

# eden project

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### Eden launches series of free social activities to connect people of all ages with nature

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The Eden Project has announced a number of group activities starting during January which aim to bring people closer to nature and each other.

Spending time in green spaces has been shown to have a positive impact on physiology with decreased stress levels and boosted creativity and productivity. Part of Eden's Nature Connections initiative, activities aim to improve participant's health and wellbeing whilst also providing the opportunity to learn, meet other people and observe how Eden grows and changes throughout the winter months.

Nature Connections is a collection of nature-based activities, workshops and courses that have been delivered to members of the community, many through social prescribing, professional and self-referral, since the first health walks in 2005. It includes a range of nature-based activities, with something on offer for every stage of life, from babies and toddlers with their parents or grandparents, to young people, through to adults and older people.

Among the new offerings for 2024 is Creating Connections, a programme of activities for young people aged under 25. As part of this, a new nature-based photography course is launching on January 27.

The six-week course will explore basic photography techniques, such as composition and lighting through the use of camera phones, with Eden's plants and landscapes providing the perfect subject matter to spark creativity and engage with nature.

The course will show how using devices to connect with what we see, when we turn our attention outwards, is a powerful tool to improve our health and wellbeing.

Also new for 2024 are Wonder Workshops. Taking place on select Fridays from January 26, these 90-minute facilitated sessions have been created to provide a friendly and sociable experience for adults seeking to learn more about the wonders of nature, trying new creative activities while connecting with others.

Participants will be led on a journey through Eden's vast living collection of plants, discovering the impact they have on our day-to-day lives. Each week will focus on a different plant, igniting curiosity and uncovering our connections to them.

Returning as part of Nature Connections are a series of ever-popular activities for under-fives and their families, which are designed to help young children understand and connect with the natural world around them. Music in the Med will recommence from January 25 and Yoga Buds from January 26. These will then be followed by Little Eden – a weekly club set in Eden's wild perimeters -which restarts from February 20.

Sam Alford, Eden's Head of Nature Connections, said: "It feels fantastic to be able to kickstart a new year at Eden with the launch of a whole host of activities for Nature Connections.

"We know that a visit to a green space can be beneficial to our physical and mental wellbeing, particularly during this time of the year. Having our Biomes to provide a nature-filled, biodiverse and undercover space, alongside our beautiful Outdoor Gardens and vast Outer Estate, allows us to run varied activities with something for everyone.

"As Nature Connections continues to build as an initiative, we'll have news on more activities and courses in the near future."

Eden has been delivering activities to support the health of local community members since 2005, when it was selected as a venue to host a weekly walk for people with COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease). Since 2016 the team have been working closely with local GPs and health practitioners through social prescribing.

The Nature Connections scheme also runs a friendly weekly walking group, specifically designed for adults who would benefit from increased activity to support their health and wellbeing. Every Friday, one-hour walks take place for anyone who would benefit from increased activity, accessing Eden's beautiful green gardens and being part of a supportive group.

The team also facilitate horticultural therapy programmes in Eden's Outer Estate, for those experiencing health-related problems, designed to improve mental and physical wellbeing. The programmes provide a quiet

space to be in nature and a chance to develop practical gardening skills. New introductory courses will start in February.

Nature Connections is supported by the Pears Foundation, Cornwall Council, The Royal Cornwall Hospital Charity and NHS Charities Together. The Creating Connections photography course is funded by the Cornwall Community Fund. The Wonder Workshops have been made possible thanks to the Albert Van den Bergh Charitable Trust.

Many of the Nature Connections activities are free to attend, such as those that available through social prescribing or other referral routes. Pre-booking or pre-arrangement is essential.

Nature Connections is a core part of Eden's commitment to health and wellbeing. Other events include free weekly park runs on Saturdays, the annual Eden Project Marathon and Half Marathon (October 20) and the annual Reclaim weekend of invigorating talks, inspiring workshops and events curated to support mental and planetary wellbeing – free for students and 17-25-year-olds (January 27 – 28).

More information can be found at [www.edenproject.com](http://www.edenproject.com).

## **ENDS**

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