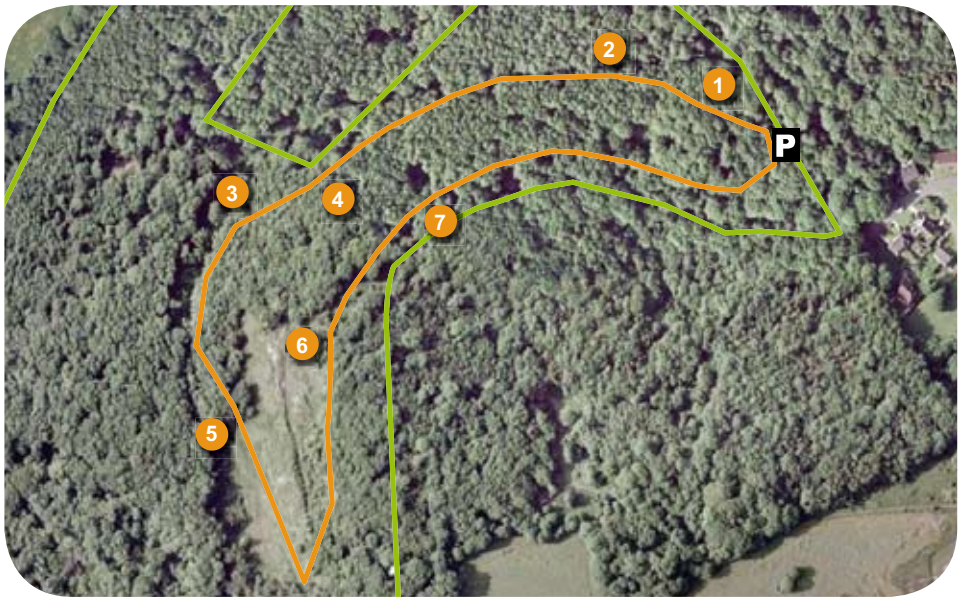
Avon Wildlife Trust

www.awtwaysintowildlife.org.uk

Brown's Folly *for bat caves and Bath asparagus*



OS grid ref: ST797 664
Walk details
duration: 1.5 hrs
grade: easy

Key to map
walk
point of interest
reserve boundary
car park

scale
100m

From the car park, follow the track past the five bar gate and down the slope **(1)** To the right is an area of coppice **(2)** good for woodland plants – in June look out for common twayblade and white heleborine in July. The rare Bath Asparagus can also be found on parts of the reserve.

The ride has been widened **(3)** to encourage breeding birds and foraging bats. Spotted flycatchers have bred along this woodland ride. Look to your left **(4)** and behind the trees you'll see large rock exposures – originally formed in a warm sub-tropical sea during the Jurassic period some 170 million years ago. They form the oolitic limestone widespread throughout the Cotswolds but known locally as Bath Stone. The quarries throughout the reserve closed during the 1930s and now provide excellent conditions for roosting bats and are home to the greater horseshoe bat, one of the rarest mammals in the UK.

At the end of the ride take the left-hand path through the gate and up on to the grassland **(5)** full of common spotted orchids, salad-burnet and wild thyme in summer. Spectacular views of the city of Bath can be admired from the top **(6)**. Behind you, on the ridge, is the Folly. Follow the path back out of the grassland through another metal kissing gate and into the woodland passing several grilled-off caves **(7)** - access for bats only!

look out for...

How to get there

Follow the minor road from Bathford to Kingsdown, taking a steep right-hand turn to Monkton Farleigh. Car park is near the brow of the hill on Prospect Place.

Access

Some paths are muddy in winter. **Take extreme caution when approaching rock faces. Mines must not be entered.**

Did you know? Bath asparagus is found around the Bath area but is scarce elsewhere in the country. One theory is that the plant was introduced by the Romans and that its heavy seeds have prevented it from spreading far from its original introduction point. There are old records of it being sold in Bath market as an alternative to asparagus!

Why don't you... look for fossil coral in the Bath stone exposures?

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photos: greater horseshoe bat – Gareth Edwards

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