

PRESS RELEASE

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Enjoy natural spectacle this autumn on Black Country canals

Waterways and wellbeing charity, Canal & River Trust, is predicting a particularly dramatic display of autumn colours over the next few weeks and there is nowhere better to experience this free natural spectacle than along the Black Country's canals.

A walk or cycle along the Dudley, New Main Line, Old Main Line and the Walsall canals, which are now part of the newly created UNESCO Global Geopark for the Black Country, is an ideal way to experience the changing seasons.

The summer weather in the Midlands has included plenty of sunshine, with just enough rain to keep foliage growing. And with a mild and calm September, leaves have remained on the trees ready for a spectacular autumnal display.

Paul Wilkinson, senior ecologist from the Canal & River Trust, explains: "We've had the right conditions for an amazing natural display this autumn. Over the summer it's been warm and dry, with enough rain showers here and there to keep everything growing. As long as the weather remains calm and mild, we should see a gorgeous display of leaf colour this year, from the reds of wild cherry to lemon yellow of ash trees. Look out for the fruit too, the dark blue of sloe berries against yellow leaves and the scarlet rose hips, beaming light beacons as the light gets lower.

"Our canals in the Black Country are really special places. At over 200 years old they tell the story of the region and how, thanks to the canals, local towns came to thrive during the Industrial Revolution. Today our canals are widely appreciated as the most amazing spaces for a local escape, with those in the Black Country now recognised as part of the new UNESCO Geopark, which marks them out as being some of the most important geological sites in the World. This time of year, is a great time to unwind down by your local canal and experience the wealth of heritage, wildlife and health benefits of being next to water."

To find your nearest canal visit www.canalrivertrust.org.uk

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Patron: H.R.H. The Prince of Wales. Canal & River Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales with company number 7807276 and registered charity number 1146792, registered office address: First Floor North, Station House, 500 Elder Gate, Milton Keynes MK9 1BB

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Notes to Editors

The Canal & River Trust cares for and brings to life 2,000 miles of canals and rivers across England & Wales. We believe waterways have the power to make a difference to people's lives and that spending time by water can make us all healthier and happier. By bringing communities together to make a difference to their local waterway, we are creating places and spaces that can be used and enjoyed by everyone, every day.

www.canalrivertrust.org.uk