



The Isle of Man is one of the most beautiful locations in the British Isles. Its stunning and varied landscape comprises austere moorland, lush valleys and wooded glens plus sandy beaches and rugged cliffs.

## THE AYRES NATIONAL NATURE RESERVE

The Ayres National Nature Reserve on the north coast is an extensive area of raised beach and dune habitats with dune slacks, maritime heath and lichen heath. Part of the beach is closed off in summer to protect the colony of little terns, otherwise open access permits walkers to appreciate the dwarf gorse, burnet rose and various orchids in season. The nature reserve, managed by the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and Manx National Heritage, is also home to many birds, whilst seals are often spotted off the coast. The Manx Wildlife Trust Visitor Centre is open daily May to September, except Mondays. The Ayres National Nature Reserve Warden will be hosting guided walks over the summer. Please contact Louise Samson on 07624 483942 for more details. Bus services 20 & 20a from Ramsey.

Tel: 01624 801985, Web: [www.gov.im/daff](http://www.gov.im/daff)

## BALLALHEANNAGH GARDENS

Boasting more than 15,000 different plants and flowers from around the world and with five miles of paths to explore, this is a horticultural haven that manages to remain one of the Island's best kept secrets. Located in the hills above Laxey, Ballalheannagh Gardens covers a total area of about 30 acres and features streams and waterfalls. 'Good children' are admitted free. Open April to September.

Tel: 01624 861875, Web: [www.visitisleofman.com](http://www.visitisleofman.com)

## CALF OF MAN

A 616 acre islet off the south coast of the Isle of Man, the Calf is a bird observatory encircled by precipitous cliffs and isolated from the main island by the choppy waters of the Sound. The former refuge for Christian monks is of great interest to bird watchers thanks to the number of seabird colonies that have made it their home. Day trips operate throughout the summer, or if you fancy an overnight stay (April-Sept), a hostel on the islet can accommodate up to eight people who must provide their own sleeping bag, food and torch.

Manx National Heritage. Tel: 01624 648000, Web: [www.gov.im/mnh](http://www.gov.im/mnh)

## CURRAGHS WILDLIFE PARK

Get up close and personal with animals that roam around large enclosures at the Curraghs Wildlife Park in Ballaugh. This popular park welcomed the arrival of rare red pandas in 2004 and is home to all sorts of animals from birds and snakes to wallabies. A popular attraction with the children is the miniature Orchid Line railway that takes passengers through the wetlands. There are indoor and outdoor play areas as well as a cafe and picnic sites. Behind the Wildlife Park is Ballaugh Curragh, a wetland formed on the site of an ice age lake. The wetland was designated an Area of Special Scientific Interest by the IoM Government in 2005. Bus services 5, 5a & 6 from Douglas or Ramsey.

Open all year round. Tel:01624 897323, Web: [www.gov.im/wildlife](http://www.gov.im/wildlife)

## CLOSE SARTFIELD

Visit the Manx Wildlife Trust's reserve at Close Sartfield during May and June to see more than 100,000 examples of colourful orchids. Ballaugh boasts the largest roost of hen harriers in western Europe while choughs, ravens and peregrine falcons can also be seen around the Island. Bus services 5, 5a & 6 from Douglas or Ramsey.

Tel: 01624 801985, Web: [www.wildlifetrust.org.uk](http://www.wildlifetrust.org.uk)

## MANX WILDLIFE TRUST WILDFLOWER GARDEN

A showcase garden demonstrating wildflower gardening techniques. The garden is situated less than 100 yards from Tynwald Mills, St Johns, with its shopping, cafes and art gallery. Bus services 5, 5a & 6 from Douglas.

Tel 01624 801985, Web: [www.wildlifetrust.org.uk](http://www.wildlifetrust.org.uk)

## **NATIONAL GLENS**

The Isle of Man has 17 national glens, both coastal and mountain, maintained and preserved in their natural state by the Government's Forestry Division. All glens can be accessed by car, with several situated near electric tram or steam railway stations, or on bus routes.

### **GLEN MAYE**

Sheltered, fern-filled woodland makes Glen Maye, three miles south of Peel on the west coast, one of the most popular glens. Covering eleven and a half acres, Glen Maye boasts relics of the ancient forests that once covered Mann and an almost sub-tropical climate. The glen also features the wheel case of the Mona Erin, one of many water wheels that once provided power for lead mines. Bus service 7 Peel to Dalby.

### **DHOON GLEN**

Another wheel casing can be found at the Dhoon Glen, five miles south of Ramsey on the east coast. The glen is famous locally for its majestic waterfall, which has long been a favourite for amateur photographers. The steeply wooded slopes make this glen one of the most challenging for walkers. Bus services 3, 3a, 3b from Douglas or Ramsey or Manx Electric Railway.

### **GLEN HELEN**

Glen Helen in the west features a wishing seat, a throne-like chair in stone that grants the wishes of those who sit on it. Lined by an impressive variety of mature trees, the path leads to another tranquil spot featuring a waterfall and plunge-pool - a favourite for dogs! Bus service 10 from St Johns or Peel.

## SILVERDALE GLEN

Silverdale Glen, near Rushen Abbey, is extremely popular with families and boasts a small boating lake, Victorian water-powered carousel, café and ceramics workshop where you can paint your own designs at the Craftworks Studio (Tel: 01624 823244). Bus service 8 from Port Erin or Peel.

## GLEN MOOAR

Glen Mooar, near Kirk Michael, has the one the Island's highest waterfalls Spooyt Vane (White Spout). The glen also has the remains of an 8-10th century keeil with a hermit's cell. Bus services 5, 5a & 6 from Douglas or Ramsey.

Free Admission. Tourist Information Centre Tel:01624 686766