

DARK SKY DISCOVERY EXPERIENCES

A starry night sky is one of the most spectacular sights nature has to offer, bringing you closer to the vastness of the universe and the wonders of space.

The skies above our park are some of the darkest in the world – with truly world-class stargazing opportunities, remarkable backdrops, fascinating landmarks and points of interest. We're proud to have achieved the prestigious International Dark Sky Reserve status, which makes us a renowned destination for dark sky discovery.

Whether you're finding nebulae with friends, picking out planets with the kids or contemplating the skies on a stargazing date, our fantastic range of dark sky discovery experiences will suit beginners and experts alike.

So many adventures await you on a clear night in the park. Look up and you'll see the Milky Way, the constellations, bright nebulae, clusters and more... Why not make your next getaway a trip to the stars and prepare to be dazzled?

Here are just a few of the stunning places you can explore the delights of the night sky.

There is so much to see and do in the Brecon Beacons National Park with plenty of places to stay, go to:

 www.breconbeacons.org

1. Usk Reservoir

Designated a Dark Sky Discovery Site, Usk Reservoir is officially recognised as an excellent place to stargaze. Just a few miles from the source of the river Usk, this remote reservoir is set among the forest and moorland of the Usk Valley, overlooking the Black Mountain.

The car park area at Usk Reservoir is a beautiful place to have a picnic as well as an ideal place to take in outstanding dark skies. The large flat area allows you to set up telescopes and the road access from Trecastle means it's easy to get to.

Most of the summits in the Black Mountain range are visible from the reservoir – see if you can pick out Fan Hir, Fan Brycheiniog, Fan Foel, Picws Du and Waun Lefrith before nightfall.

Here are just a few of the stunning places you can explore the delights of the night sky.

GREAT FOR:	NEAREST VILLAGE:	COORDINATES:	LIMITING MAGNITUDE:
DEEP SKY ASTROPHOTOGRAPHY	TRECASTLE	SN 833286 N 51.56.58 W 03.41.55	6.4

BRECON BEACONS

OUR NATIONAL PARK

WHAT KINDS OF DARK SKY OBJECTS CAN YOU SEE WITH...

THE NAKED EYE: Look up into the night sky over the park and you'll see constellations and bright star clusters such as the Pleiades, the Hyades and the beehive cluster. Keep gazing skywards and you might also pick out the Andromeda galaxy, plus bright nebulae such as the one in Orion, as well as stars of varying colours.

Parc Cenedlaethol Bannau Brycheiniog Brecon Beacons National Park



★ Lleoliadau Awyr Dywyll

1. Cronfa Ddŵr Wryg SN 835285 NS1.56.58 W03.41.55
2. Cronfa Ddŵr Crai SN 886210 NS1.54.52 W03.35.12
3. Ffynnon Llanddewi Nant Hodi SN 288278 NS1.56.41 W03.02.11
4. Hay Bluff SO 239373 N 52.01.43 W03.06.34
5. Canolfan Ymwehyr y Parc Cenedlaethol (Canolfan Ffynnydd) SN 978264 NS1.56.02 W 03.28.40
6. Pen Rhiw Ddu SN 730192 NS1.51.13 W03.50.31
7. Caring Cerrnen SN 668193 NS1.51.12 W03.56.02
8. Parc Gwledig Craig y Nos a Chastell Craig y Nos SN 840161 NS1.50.16 W03.40.29
9. Mynydd Pen y Ffâl SO 268167 NS1.50.30 W03.03.34
10. Llyn Llangors SO 127270 NS1.56.07 W03.16.13

★ Dark Skies Locations

1. Usk Reservoir SN 835285 NS1.56.58 W03.41.55
2. Crai Reservoir SN 886210 NS1.54.52 W03.35.12
3. Llanthony Priory SO 288278 NS1.56.41 W03.02.11
4. Hay Bluff SO 239373 N 52.01.43 W03.06.34
5. National Park Visitor Centre (Mountain Centre) SN 978264 NS1.56.02 W 03.28.40
6. Pen Rhiw Ddu SN 730192 NS1.51.13 W03.50.31
7. Caring Cerrnen SN 668193 NS1.51.12 W03.56.02
8. Craig-y-nos Country Park and Craig Y Nos Castle SN 840161 NS1.50.16 W03.40.29
9. Sugar Loaf Mountain SO 268167 NS1.50.30 W03.03.34
10. Llangorse Lake SO 127270 NS1.56.07 W03.16.13

