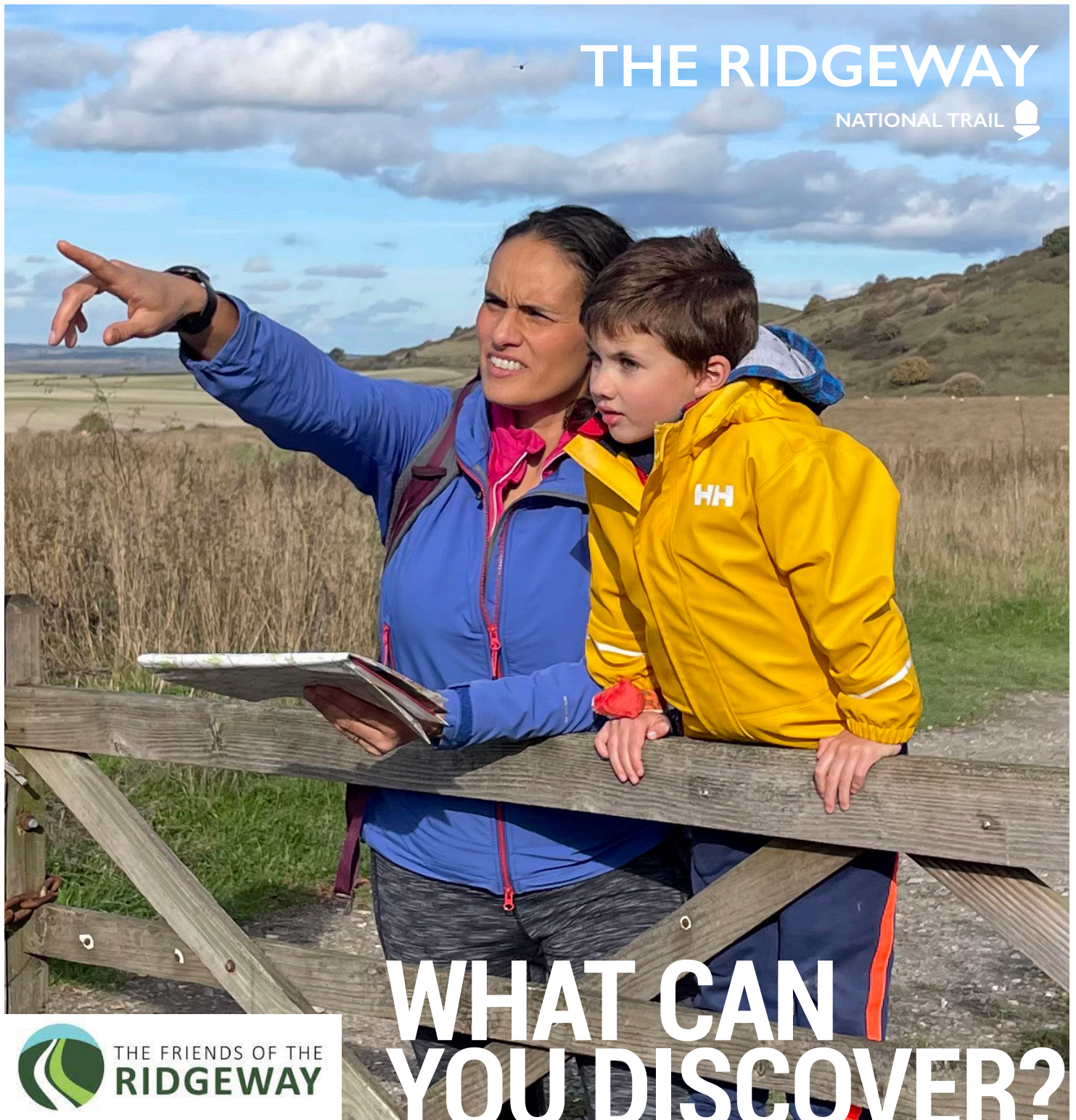


#RIDGEWAY SPOTTER

Free monthly spotter challenges to create a special calendar of your Ridgeway memories!



THE RIDGEWAY

NATIONAL TRAIL 

WHAT CAN
YOU DISCOVER?



THESE MONTHLY CHALLENGES ARE FREE OF CHARGE AND EASY TO DO – JUST VISIT THE RIDGEWAY AND SEE WHAT YOU CAN SPOT!

EACH MONTH HAS A THEME AND TIPS ARE PROVIDED TO HELP YOU IDENTIFY WHAT YOU SEE, INCLUDING VIDEO GUIDES. THE ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN DESIGNED TO BE FLEXIBLE SO THAT THEY CAN BE DONE AT ANY LOCATION ON THE RIDGEWAY BY ANYONE IN THEIR OWN TIME EACH MONTH.

