

PANTHER CAUGHT ON CAMERA IN FOREST OF DEAN FIELD!

The evidence is now overwhelming with thousands of eye witnesses!

A couple who had travelled from overseas to visit family in the Forest of Dean, captured what they believed to be a big cat in a field adjacent to the A40. At first they were not sure what the creature was but the lady can be heard on the video wondering if the jet black animal was in fact a panther.

The creature was filmed from some distance away but can be clearly seen against the background of the green field. The lady who recorded the footage estimates the animal to be as tall as a Labrador dog and twice as long in the body.

Intrigued by what she had seen, the lady set about contacting someone who may have information on big cat sightings in Gloucestershire and the rest of the UK. The footage was shared and is said to be one of the best videos yet of a big cat sighting.

Frank Tunbridge, 74 from Podsmead has been studying wildlife and big cats for around 60 years. Having reviewed the footage, he says the evidence of big cats roaming the British countryside is

overwhelming now.

Mr Tunbridge said: *“To most people throughout the UK the concept of large predatory wild cats, similar in description to black leopards and pumas living a feral existence in our woods and other wild places is unbelievable.*

“We can accept other species, such as mink, muntjac deer, wild boar, wallabies, and ring necked parakeets with some distain. Yet the mere thought of coming across a big cat, the size of a large dog, only 10 metres ahead, whilst on a quiet stroll in the countryside fills most people with dread.

Mr Tunbridge believes there are between 16 -24 sightings of big cats every week, throughout Great Britain. He believes many people keep it to themselves, for fear of ridicule.

“The whole tantalising subject of ‘The British Big Cat’ has been rolling on for decades now, without a satisfying conclusion. The evidence is now overwhelming with thousands of eye witness reports.

“Road kills of big cats have been seen, but removed by authorities. Deer and sheep dispatched and eaten as only

a large field would do it. There is video footage and signs in fields such as, scratch marks, droppings, hair, and vocalisation.

“Back before the 1976 Dangerous Animals Act was implemented by the Government, many exotic wild animals were kept as pets throughout the UK, with large carnivores especially favoured. Due to the stringent new rules imposed by this new legislation lots of owners’ released their ‘pets’ into wild places up and down the country to fend for themselves.

“With the abundance of live prey available, including rabbits, pigeons, and deer, these ‘abandoned’ carnivores soon adapted, bred, and spread, with hybrids of different species appearing here and there.”



Fun Fact



ABOUT EASTER ...

On Easter Sunday in the U.K. we eat chocolate eggs! Even before Easter was celebrated, our ancestors celebrated Spring at a similar time to Easter and eggs were a symbol of new life with Spring being a time to celebrate new life and rebirth. There are between **80 and 90 million** chocolate Easter Eggs eaten in the UK every year!!

KING CHARLES III'S CORONATION: JETS INVOLVED IN FLYPAST TO DISPERSE OVER GLOUCESTERSHIRE

In Coronation flight rules set down by Forest of Dean MP Mark Harper, it has been revealed that some of the planes due to be involved in the King's flyover will disperse over Gloucestershire.

Flight restrictions are also to be imposed across parts of the South East and East Anglia due to the coronation flypast.

A notice to pilots published online said Transport Secretary Mark Harper has decided to ban aircraft from flying below various altitudes in certain areas on the afternoon of Saturday May 6. The PA news agency understands this will have an impact on light aircraft pilots and drone users, but not commercial flights.

That is in contrast with the day of the late Queen's funeral, when more than 100 Heathrow Airport flights were cancelled to prevent aircraft noise disturbing proceedings at Westminster Abbey and Windsor Castle.

At around 2.15pm on May 6, the King and Queen Consort will appear on the balcony of Buckingham Palace with other members of the royal



family to watch a six-minute flypast of more than 60 aircraft from the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force – including the Red Arrows – over The Mall.

The aircraft will then disperse to airspace above Surrey, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire. Restrictions on aircraft not taking part will be in place in airspace above parts of London, East Anglia and the North Sea at various times from 12.15pm until 2pm. A document published by the Civil Aviation Authority and air traffic control

service Nats setting out the exact details and locations of the rules states: "Due to the large number of aircraft involved (in the flypast), the Secretary of State for Transport has decided that it is necessary to introduce Restriction of Flying Regulations."

Aircraft operated by the emergency services are exempt. Restrictions have also been announced for parts of East Anglia, Lincolnshire and the North Sea on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday due to flypast rehearsals.



EXERCISE LEVELS IN THE FOREST OF DEAN

Exercise levels among adults in the Forest of Dean are the same as they were before the pandemic, new figures show.

Sport England said its Active Lives survey shows a strong recovery across England after Covid-19 impacted people's exercise habits, but added a significant proportion of the population are still not meeting the recommended amount of activity. The survey shows 63% of 514 respondents aged over 16 in the Forest of Dean said they were active in the year to November 2022, exercising for more than two and a half hours a week.



