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Caring for Scotland's most important gardens

The National Trust for Scotland cares for and protects 70 gardens and designed landscapes, 38 of which are some of the most important gardens in Scotland.

Many of the gardens under the care of the National Trust for Scotland show the pioneering vision and ambition of their originators and that's why it's so important that their stories are preserved.

For example; Inverewe Gardens in Wester Ross, created by the famous Osgood Mackenzie, has one of the most bio-diverse plant ranges in the UK and Brodie Castle in Moray is a unique design landscape from the 1750s, where Lord Brodie cultivated a collection of more than 400 different daffodils.

The aptly named Pineapple in Falkirk was built by the Earl of Dunmore as a summer house in 1761 where he grew pineapples, which at the time were among Britain's most exotic foods. His walled garden and glasshouses were home to many more exotic fruits and vegetables showing that even in the 1800s Grow Your Own was a key trend.

National Trust for Scotland's records show that gardeners cultivate 100,000 different kinds of plants across its locations. From the Cassiope at Branklyn Gardens, the Olearia collection at Inverewe and the stunning Bergenia at Greenbank the diversity (and depth of knowledge to care for them) of the plants in the charity's care is significant.

Right now, the Trust's gardens are closed but in the meantime the team have been sharing gardening tips online as well as hosting weekly Q&A sessions on social media.

Ed Walling, head gardener at Brodie Castle in Moray gives helpful advice for people spending more time in their garden.

- Tips on planting and caring for brassicas: https://youtu.be/jnZo_sRfdME
- How to make a hanging basket: <https://youtu.be/AJzKNLKYwUs>

Top tips from Brodie Castle's head gardener, Ed Walling:

- When planting your hanging basket, I would recommend that you place a bucket underneath to help stabilise the container. This makes it nice and easy to plant the flowers without the basket moving at all.

- I would suggest that you hang your basket when the windy season has died down, from around May onwards.
- You can make hanging baskets nice and dense by using all-purpose compost and flowers from your local nursery/ garden centre to add a pop of colour.
- When planting the vegetable garden, you can place the brassica family together. Here we have planted cabbage, broccoli and brussels sprout together, leaving a nice amount of space between them.
- It's really important to water plants regularly when you first plant them and remember to keep them watered as often as possible – especially when it's hot.

Ed has also been sharing videos on Brodie Castle's Facebook page.

- Protect your plants from colder weather:
<https://www.facebook.com/BrodieCastleNTS/videos/1295037690699295/>
- Earthing up potatoes:
<https://www.facebook.com/BrodieCastleNTS/videos/2912062812245275/>

Stuart Stockley, gardener at Fyvie Castle in Aberdeenshire has been kept busy maintaining the extensive grounds including its Walled Garden, American Garden, Woodland Garden plus the estate grounds and driveway.

He's been sharing videos on Fyvie Castle's Facebook page, giving followers gardening tips as well as advice for anyone trying something new in the garden during lockdown.

Top tomato tips:

<https://www.facebook.com/FyvieCastle/videos/2723762141185547/>

Keeping on top of cutting the grass on the estate:

<https://www.facebook.com/FyvieCastle/videos/256932268789184/>

The National Trust for Scotland is a charity and relies on memberships and donations to continue its important work in caring for and protecting some of the country's most significant places and spaces. If you would like to find out more about how you can support the Trust visit www.nts.org.uk.

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Editor's Notes:

The National Trust for Scotland is the charity that celebrates and protects Scotland's heritage. It relies on the support of its members and donors to carry out its important work of caring for the natural and built heritage of Scotland for everyone to enjoy.

From coastlines to castles, art to architecture, wildlife to wildernesses, the National Trust for Scotland exists to protect the national and natural treasures we all love. To plan your visit today, enter your postcode at www.nts.org.uk.