☀️ Lleoliadau Machlud Haul

1. Cronfa Ddŵr Wryg SN 835285
2. Cronfa Ddŵr Crai SN 886210
3. Hay Bluff SO 239373 Maes Parcio Stone Castle
4. Canolfan Ymwehyr y Parc Cenedlaethol SN 978264
5. Pen Rhiw Ddu SN 730 190 Maes Parcio'r olyfyan
6. Mynydd Pen y Ffâl SO 268167
7. Llyn Llangors SO 127270
8. Cooks Hill SO 160283 Cilan ger golyfyan Mynydd Llangors
9. Cilan Bwlch SO 132224
10. Golyfyan Blaen Onneu SO 156170

☀️ Sunset Locations

1. Usk Reservoir SN 835285
2. Crai Reservoir SN 886210
3. Hay Bluff SO 239373 Stone Castle Car Park
4. National Park Visitor Centre SN 978264
5. Pen Rhiw Ddu SN 730192 Look out Car Park
6. Sugar Loaf Mountain SO 268167
7. Llangorse Lake SO 127270
8. Cooks Hill SO 160283 Lay by Mynydd Llangorse viewpoint
9. Bwlch layby SO 132224
10. Blaen Onneu Viewpoint SO 156170



UNFORGETTABLE SUNSET EXPERIENCES

Early evening is a magical time of day. As the sun disappears beneath the horizon, the beauty of the changing sky can inspire wonder, awe and a sense of calm. Come to the park and experience dusk over epic mountainscapes, glacial valleys and glassy lakes. Immerse yourself in nature as the scarlet skies turn indigo blue and finish each day with an unforgettable sunset experience.

There are so many remarkable backdrops in our park, offering some of the most dramatic sunset scenery you'll see anywhere in the world. We've picked out just a few to inspire you to come and stay, and create memories that will last a lifetime.

4. Brecon Beacons National Park visitor centre

At 330 metres above sea level, right in the centre of the park, our visitor centre is an excellent location for watching the sun go down. It offers easy access to the countryside, great parking and plenty of space to find the best sunset spot. There's even a 24-hour webcam that looks out towards Pen y Fan and Corn Du, so you can see what the weather's doing at any time.

Just a few minutes' walk across working common land, you'll find ancient standing stones that open up to distant panoramas. Gaze out over Hay Bluff and the Black Mountains to the east, Mynydd Epynt to the north, the Black Mountain to the west and the rolling hills of Fforest Fawr to the south.

Animals graze the common, so to avoid disturbing them (and the people who live nearby) our advice is to stay close to the visitor centre at dusk.

There is so much to see and do in the Brecon Beacons National Park with plenty of places to stay, go to:

Visitor centre webcam  www.beacons-npa.gov.uk/livewebcams

GREAT FOR:

distant panoramas carved
by ancient glaciers

NEAREST VILLAGE:

Brecon

COORDINATES:

SN 978264

BRECON BEACONS

OUR NATIONAL PARK



Ride into the sunset together

Our park is the perfect place for horse lovers. We have over 600 miles of bridle paths and tracks. Our spectacular scenery and wealth of wildlife create some of the best riding in Europe. We are close to excellent road and rail links, yet a world away from the bustle of urban life. The only delays here are for leisurely pub lunches while your mount grazes outside.

We have thousands of acres of hills, moors and fields, criss-crossed by ancient tracks and lanes. You can ride all day, sharing the views with the soaring buzzards. Our riding and trekking centres work together to offer top quality trekking, riding and hacking holidays, short rides and pony trekking.

FIND OUT MORE.



www.breconbeacons.org/things-to-do/activities/adventures-on-horseback/horse-riding-and-pony-trekking-centres



Brecon Beacons National Park Sunset Locations

1. Usk Reservoir SN 835285
2. Crai Reservoir SN 886210
3. Hay Bluff SO 239373 Stone Castle Car Park.
4. National Park Visitor Centre SN 978264
5. Pen Rhiw Ddu SN 730192 Look out Car Park.
6. Sugar Loaf Mountain SO 268167
7. Llangorse Lake SO 127270
8. Cockitt Hill SO 160283 Lay by Mynydd Llangorse viewpoint.
9. Bwlch Ialyby SO 132224
10. Blaen Onneu Viewpoint SO 156170



N/G 5 Miles / Milltir
10 Kilometres / Cilomedr

This is an Elephant Hawkmoth. They visit flowers for nectar at night, including Red Valerian in this photo, and Honeysuckle.

