

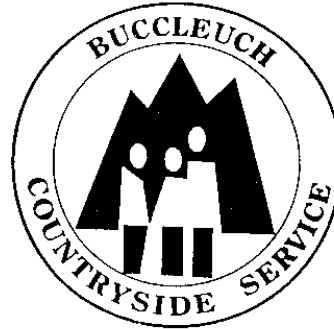
## *History of the Forest*

Most of the lands around Bowhill were once part of the vast Ettrick Forest. In 1235 the lands passed to the control of Melrose Abbey. From this time until the end of the 16th century the forest was progressively cleared to meet the agricultural requirements of the Abbots. The political unrest in the Borders was also a cause of forest clearance. From 1450 the Ettrick Forest was used as royal hunting ground.

Anne, Duchess of Monmouth and Buccleuch, acquired much of the woodland around Bowhill between 1708 and 1726. She initiated a survey of the woodlands and appointed foresters to block illegal woodcutting.

At the beginning of the 19th century, when the new house was being built, the formal planting to landscape the policies around the house had begun. The majority of the woodland as it is today dates from between 1810 and 1870.

From Duchess Anne's time to the present, each generation has acted as guardian and manager of the land. The beauty of the landscape is testimony to this fact.



A Countryside Ranger Service operates on the Bowhill estate. The ranger will be only too pleased to help and advise visitors.

The ranger service at Bowhill offers free educational visits for groups throughout the year. These must be made by prior arrangement. Parties wishing to be lead on a guided walk in any areas of the estate must phone the ranger for further details.

For more information on waymarked walks; ranger led activities and educational visits telephone:

**Selkirk (01750) 722204**

**Buccleuch Countryside Service**

**Buccleuch Heritage Trust**

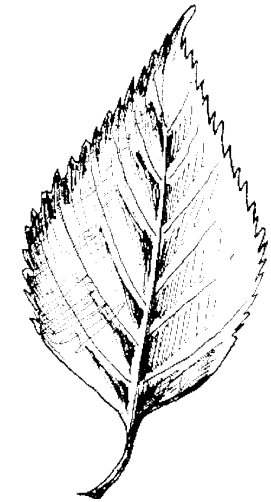
**Bowhill**

**Selkirk**

**TD7 5ET**



# *Bell o' the Woods*



Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*)



**BOWHILL HOUSE & COUNTRY PARK**



# Route Map & Walk Information

**Distance:** 1 mile  
**Time:** 1/2 – 1 hour  
**Terrain:** wide and narrow forest paths with some muddy areas.

## The Route

The Bell o' the Woods is a short and easy walk that winds its way through the mixed woodlands south-west of Bowhill House. **The route is waymarked with green arrows on a white background.** The first arrow takes you left out of the courtyard to the far side of the public car park. Follow the path round to the right, into the wood, and follow the arrows from here. The return route is along Major Price's walk.

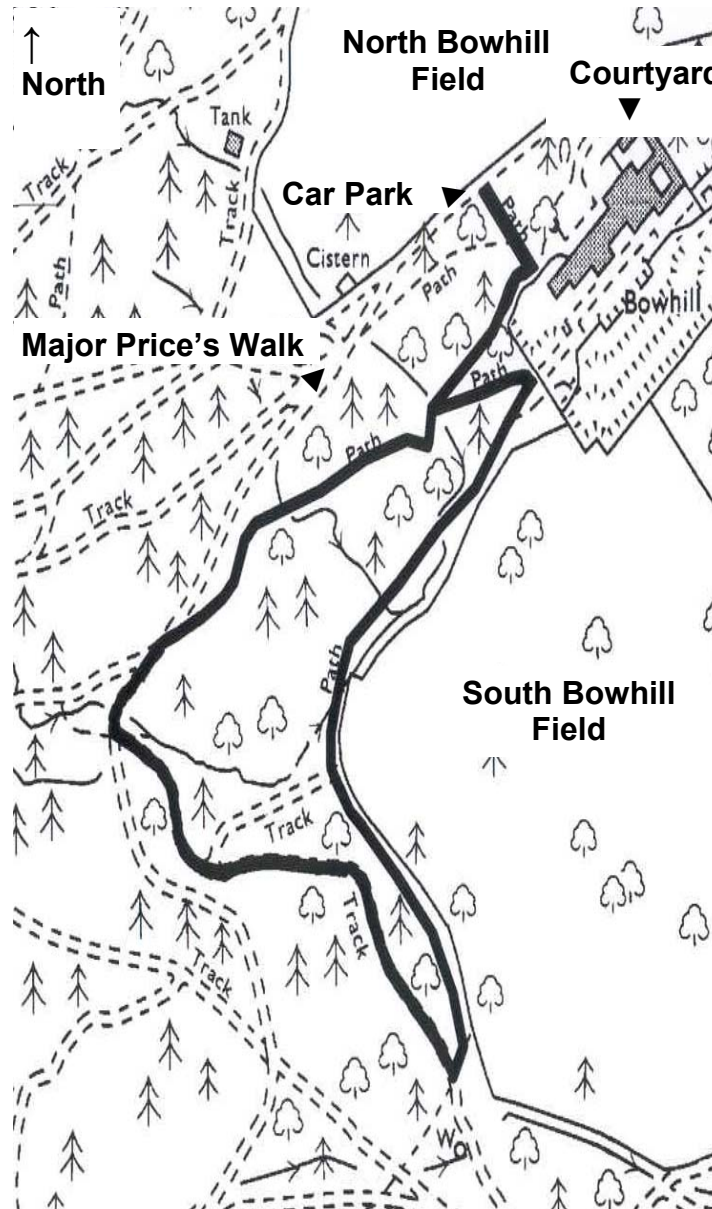
## Flora & Fauna

There is a rich diversity of tree species and age distribution in the woodland. The woods are managed for commercial, scenic and recreational purposes. Among the common broadleaves in the woodland there are Oak; Beech; Rowan; and Sycamore. There are some Red Oaks and beautiful Yew trees as you enter the woodland.

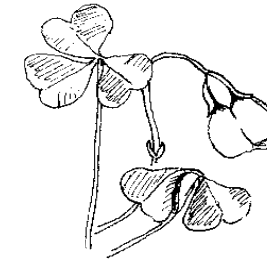
Norway Spruce and Western Hemlock are the predominant coniferous species. A spectacular stand of Douglas Firs that were planted in 1923 can also be seen. Two especially fine Sitka Spruce can be seen just past the car park.



Herb Bennet



From April to September the woodland floor is brightened by the presence of wild flowers. The deep pink of Herb Robert, the yellow of Herb Bennet and the purples of Bugle spring forth after the delicate whites of Wood Sorrel have passed. Wood Sorrel and Wood Anemone flower before the canopy closes its shimmering green veil.



Wood Sorrel

The bird songs and calls are often the only detectable sign of their presence. Many small birds, like the Coal Tit and the Goldcrest, spend much of their time in the higher reaches of the forest. Members of the thrush family, like the Blackbird and the Song Thrush, can be heard rustling about in the undergrowth looking for worms and snails. A Buzzard often nests in the area and the beautiful plumage of Pheasants is frequently seen.

The only signs of the secretive woodland mammals are often their prints, or the half chewed pine cones where squirrels have been feeding. It is possible to see both Red and Grey Squirrels, although the Red Squirrel spends most of its time high up in the canopy. The Roe Deer are rarely seen foraging in a woodland glade. The smaller rodents move about the woodland floor unchecked. Millions of insects make homes throughout the woodland's layers, especially in dead wood.

Please note there are some seats around the route and one interpretation board.

