

GOD'S COLOURS IN THE GARDEN:

POWIS CASTLE NEAR WELSHPOOL

A beautiful Welsh garden in the height of summer, displaying a profusion of colours.



We visited Powis Castle in late August 2017. It's a medieval castle, built by a Welsh prince in the 13th century near Welshpool, in Powys, Wales but later turned into a grand mansion. It's best known for housing the treasures that were brought home by **Robert Clive** and his son, **Edward Clive** from India. They were collected during their time working for the **East India Company**.



The castle with its terraces, filled with well stocked flowerbeds and dramatic, beautifully maintained topiary.



A view of the Powys countryside from the Italian Renaissance-influenced flower terraces containing statues. When we visited, the grassed area in the distance was being used for children's activities.



The lower level of the castle has a beautiful fountain, what remains of an extensive 17th century Dutch water garden. 'National Trust' deck chairs are laid out in groups for the convenience of visitors in the summer months.

The garden you see today has its origins in the 1680s, when William Herbert, 1st Marquess of Powis (c.1626–96), employed architect William Winde to develop a series of terraces and formal grass slopes against the south-facing ridge below the Castle. For a detailed history of how the garden developed, see the [National Trust website](#).



Following the end of the Welsh Wars (1282) and for his loyalty to [Edward I](#), the King permitted a Welsh prince, [Gruffydd ap Gwenwynwyn](#) to begin building Powis Castle circa 1283.



The Italianate terraces of Powis Castle.

A descendant of Owain ap Gruffydd ap Gwenwynwyn, the last hereditary prince of Powis, sold the castle to **Sir Edward Herbert (d. 1595)**. Sir Edward's wife was a [Roman Catholic](#) and the family's allegiance to Rome and to the [Stuart](#) kings was to shape its destiny for over a century. On 22 October 1644 Powis Castle was captured by Parliamentary troops and was not returned to the family until the restoration of [Charles II](#).



The impressive Powis countryside viewed from the castle.

The castle passed on to Robert Clive's son, Edward when the latter married Henrietta, a descendant of the original owners. It continues to be owned by the Clive family, through the National Trust. According to William Dalrymple, much of the wealth amassed by Clive was loot that was illicitly collected after the Battle of Plassey. Much of it is today displayed at the Clive museum at Powis. When Clive returned to UK with £234,000 (£ 23 million today), he was the richest self-made man in Europe.

Edward also worked in the [East India Company](#) and was then the [Governor of Madras](#). His marriage to Henrietta led to the union of the Clive and Powis estates in 1801, and in 1804 the earldom of Powis was recreated for the third time for Edward Clive.



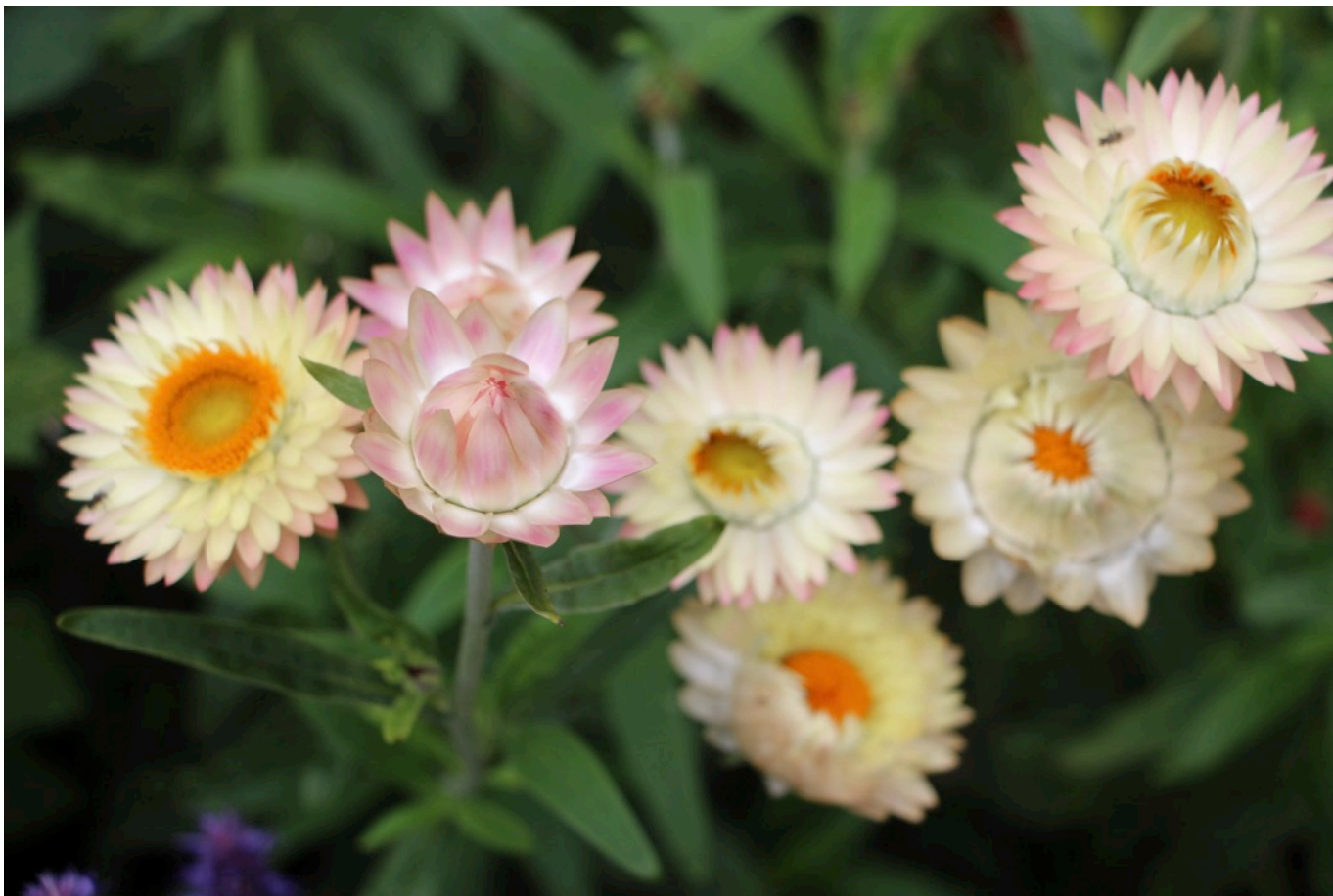
The 'gallery of the Caesars' at Powis Castle.