NOCTURNAL WILDLIFE EXPERIENCES

Daytime in the park offers spectacular stonping grounds, countless activities and opportunities for fun whatever the weather. If you stay with us overnight, then a whole new world of adventure opens up as nocturnal wildlife comes out. Immerse yourselves and your family in the sights and sounds of nighttime nature with a truly memorable animal detective experience.

The Beacons is home to an abundance of bird life, insects, amphibians and mammals that love the dark thanks to the diversity of our habitats. There are so many places to explore our park's nocturnal world – we've put together just a few to get you started.

1. Llangorse Lake

Llangorse Lake is a very special place for nocturnal wildlife spotting. As South Wales's largest natural lake, it's rich in biodiversity and a renowned stopover for migrating birds in spring and autumn. In summer you'll find its shores alive with dragonflies, damselflies and butterflies.

There's a huge variety of wildlife here to track, spot, see, hear and smell. You may even be lucky and catch a glimpse of an elusive owl. Keep an ear out for their distinctive calls, which differ between species. For example tawny owls are famous for their 'twit two', while barn owls screech.

Visit Llangorse as night is falling and you're likely to see swans taking off and landing, with powerful wings beating against the air. From September onwards into winter, head over to Llangorse Common at dusk where murmurations of starlings in huge numbers rise and fall. It's an unmissable spectacle and the sound of the birds as they call and feed on the wing is incredible.

Bats also forage over the waters of the lake and surrounding fields, including the European protected lesser horseshoe bat. Watch out for Llangorse's bats as they hunt for their insect prey, flying fast and sometimes low. Bat detectors allow you to listen in on their 'warbles' as they use their echolocating abilities to dive and dodge through the darkness of the night. A very basic detector is inexpensive and well worth the investment.

Moths come out at dusk too, including brightly coloured Hawk Moths, which you might see collecting nectar among the flowers. Llangorse Lake supports a wide variety of wildflowers, so it's a popular foraging ground for many types of moth. Certain plants are even adapted to pollination by different moth species.

Moths are attracted to light, so they're a regular sight near accommodation and campfires. They come in an amazing diversity of colours and sizes – why not come along to a moth-trapping event or have your own moth-spotting evening with a torch?

GREAT FOR:
water-based birds, bats,
moths and the odd elusive owl

NEAREST VILLAGE:
Llangorse

FIND OUT MORE:
[www.breconbeacons.org/poi/
town-village-llangorse](http://www.breconbeacons.org/poi/town-village-llangorse)

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OUR NATIONAL PARK

Just before dusk, small groups of starlings from the same area come together above a communal roosting site.

Other fun things to do at Llangorse Lake

- o Hire a kayak, Canadian canoe, pedalo or stand-up paddleboard and head out across Llangorse Lake.
- o Take a look at the reconstructed ancient crannog – a wooden lake dwelling – originally built during the Dark Ages as a palace for Brychan, the king of Brecknock (and the park's namesake).
- o Try out the energetic 12 mile circular walk starting on Llangorse Common. This family-friendly route has been made popular through the yearly 'Bwlch with Altitude' walking event, and offers panoramic views of the lake.

NUTS ABOUT CLUES

Keep your eyes peeled for the signs of small rodents, who love to nibble hazelnuts in quite particular ways.

Dormice leave a smooth inner rim with toothmarks at an angle to the hole on the nut surface. These often look a little like a clog.

Wood mice leave toothmarks both on the inner rim of the nut and also on the surface, around the edge of the hole.

Voles leave toothmarks across the inner rim of the nut, but don't leave any marks on the surface, around the edge of the hole.

FIND OUT MORE.



www.breconbeacons.org/poi/town-village-llangorse



Brecon Beacons National Park Wildlife Locations

1. Llangorse Lake
2. Llangasty Bird Hide
3. Brecon Beacons National Park Visitor Centre
4. Brecon Promenade
5. Talybont Reservoir Bird Hide



Moths: Keith Noble
Starlings: Drew Buckley