

Dark Sky Tourism in the Brecon Beacons



In 2013, The Brecon Beacons National Park was awarded International Dark Sky Reserve Status.

To capitalise on this, a small observatory and lecture room accommodates visitors

Since that time, Astro-tourism has been a large feature of the park with over 10,500 people attending sessions to date

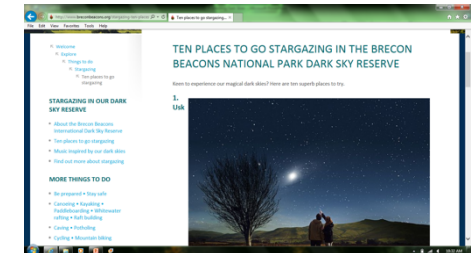


Since that time, education, stargazing and astronomy have been at the forefront of public engagement with **Dark Sky Wales** leading sessions and **Astrocamp** providing a biannual star party



The park has won several awards. One from the Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales and a Dark Sky Advocate Award for the observatory director from the Astronomical League

A website details the best places to go stargazing in the national park



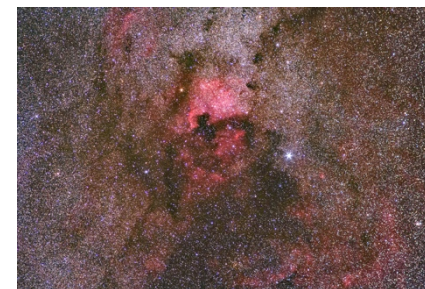
With a naked eye limiting magnitude of 6.6, the park vies as one of the best sites in Europe for dark skies.

The Summer Milky Way is obvious to the naked eye and photography brings out the highlights

The benefits of dark sky tourism

- Education
- Heritage
- Mental Health
- Environmentalism
- Social Interaction
- Hobbies
- Dark Sky Awareness

Astronomers and public enjoying a summer night in the National Park



Sustainability, ethics and education as critical to achieving sustainable Dark Sky Tourism. (Blundell Shaffer and Moyle)

Unique landscapes coupled with astronomy sites of global importance presents the ideal opportunity to develop Astro Tourism as niche offering. (Jacobs, Du Preez and Fairer-Wessels)
Astro-tourism can be considered a modern form of ecotourism. The main resource for astro-tourism is a high-quality night sky, but this is very sensitive to natural as well as anthropogenic factors; such as land utilization and expansion of urban areas, which cause the negative effect of light pollution. (Kanianska, Skvareninova and Kaniansky)