WE HOPE FAMILY GROUPS, DAILY DOG WALKERS, WALKING/CYCLING/HORSE RIDING GROUPS, YOUTH GROUPS AND OTHERS WILL TAKE PART.

Download your free #RidgewaySpotter guide presenting 12 monthly challenges from the Ridgeway National Trail website:

FIND OUT MORE →

To plan your outing, use the interactive map on The Ridgeway's website to find car parks, train stations, places to eat, attractions etc:

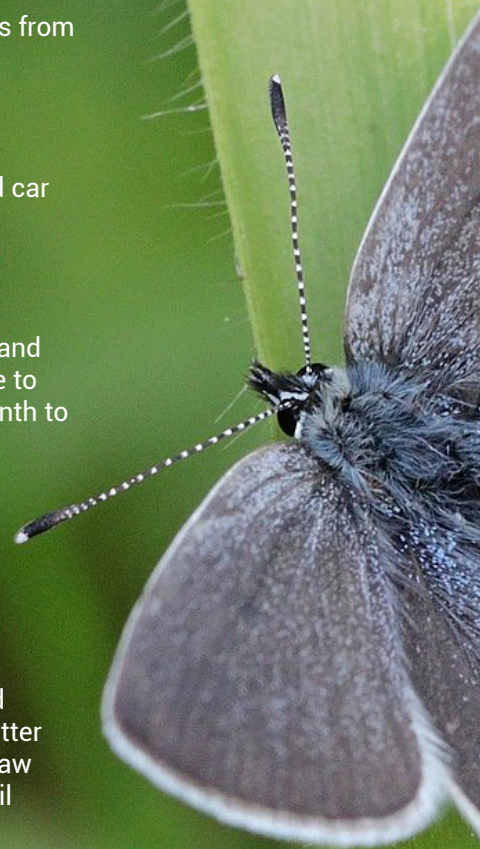
FIND OUT MORE →



Your photos will form a record of the year that you can look back at and help you to identify what you have seen. Perhaps you could continue to do this on every visit to The Ridgeway to discover what changes month to month, year to year.



Everyone taking part in the challenges is encouraged to share their photos and stories with others. Sharing on social media using the hashtag #RidgewaySpotter will enable other people to help you identify the things you see and will also draw encouragement from Friends of The Ridgeway and The Ridgeway National Trail whose social media accounts and newsletters will be promoting interesting #RidgewaySpotter photos and stories from different people through the year.



SPOT & SHARE

THE RIDGEWAY NATIONAL TRAIL



WHAT CAN YOU DISCOVER?

Share your photos on social media #RidgewaySpotter





Mary Tebje

STONE STORIES

WINTER IS THE PERFECT TIME TO LOOK FOR STONES WHILST NATURE IS QUIET AND FADED.

Can you see different materials used in buildings and monuments along the Trail? What words are carved into memorial stones? Can you see patches of chalk shining white and can you imagine the sea creatures which gave rise to flints? Does anyone know the myths and legends linked to sarsen stones along The Ridgeway?

Find out about chalk, flints and sarsen stones in this leaflet about The Ridgeway's geology:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Watch this Historic England video to see how stones were used to create the special monuments around Avebury:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Discover a famous Ridgeway sarsen stone and its legends:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Use this guide to look for different stones traditionally used in buildings around the North Wessex Downs area:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)



THE RIDGEWAY

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 Share your photos on social media **#RidgewaySpotter**





FEBRUARY

SMALL SIGNS OF CHANGE

THIS IS THE MONTH WHEN NATURE STARTS TO STIR AND NATURE'S TIMINGS ARE PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT WITH CLIMATE CHANGE.

Snowdrops, lesser celandines and hazel trees are the earliest to flower, followed by buds and leaves on hawthorn and elder – where and on what date can you find any of these? Now check the skies for change – any birds, planes or vapour trails? Are the clouds changing colour and shape and can you see fantastic beasts and faces?



Hackpen skies

Use this calendar to see what plants and wildlife to keep an eye on each month:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

This BBC Cloud Spotters Guide shows photos of 10 different types of clouds:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Have fun with clouds with these inspiring examples from artist Martin Feijoo:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Watch this video 'A year in the life of a hazel tree' by the Woodland Trust.

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)



THE RIDGEWAY
NATIONAL TRAIL

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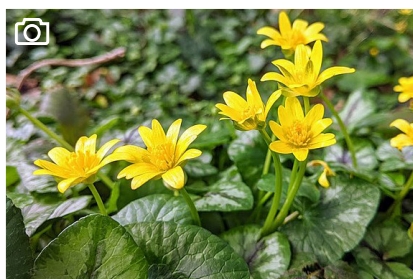
Mary Tebje

MARCH

LOOK FOR YELLOW

**IF YOU LOOK CAREFULLY,
THERE ARE LOTS OF COLOURS
ALONGSIDE THE RIDGEWAY
AND SPRING IS A TIME FOR
OPTIMISTIC YELLOW!**

How many different yellow things can you see on the Trail and in the distance? What is the most surprising or unusual yellow thing you can find? Are there yellows in the sunrise and sunset? Don't look directly at the sun!



