



Winter bingo

As you reach these big holm oak trees, walk further along the trail, keeping your eyes open for some winter treasures. How many can you find?



☐ turkey oak acorns



☐ holly berries



☐ holm oak acorns



☐ nest



☐ evergreen leaf



☐ ash keys



☐ squirrel



Woolly thinking!

If you stood at this spot one hundred years ago, you would be looking at a herd of sheep! At that time, people were allowed to use the Downs to graze their animals. If the people forgot to bring their sheep in at night, the Downs Ranger would round them up and keep them in this fenced area called a 'pound'.



Imagine you have travelled back in time. What can you see? What can you hear? What can you smell? How does it make you feel?

www.avongorge.org.uk



The Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project is a partnership of Bristol City Council, Bristol Zoo Gardens, Natural England, University of Bristol, the Society of Merchant Venturers, Downs Committee and Bristol Zoological Society.



The Downs Winter Family Trail

For adults and their children to enjoy between November and February

Wrap up warm and venture out onto the Downs! There are plenty of fun and exciting things to do at this time of year. Why not follow our trail and have a go at our activities?



Things to bring!

- ☒ an adult
- ☒ sensible, comfy shoes
- ☒ warm and waterproof clothes
- ☒ drink and snack
- ☒ pencil



I hear with my little ear



The trail starts and ends near Bristol Zoo Gardens, so as well as the sounds that you might expect to hear on the Downs, you may also hear some of the zoo animals! Sit quietly on the bench by the stone tower and listen to the noises around you for two minutes. Each time you hear a new sound, write it down. Listen out for wild birds, the lions, the seals and the gibbons!



2 Tree silhouettes

Make your way to the circle of five ash trees. Once you are there, have a look around and see if you can spot these tree silhouettes. Tick them off once you have found them.



☐ ash tree giant

☐ tiny hawthorn

☐ wise old ash

Can you recreate their shapes by using your body?

3 Lovely lichen!

Lichen are fungi that behave like plants because they have little green algal cells inside them. They are found on the branches of trees marked on the map, see if you can spot them.

On the ash tree



Lecidella elaeochroma

On the hawthorn tree



Xanthoria parietina

On the oak tree



Flavoparmelia caperata

4 Cheeky creatures

Follow the track until you reach a yellow gravel path. Follow this path down the hill until you see a small track on your right. The first tree you come to is a monkey puzzle tree. Have a look on the ground around the base of the tree, can you find any of the woody spikey leaves?



What kind of creature could you make them into?
Draw it in the Space provided.

5 Bird calls

As you follow the trail through the trees you are likely to see, and hear a number of different birds. Can you recreate their calls?



☐ Long-tailed tit

These tiny birds are often found in groups known as flocks at this time of the year. Listen for their high-pitched '**see-see-see**' call.



☐ Robin

You can often see these birds perched in the top of trees singing at you! Their song has been described as '**twiddle-oo, twiddle-ee-dee, twiddle-oo twiddle**'.



☐ Magpie

The chattering call of this large bird is easy to hear. Listen out for a harsh '**chacker-chacker**'.



☐ Wren

These small birds normally hide in the bushes. Their fast '**teck teck teck**' call sounds a bit like a machine gun!

Can you hear any other calls? What do you think is making them?

2

Tree silhouettes

As you walk from the ventilation shaft through the trees, the circle of ash trees stands towards the right of the area of open grassland. If you stand inside the circle with the ventilation shaft to your left, the trees for the silhouettes will all be in front of you.



3

Lovely lichen!

These trees form part of the Downs Lichen Trail, which is available from the café near the Water Tower. Look out for the discs in the trees. You will have to get up close to the branches to spot the lichen. Please make sure that your child looks but does not touch as lichen are very delicate.



4

Cheeky creatures

You could collect a few leaves to take home with you and make into creatures. At home, use a ball of modelling clay, playdoh or even mud, and shape it into animals. The leaves could be used as ears, teeth, fangs, whatever your child can imagine.

5

Bird calls

Bird calls are difficult to describe so you can check the sounds on www.rspb.org.uk and search for each bird by name. Each page will tell you a little about the bird and you can listen to an example of its call.

6

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The path splits into two when you get to a group of evergreen trees. You need to take the right-hand track, closest to the road.

7

Woolly thinking!

The compound in front of you is known as the Ranger's Pound. The Downs team, who are responsible for looking after the Downs, are based here.

We hope you enjoyed the trail. Why not try our other seasonal trails?



Winter Family Trail Notes for Adults

A guide for grown-ups



Before you start

Once you embark upon this trail you could be out and about for over an hour. The trail begins near the zoo and the nearest toilets are situated near the Water Tower, at the top of Blackboy Hill. There are no toilets on this trail.



Supporting your child on the Winter Trail

This section is designed as a guide to enable you and your child or children to get the most out of the trail. We highly recommend reading this section through before you start the trail so you can stay one step ahead of your little ones!



I hear with my little ear

The big stone tower is actually a ventilation shaft for the railway that runs below the Downs. The line goes from Clifton Down to Severn Beach and work was begun on it in 1871. It was initially used for freight trains and was opened to passenger trains in 1885. Trains still run through the tunnel.

Two minutes can feel like a long time – keep going for as long as your child is interested! Encourage them to talk about each sound that they hear.

What does a lion sound like? Apart from a roar, the lion also makes a chugging sound. It sounds a bit like a steam train! The seals make a strange noise that is rather hard to describe – it's half way between a burp and a scream! The gibbons make a song-like whooping sound.



Winter Family Trail Map



Key

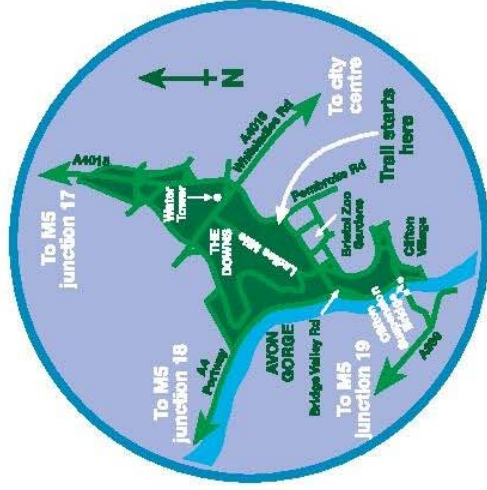
- Winter trail
- Bench
- Slope (lip of old quarry)
- Bus Stop

Toilets

The nearest public toilets can be found beside the Water Tower where there are baby changing facilities and toilets for disabled people.

Safety

Beware! Some sections of the trail can be muddy and slippery after it has rained.



The Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project runs a variety of family and children's events throughout the year. Details can be found at www.avongorge.org.uk www.facebook.com/avongorge or call 0117 9030609