

## **NATIONAL TRUST FOR SCOTLAND MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Moths, Bats...and Beer – Beasties Tempted Towards the Light with Late Night Refreshments at Craigievar**

They are the type of beasties that most people try to keep out of their homes but the rangers at Craigievar Castle will be doing everything they possibly can to lure moths out of hiding – even offering them a beer.

Visitors to a late-night event at the National Trust for Scotland's property will be able to learn how to make sugar traps – a sticky solution of black treacle and beer that moths just can't resist.

The sweet-smelling mixture, which is completely harmless to the creatures, is then pasted onto trees in the grounds of the castle and will attract moths from far and wide.

But it's hoped that moths will not be the only winged visitors making an appearance at the family event on Friday, July 28. Those who go along to the Craigievar, near Alford in Aberdeenshire, will also have the chance to meet the resident colony of bats.

The elegant tower house, known for its distinctive pink façade, is home to pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats which love to go flying as the sun starts to set.

National Trust for Scotland ranger Toni Watt said: "Moths and bats are absolutely fascinating flying creatures. We've previously staged popular events for bats and events for moths, but this is the first time that we have brought the two together.

"We'll start off in the castle grounds where we will show people how to make and set sugar traps. The traps are a harmless mixture of black treacle and beer which is boiled up and pasted to trees. It gives off a sweet-smelling nectar which the moths love.

"While we are waiting for the traps to work their magic and attract the moths, we'll take a walk around the castle grounds and look for bats. We have not yet

conducted a bat survey this year, but previously we have had pipistrelle and brown long-eared bats roosting at the castle.

“We’ll be using bat detectors to see what is out and about, and during the walk we’ll be discussing the bats and their nocturnal lifestyles.

“We’ll then go back to the sugar traps and set up a light so that we can see the moths. As well as a torch to walk around the grounds, we recommend that people bring sunglasses or a wide brimmed hat to protect their eyes from the light – a real mix of items!

“I know that some people may find this a little bit spooky but it is a lovely time of day to visit the property. I love being out with the bats as it starts to get dark and it can be a beautiful sight on a nice evening.”

Moths and Bats at Craigievar is one of a range of special events being held by the National Trust for Scotland, Scotland’s largest conservation charity, at its properties over the summer months.

The event is being staged by the Trust’s Ranger Service in partnership with Aberdeenshire Council Ranger Service and Butterfly Conservation.

It is suitable for all ages – visitors aged under 16 must be accompanied by an adult – and starts at 8.30pm. It will go on until after darkness falls, and is expected to wind up at around 10.30pm.

Booking is essential for the event and tickets, which cost £4 for adults and children, are available at [www.nts.org.uk](http://www.nts.org.uk)

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