



WADDESDON

## Flock to Waddesdon Manor for a summer celebration of birds



### **Flights of Fancy: Birds at Waddesdon**

**22 May – 27 Oct**

This summer, Waddesdon Manor will take a flight of fancy with a festival of feathered friends that promises to be fun for all the family.

A whole host of bird-themed exhibitions, interactive events and outdoor activities will swoop down upon Waddesdon for the entire season, offering something for everyone, whether you are a fledgling enthusiast or a wise expert.

Already home to hundreds of beautiful birds, the recently restored **Aviary** is a treasure trove of exotic and endangered species. There's no need for binoculars in this part of the bird-spotting trail, as children can get up close with lots of colourful and noisy songbirds. There's the chance to see the rare Socorro Dove or how about the Painted Bunting which, as the name suggests, is a glorious mix of blue, red, yellow and green. Then there are the Indian Hill Mynahs who will probably be wanting a chat, as they're often heard saying "hello", beeping like a lorry reversing, or laughing heartily.

And now, this summer, you'll have the chance to tell a secret to the birds with an interactive art installation that translates your words into birdsong! The multisensory sculpture, ***Tell it to the Birds***, created by contemporary artist Jenny Kendler (b.1980) allows visitors to whisper a message, but as your words are translated into chirps, calls and chirrups, the meaning will stay between you and the birds.

We've also got a brand-new opportunity to ***Sponsor a Bird*** at the Aviary with packs at the Manor Shop, with certificates designed by illustrator Madeleine Floyd, who is also designing an exclusive range of bird merchandise for the Waddesdon shop. Proceeds go towards the conservation of the Rothschild mynah – the snowy white bird with a startling blue eye mask native to Bali which was named after Walter, second Lord Rothschild (1868-1937), a famous zoologist. It was at risk of extinction, but thanks to the Waddesdon Aviary's breeding programme, birds are now sent back to Bali and are helping increase numbers in the

wild. There is also a chance to find out more with [Meet the Aviary Keeper](#) talks that are happening throughout the summer.

With the promise of sun-filled mornings and afternoons, a **Waddesdon Bird Spotting Guide** will help you identify all the inhabitants and roosting residents as you migrate through the grounds. Keep your eyes to the sky as you may see a Red Kite with its distinctive forked tail, or perhaps you'll even spot a species that has not been seen at Waddesdon before.

But birds beware on the **May Bank Holiday weekend** as Waddesdon becomes a little bit wilder when Berkshire Birds of Prey come to visit. From 25 May until 27 May children receive free entry to the house and grounds for the special May bank holiday weekend [Escape from the Aviary](#). This includes the chance to glove up and meet the likes of Bella the Barn Owl, Buddy the Hawk, Princess Leia the Falcon and many more. There will also be a host of craft workshops, face painting, and giant birds roaming the grounds all weekend.

**The gardens** are also having an avian-inspired artistic intervention. Two impressive 3D bedding bird sculptures will be showing off their fancy plumage during the summer months, and on the Parterre, a specially designed carpet bed will translate a drawing of two orioles into a complex living mosaic made up of over 25,000 succulent plants.

The orioles are inspired by the artistry of the famous bird-painter on porcelain, Louis-Denis Armand (1723-1796), whose brilliance has hatched the entire season as the Manor hosts **Fights of Fancy**, the [first ever exhibition](#) solely focused on the artist. Widely acknowledged as the finest painter of birds at the world-famous Sèvres factory in 18<sup>th</sup>-century France, visitors can step out of the sun and into the Manor to see a survey of porcelain, paintings and drawings. Joining Waddesdon's own fantastic collection of what will be nearly 50 loans from private collections.

And more birds have broken free this summer with a series of interventions by paper artist **Andy Singleton**, who has been inspired by the collection, the Aviary and Armand's art to create a paper trail of bird sculptures throughout the Manor. Will you be able to spot them all?

With all this going on over the summer, it won't just be the jays having a party but anyone who takes a trip to Waddesdon Manor.

#### **NOTES FOR EDITORS**

**Waddesdon Manor** was built at the end of the 19th century by Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild in the style of a French early 16th-century château. Baron Ferdinand was an inspired collector, and the house was designed to showcase his exceptional collection of English and Dutch paintings, French 18th-century furniture, Sèvres porcelain, and other decorative arts. When Ferdinand died in 1898, he left Waddesdon to his sister, Alice, who also was a great collector. Upon her death the house passed to her great-nephew, James de Rothschild, who inherited a substantial part of his father Baron Edmond's great collection. In 1957, to ensure its future in perpetuity, Waddesdon was bequeathed to the National Trust. The Rothschild family continues to run Waddesdon through a family charitable trust, the Rothschild Foundation. Until February 2024, it was under the chairmanship of Jacob, 4th Lord Rothschild. His eldest daughter, Hannah Rothschild, is now the Chair. More at <https://waddesdon.org.uk/about-us/press/notes-for-editors/>

For more information on Waddesdon Manor and its exhibitions, visit [www.waddesdon.org.uk](http://www.waddesdon.org.uk), like @WaddesdonManor on Facebook, follow @WaddesdonManor on Twitter and @waddesdonmanor\_nt on Instagram.

#### **HIGH RESOLUTION IMAGES CAN BE DOWNLOADED BY CLICKING ON THIS LINK**

- 3D bedding © Waddesdon, A Rothschild House & Gardens
- Hieronymus © 2024 Andy Singleton

- Owl handling © Berkshire Birds of Prey

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