



## **BOWOOD'S NEW NATURE TRAIL LEADS CHILDREN TO PLAY OUTDOORS**

A new Nature Trail - to be unveiled when Bowood House & Gardens (nr. Calne, Wiltshire) reopens to the public on Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2007 – has been designed not just to increase children's understanding and appreciation of the great outdoors but also to encourage healthier and more stimulating leisure time amongst youngsters.

Starting at the Ha ha and finishing in the wildflower meadow, the nature trail traces its way through Bowood's Pleasure Grounds and across the Grade I listed Great Park, landscaped by Capability Brown in the 1760s. Aimed primarily at children between the ages of 8-12, an accompanying illustrated worksheet provides illuminating background to all that will be encountered, telling children what to look out for along their way and posing questions to prompt inquisitive minds and rewarding investigation.

Anyone thinking this sounds too much like boring homework will soon think again for there's a Hermit's Cave to explore; banana-less banana trees to spot; a Rock Hollow to inspire a ditty and the 'Crooked Mustard' tunnel in which to crouch. Discover, too, that the Cascade isn't really a work of nature but was built in the 1780s using natural rock. By the lake, children will be asked to sketch the Greek Temple and then take a gander at the birdlife – seeking out a Canada Goose, a Great Crested Grebe and a pied Wagtail, for example. These are just some of the activities that will make 1 ½ hours – the time estimated to complete the trail – simply fly by!

While older children can challenge themselves and compete against one another, parents can steer younger children round the trail making this an activity that the whole family can enjoy together.

Opening up the new nature trail in 2007, complements Bowood's championship of adventurous and imaginative play this year. "In tempting children away from the TV screen and computer games," says Bowood's owner, Lord Lansdowne, "we are delighted to provide a great expanse of space in which to run about, let off steam and experiences thrills of all sorts, whether in our Adventure Playground or by getting closer to nature. As we live in such a consumer-based society today it's crucial now, more than ever, not to forget or overlook the simple joys and marvellous pleasures that the great outdoors can awake in children."

A closer affinity with the natural world will also open children's eyes to various other outdoor wonders and seasonal delights that can be experienced during a visit to Bowood, including the mesmerising colours that burst forth along the **Rhododendron Walks** (located in a separate part of the estate, two miles from Bowood House, and with their own entrance) from late April-early June and Autumn's palette in the **Arboretum** (boasting 11 champions trees - the largest or tallest of their kind recorded in Britain and Ireland).

*Bowood House & Gardens is open to the public from Saturday 31 March – Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2007, from 11am-6pm daily – with last admissions at 5pm (closing one hour earlier after the autumn clocks go back).*

*Individual entrance tickets start at £4 per head for children aged 2-4 and go up to £7.70 per adult. Special rates for groups and senior citizens are also available, as are individual and company Season Tickets.*

*Entrance tickets for the Rhododendron Walks are priced separately from £4.45 per person (with children up to 15 being admitted free of charge). If visiting Bowood House, on the same day too, then entrance to the Rhododendron Walks is reduced by £1 per person.*

*For further details, log on to [www.bowood.org](http://www.bowood.org) or call 01249 812102.*

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