



the National Trust
for Scotland
a place for everyone

Crarae Garden

Information for schools



Crarae is the finest example of an exotic Himalayan-style woodland garden in Britain. Set beside the banks of Loch Fyne, this unique 40-hectare garden is planted around the steep-sided Crarae burn. The garden was started by Grace, Lady Campbell, in 1912, and includes a National Collection of southern beech, as well as superb examples of maples, mountain ash and eucalyptus trees.

It is a magical spot at any time of year, with the earlier flowers of rhododendrons, azaleas, camellias and magnolias being replaced later in the season by the rich tints of foliage and fruit. Thanks to the Argyll climate, Crarae has one of the most extensive fern populations in the UK, ranging from huge golden-scaled male ferns to tiny filmy ferns.

With its variety of plant-life, Crarae Garden attracts many different birds including goldfinches, woodpeckers, treecreepers, dippers, ravens, buzzards, sparrowhawks and peregrine falcons. Mammals include red deer, roe deer, red squirrels and otters.

There is also a Neolithic chambered cairn within the garden, and a medieval kirkyard adjacent to it.

Spring: Several hundred rhododendron and azaleas make spring a popular time to visit, from late April (up to June or July). Many of the later flowering varieties have a wonderful scent. Under everything is a groundcover of beautiful, unfurling fern fronds.

Summer: There is a mass of expanding new foliage, and the garden becomes full of different textures and hues. Later, huge eucryphias flower, along with hydrangeas and buddleias (that attract small tortoiseshell and peacock butterflies).

Autumn: A huge variety of maples, birches and rowans provide a brilliant display in September and October. The masses of berries attract both native and visiting birds. It is the best time to see red squirrels, too, as they stock up with food for the winter.

Winter: The garden has winter flowering shrubs, such as the spectacularly large witchhazels, while many deciduous trees have brightly coloured bark. You might see wonderful icy sculptures in and around the Crarae Burn, or even early flowering rhododendron.

A school visit at Crarae offers walks and activities in the gardens, providing excellent opportunities to engage with the Curriculum for Excellence:

- Teacher led walks only are available – but there are marked trails, with questions along the trails, family activities, and a free children's Planthunters Quiz (1 quiz booklet per 3 pupils)
- Teachers are encouraged to visit Crarae before booking a class visit in order to orientate themselves and also discuss their requirements with the property manager

For more information, visit www.nts.org.uk/Learn

The National Trust for Scotland for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty is a charity registered in Scotland, Charity Number SC 007410 and depends for its support on the subscriptions of its members, donations and legacies. Copyright © 2011 the National Trust for Scotland.



Crarae Garden

Information for schools

Resources for schools:

- A set of information sheets about the garden.
- Planthunters Diary and Quiz (for children).
- Backpacks – for learning about the environment, including minibeasts and birds (can be booked for teams of pupils).
- Games are available on the lower lawn (weather permitting).
- You can also visit the NTS Learn website to check out information for teachers: www.ntslearning.org.uk

Planning your visit:

- To book: please contact the Property Manager to arrange your visit.
- Book well in advance to avoid disappointment.
- Crarae Garden is open to schools all year round, weather permitting.
- Maximum class size: teacher to decide; ratio of 1 teacher/adult to 5 pupils recommended.
- Access: the Visitor Centre, lower garden and lawns are accessible for wheelchair users. There is a slide show about Crarae gardens in the Visitor Centre. If desired, for pupils with mobility impairment, we could provide indoor games at the Visitor Centre. Please discuss requirements when booking your visit.
- Toilets: within the garden, by the Visitor Centre - including a fully accessible toilet.
- Refreshments: Pupils are welcome to picnic in the garden. The car park is large enough for a coach to stay during the visit so pupils could shelter here in bad weather
- Clothing: should be appropriate for outdoors
- The site has been risk assessed. Teachers should prepare their own RA for the visit
- There is more information about planning a visit to a Trust site on the NTS Learn website: www.nts.org.uk/Learn/schools_plan.php
- For more information about Crarae Garden, please go to our web pages: www.nts.org.uk/Property/Crarae-Garden/

Charges:

- There is no admission charge for schools with NTS educational membership
- Non-members are welcome but there is an admission charge of £2 per pupil
- Accompanying adults are admitted free
- All class teachers are encouraged to make a free preparatory visit to the site
- Membership: please apply to Crarae Garden – or go to the NTS Learn website: www.nts.org.uk/Learn/schools_membership.php
- Class teachers are encouraged to make a free preparatory visit to the site

During your class visit:

- The duration of a visit depends on the walk or activities booked – but you should allow 1 – 1.5 hours for a walk around the gardens
- Teachers are responsible for their pupils, and for their behaviour.
- Please note: parts of the Himalayan Glen path are next to the steep sided gorge - so extra care and supervision are required here
- Pupils are welcome to take photos and films in the gardens
- Coats and bags should be left on the coach
- There is shop that pupils may visit under teacher supervision (small groups please)
- On arrival: please report to the Admission Desk in the Visitor Centre



the National Trust
for Scotland
a place for everyone

Crarae Garden

Information for schools

Getting to Crarae Garden:

- Crarae is on the A83, 10 miles south of Inveraray. Ordnance Survey Ref: NR986973
- Parking for a school coach is available in the car park, next to the Visitor Centre

For more information, please contact:

Property Manager, Crarae Garden, Inveraray, Argyll, Bute & Loch Lomond PA32 8YA

Telephone: 0844 493 2210

Email: craraegarden@nts.org.uk