Lesser Celandines are a type of buttercup found in woods and hedgerows.

Here are some free monthly photo guides to help you identify flowers at different times of the year:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

The Natural History Museum lists a Top 10 for yellow in nature around the world, including birds and insects:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

If you find litter on your hunt for yellow and want to help us address the problem, contact the Ridgeway Officer and read this:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)



THE RIDGEWAY

NATIONAL TRAIL 

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Nick Smith

APRIL

SINGING RIDGEWAY

THE RIDGEWAY IS A GREAT PLACE TO LOOK FOR AND LISTEN TO BIRDS. SOME ARE EASIER TO IDENTIFY THAN OTHERS – GET STARTED BY LOOKING FOR A KITE OR A YELLOWHAMMER.

Are there birds that you see near your home that you also see on The Ridgeway and others that are different? Can you hear them singing? Several birds, such as skylark shown in the photo above, nest on the ground so keep to the worn track – if you see birds flying up from the ground or landing down on the ground, it means they are vulnerable to you or your dog disturbing them.

The RSPB website provides useful facts and videos about different bird species, such as this webpage about the Yellowhammer:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Compare what you hear on The Ridgeway with these recordings of birds singing:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

This free spotter guide provides a list of several birds found along The Ridgeway:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Watch Clare Balding talk about skylarks and dogs in this video:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)



THE RIDGEWAY

NATIONAL TRAIL 

 Share your photos on social media [#RidgewaySpotter](#)





Jos Joslin

MAY

LOOK FOR WHITE

THIS MONTH LOOK FOR WHITE THINGS, BOTH ON THE RIDGEWAY AND IN THE DISTANCE.

How many different types of white things can you see? What is the most surprising or unusual white thing you can find? Which white flower has the best or worst perfume? Can you visit a chalk horse or other chalk mark along The Ridgeway? How many sheep and lambs can you count during your walk/ride?

Use this #BlossomWatch guide to identify the white flowers on different shrubs and trees:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Watch this video to see how the famous chalk horse at Uffington is kept white:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Learn about the significance of sheep and wool to The Ridgeway area here:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Here's a video of the Dogfather Graeme Hall explaining how dogs can cause sheep deaths:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)



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Sarah Wright

JUNE

THAT'S OLD!

HISTORIC ROUTEWAYS OFTEN LEAD TO ANCIENT MONUMENTS, OLD TREES AND HISTORIC BUILDINGS.

What is the oldest built thing you can find during your walk/ride and what is the most modern? What materials are used in the construction and can you imagine or find out who built it? Where can you find old trees? You may be surprised to know that an ancient Hawthorn measures 1.5m or more around its trunk, compared to over 6m for ancient Oak.



Pitstone windmill, one of the oldest post mills in Britain, can be seen from the Trail

Check out the history timeline in the Ridgeway leaflet to get you started:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Watch this video of the National Trust ranger showing a group around the oldest monument along The Ridgeway – Wayland Smithy's long barrow:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Find out about ancient trees here:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Use this video guide about ancient trees to estimate how old your tree is:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

DON'T KNOW HOW OLD?

Post photos of what you find on social media tagged #RidgewaySpotter and ask the question!



THE RIDGEWAY

NATIONAL TRAIL 

 Share your photos on social media #RidgewaySpotter





JULY

WINGED CREATURES

KEEP YOUR EYES PEELED FOR BUTTERFLIES AND OTHER INSECTS.

Are some insects noisy when they fly, others quiet? What colours are they? Some butterflies are easier to identify, especially when there are lots of them around – start out looking for a Marbled White and a Brimstone. What plants are insects visiting? Where is The Ridgeway busiest with flying insects?

This Butterfly ID guide can help you name the butterflies you see:

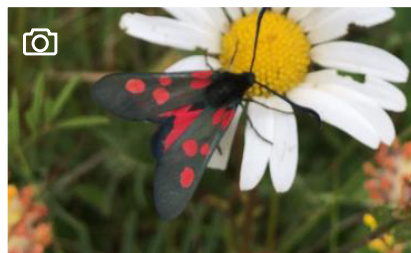
[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Watch this Natural History Museum video to discover something surprising about pollinators:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Some insects migrate across the world, as explained in this Wildlife Trust article:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)



Sarah Wright

This Five-spot Burnet Moth adds extra colour to The Ridgeway's flowering verges



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Sarah Wright

AUGUST

RAINBOW RIDGEWAY

**LOOK CAREFULLY TO SEE
HOW MANY DIFFERENT TYPES
OF FLOWERING PLANTS YOU
CAN SPOT.**

How many colours can you find amongst the flowers along The Ridgeway? Are there flowers growing in the fields beside The Ridgeway? Can you make a rainbow with your photos or drawings?