LATEST ACTIVITIES & EVENTS AT SYDENHAM HOUSE

APRIL: KICKING OFF WITH EASTER!

April brought the start of the Spring Holiday season kicking off with Easter. To celebrate we decorated Easter Bonnets for ourselves, made festive coloured eggs and feasted upon Hot Cross Buns and chocolate eggs, leaving plenty of room for a lovely Roast Dinner and tipples of something in a Glass on the Sunday. Several of our residents enjoyed going out for the day with their families over the Bank Holiday weekend, and this year we have several more holiday weekends coming up to enjoy. Special thanks to all our staff who forego their own families to look after us on "holidays"!

It's always uplifting to see Spring breaking through in the Forest as grey turns to green in the hedgerows, daffodils, celandines and even dandelions brighten the banks and roadsides and as the month draws to a close, the scent of bluebells fills the air. It's a short trip in a car to the Bluebell Woods near Soudley and even those of us with failing eyesight

can appreciate the unmistakable signs of Spring by simply opening the window and sniffing.

Back at home we've enjoyed vases of daffodils and "lamb's tails" twigs of Hazel as centre pieces on our tables and in our rooms. Simple things bring back so many memories.

We were delighted to receive a donation of a set of "old money" coins from a storekeeper at Taurus Crafts this month. It was 1971 when the UK converted to decimal currency but our residents recognised and recalled the coins straight away, even remembering how much day-to-day goods cost, and how to calculate in Pounds, Shillings and Pence.

Lots of Birthdays were celebrated in April including one special birthday as Arthur turned 100! He was delighted to receive his card from **The King**, and we were thrilled when he generously shared it with us. Celebrations included visits from an

old favourite entertainer, Mickey Bull and **Super Rooster** from Bristol and the children from **Blakeney School** who came to sing with us. Mary gave us a jolly dance tune or two on the melodean and all the children danced for us. Sue taught the little ones to do "The Twist" and showed them how to twirl their partners in Rock Around the Clock and those of us whose dancing days are but dim memories joined in, tapping feet, clapping hands and singing along enthusiastically.

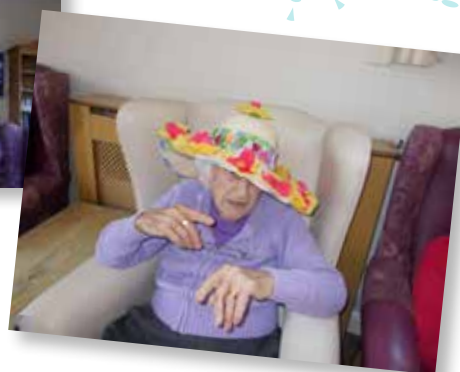
As the month ends we're already building up for yet more "holidays" in May, celebrating old country traditions on May Day, followed by the Coronation and then Oak Apple Day. Watch this space for more of what we get up to in Sydenham House!



Lyn

About Activities:

There's always plenty to do at Sydenham House



Largest Woodlands soon to be Connected: PLUS: Planting Trees for 60 mile stretch ...

The two forests will be connected by a 60 mile corridor of hedgerows and woodland: Forest of Dean & the Wyre Forest ...

Two of England's largest woodlands will be connected by a new project.

The Forest of Dean and the Wyre Forest will be joined by a 60 mile (96km) corridor of hedgerows and woodland.

The 'Severn Treescapes' project will be carried out by Wildlife Trusts in Gloucestershire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

When complete, it will form "a wooded landscape at a scale never seen in the region before," the Trusts say.

There are hopes that enough trees can be planted to reverse a trend that has seen a reduction in tree coverage in the space between the two forests.

The majority of the land there is used for farming, so the scheme will have to work with local landowners if it is to succeed.

It will be a legacy project of the Queen's Green Canopy, which marked the Platinum Jubilee of the late Queen Elizabeth II.

Dr Juliet Hynes, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust's head of ecological evidence, said: "It will provide a fantastic

opportunity for local communities, landowners and farmers to build a closer relationship with trees.

"Trees and hedgerows can help to tackle the impacts of climate change - providing livestock with shade in the summer, fruit and nuts for birds and small mammals in the winter and increased water infiltration.

"What's more, the wellbeing benefits of being in nature and around trees are well-known and vital to our health and happiness," she added.



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Just for fun!

here's a little quiz - who would like to be Quiz Master?!

General Knowledge

- 1 How many faces does a Dodecahedron have?
- 2 Where are you if you were standing on the Spanish Steps?
- 3 Who was the Ancient Greek God of the Sun?
- 4 How many elements are in the periodic table?
- 5 Aureolin is a shade of what color?
- 6 What is the 4th letter of the Greek alphabet?

Inspirational Quote

“ Kindness is one thing you can't give away. It always comes back. ”

George Skolsky