The final alterations to Powis Castle were undertaken at the beginning of the 20th century by G. F. Bodley for George Charles Herbert, 4th Earl of Powis (1862–1952) whose wife improved the garden which she felt had the potential to be 'the most beautiful in England and Wales'. On Herbert's death in 1952, he bequeathed the castle and gardens to the **National Trust**.



The half timbered 'Bothy' house in the midst of the formal gardens at Powis Castle can be rented from the National Trust. Built in 1908, The Bothy's Edwardian, half-timbered style was chosen to reflect the rustic cottage garden theme that was popular at the time.

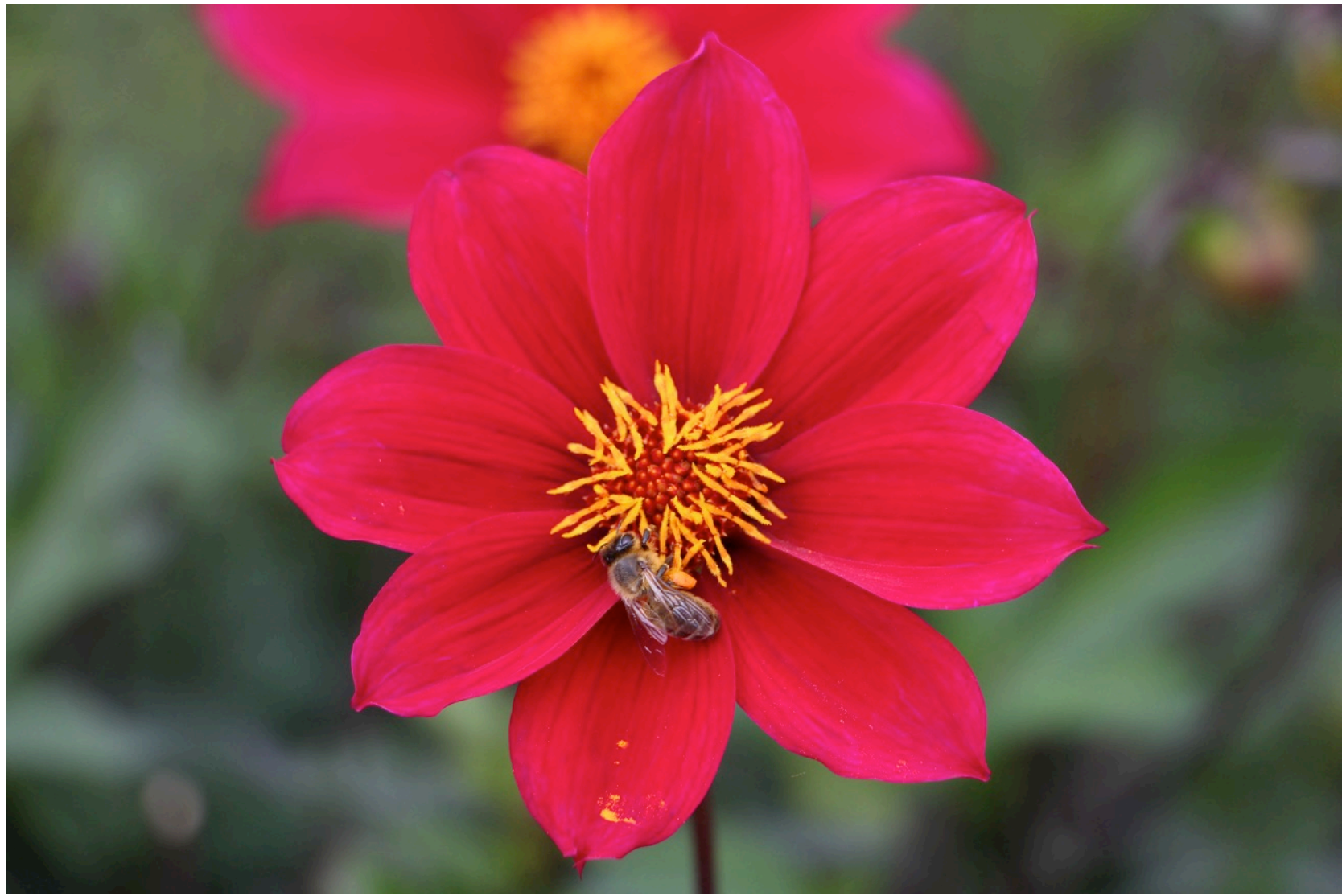
Here is a selection of the stunning range of flowers, colours (and some insect life!) to be seen in summer at Powis Castle gardens:



















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Links and sources of information:

Wikipedia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Powis_Castle

National Trust

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/powis-castle-and-garden>

The Bothy Holiday cottage

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/powis-castle-and-garden/features/the-bothy-holiday-cottage-at-powis->