Meadow cranesbill

Watch this video by Bumblebee Conservation Trust to see numerous flowers that can be found along the Trail:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

This free ID guide lists several flowers you can hope to see in The Ridgeway's verges:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Check out these tips from an expert wildflower photographer:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)



THE RIDGEWAY

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Sarah Wright

SEPTEMBER

WILD HARVEST

WILDLIFE FEEDS ON NUMEROUS FRUITS, BERRIES AND NUTS ALONG THE RIDGEWAY. BLACKTHORN, HAWTHORN AND ELDER TREES ARE COMMON ALONGSIDE THE TRAIL AND YOU CAN ALSO SPOT WALNUT, HAZEL AND APPLE.

How many different shrubs and trees can you spot on your Ridgeway outing? What colours are the fruits and berries? Do you know any good recipes using the wild foods you find?

All the fruits shown in this video can be found along The Ridgeway:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Use this ID guide to name the trees and shrubs you spot:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Here's some interesting information about birds and berries:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)



Apple trees found in Ridgeway hedgerows could be native Crab Apple or cultivated Apple or a combination of the two.



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Sarah Wright

DOWN TO EARTH

**AUTUMN LEAVES AND FUNGI
DRAW OUR ATTENTION TO THE
GROUND AT THIS TIME OF YEAR.**

How many different shapes of leaves can you spot and what artwork can you make with fallen leaves? How many different types of fungi (wild mushroom) can you spot and are they growing on the ground or on tree trunks or branches? Can you imagine the stories linked to fungi called Lemon Disco, Destroying Angel and Snaketongue Truffleclub? Wash your hands if you touch fungi and don't eat them in case they are poisonous!

Marvel at Andy Goldsworthy's sculptures using leaves and other natural items he finds:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Use these free photo ID guides to identify what leaves come from which trees:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

This calendar gives you clues as to what type of fungi can be found at different times of year:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Use these free ID guides for fungi growing on trees:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Fungi growing on the ground:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)



THE RIDGEWAY

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Dave Cavanagh

SHAPE OF THE LAND

WINTER IS STRIPPING THE LANDSCAPE BARE, ESPECIALLY ON THE EXPOSED HILLTOPS.

Can you climb the high points of The Ridgeway to look for trig points?

Can you use an Ordnance Survey map like the one on The Ridgeway website to find trig points and check their elevations? When the sun is low, shadows are cast across the ground to make it easier to spot earthworks (a type of archaeological feature). Can you find hillforts such as 'Barbury Castle' marked on maps and then go out to trace the earthworks (mounds and dips) on the ground? Wrap up warm when going to hilltops and make sure not to stray onto private land (take binoculars for those times you can't get close).

Watch this BBC News video about trig points:

FIND OUT MORE →

Look on OS maps for clues - blue triangle icons indicate trig points and historic features are labelled too. The OS map on The Ridgeway website is free to use:

FIND OUT MORE →

Check this new online map by Historic England to see where earthworks have been mapped:

FIND OUT MORE →

You can also search for Scheduled Monuments here:

FIND OUT MORE →



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DECEMBER

WINTER SECRETS

WINTER IS A QUIET TIME WHEN YOU NEED TO LOOK AND LISTEN ESPECIALLY CAREFULLY



Prehistoric farming tools in Wiltshire Museum.

What patterns can you see in the bark of different trees?

Can you find something made magical by ice, snow or fog, such as a frozen spider's web or ice hanging from a tree? Are there human, animal and bird footprints in the mud or snow? Can you find a local pub with a log fire? Can you visit a local museum and hunt for the most interesting/oldest/beautiful exhibit relating to The Ridgeway, e.g. an item made from chalk, a prehistoric item buried in a barrow along the Trail, an old photo relating to farming.

Here is a guide showing the bark of 12 common trees:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Here is a free picture guide to wildlife footprints:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Get inspired by the snow art of artist Simon Beck:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)

Use The Ridgeway website's interactive map to find pubs and museums to visit – tick the box for 'Food and drink' and 'Attractions' respectively:

[FIND OUT MORE →](#)



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#RIDGEWAY SPOTTER

Free monthly spotter challenges to create a special calendar of your Ridgeway memories!

These challenges have been created by the Ridgeway Officer and the charity Friends of the Ridgeway. The charity works to preserve the spirit of the Ridgeway and its surroundings for maximum enjoyment by the public, and protection of the adjacent natural and historic environment. Please consider becoming a member of the charity – individual membership costs £8 for one year: <https://ridgewayfriends.org.uk/>

WHAT CAN YOU DISCOVER?



THE RIDGEWAY

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