead ladybirds that didn't quite make it.
- Most sophisticated communicators? Honeybees - in the hive they can communicate the way to a good patch of nectar flowers, its distance and direction, mainly by the way they waggle their bottom.
- Most loved? Probably ladybirds (53 species of them!) - beloved of children's rhymes and many are useful predators of greenfly - so loved by children, mums and dads, farmers and gardeners.
- Most reviled? Cockroaches - which is sad because we have cute little native cockroaches which live harmlessly beside the sea and amongst heather.
- Most feared? Wasps and hornets - for their stings - a shame because they are useful predators of injurious insects in horticulture. Worker wasps often go on a drunken aggressive binge on fermenting fruit in the autumn - attacking us vertebrates to remind us that black and yellow means "beware!"
- Most unappetizing? All insects! Nearly all cultures of the world except those originating from North Western Europe are happy to eat insects, with many delicacies such as deep fried cockroaches, mole crickets and water beetles, midge paté, and grilled palm weevil grubs - and with specialist cook-books. Our aversion to eating insects is an illogical taboo.