

An Introduction to HEATHERCOMBE GARDENS

Heathercombe is a tranquil wooded valley 1,000 feet up on Dartmoor. Essentially cool and damp!

In the 19th century North and South Heathercombe farms, with their 15th century longhouses, became part of the Heatree estate of the Kitsons of Torquay. They established conifer plantations on the upper slopes and created ponds, lakes and paths besides the streams running down from Hameldown.

After World War II the estate was broken up, the plantations felled and the amenity features lost under a blanket of *Rhododendron ponticum*. Re-planting of the conifer plantations was carried out between the 1950's and 1970's.

The late Claude and Margaret Pike acquired the Heathercombe estate in 1965, built Manwood house, cleared and restored the 19th century features, planted over 1,000 well-labelled specimen trees and shrubs, with over 120 varieties of *Rhododendron*, and made 2 miles of woodland walks and paths.

In recent years the gardens have been developed by John and Svetlana Pike, with Duncan Holden, Andrew Fowler and Peter Nicholls, to create a variety of garden areas, extending over 30 acres, with much new shrub and tree planting. The conifer plantations have been felled and replaced partly by native broadleaved trees and partly by a wide range of conifer species.



A Brief Guide to HEATHERCOMBE GARDENS

1. Car Park

2. Manwood Drive

Drive to below Manwood House, with several ponds, the 'water garden', waterfall, Rhododendrons, Azaleas and specimen trees. Sculptures including "Five Stone Circle" installation by Justin Knowles.

3. Oak Park and Laburnum Walk

Across stone bridge, developing collection of Oak and other trees and shrubs. Laburnum walk overlooking escarpment to stream below (return to bridge).

Walk to the Lower Lake and back (approx. ½ mile):

4 (a) Mill Wood (down)

Woodland walk beside stream, past site of old water mill & fine Beech tree, to Lower Lake. Bluebells.

4(b) Lower Lake

Large lake created in 1890's. Peaceful landscaped setting with benches.

4(c) Bluebell Wood (back)

Woodland walk, amongst carpets of bluebells in late spring, with steeper path (and benches) approaching Manwood House.

5. The Park

Extensive network of level paths amongst large collection of Rhododendrons, arboretum of specimen trees and shrubs (including

fine Monkey Puzzle). Carpet of bluebells in late spring in South Park.

From the SW corner, walk via the Duck Pond and the water garden up the road to:

6. South Heathercombe

Cottage garden with rustic features. *Teas in conservatory and garden terrace.*

7. Heathercombe North Garden

Varied garden around 15th century thatched longhouse, with stream and views across expansive lawn to the adjoining meadow.

8. Barn and Little Burn Gardens

Small barn garden and streamside bog garden. Snowdrops and daffodils in early and mid spring.

9. Burn Wood

Woodland gardens overlooking Heathercombe Burn including the 'Glade', 'Dell' and fernery. Some steeper paths.

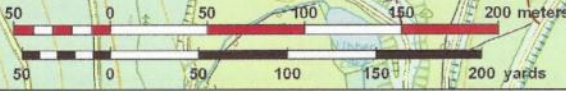
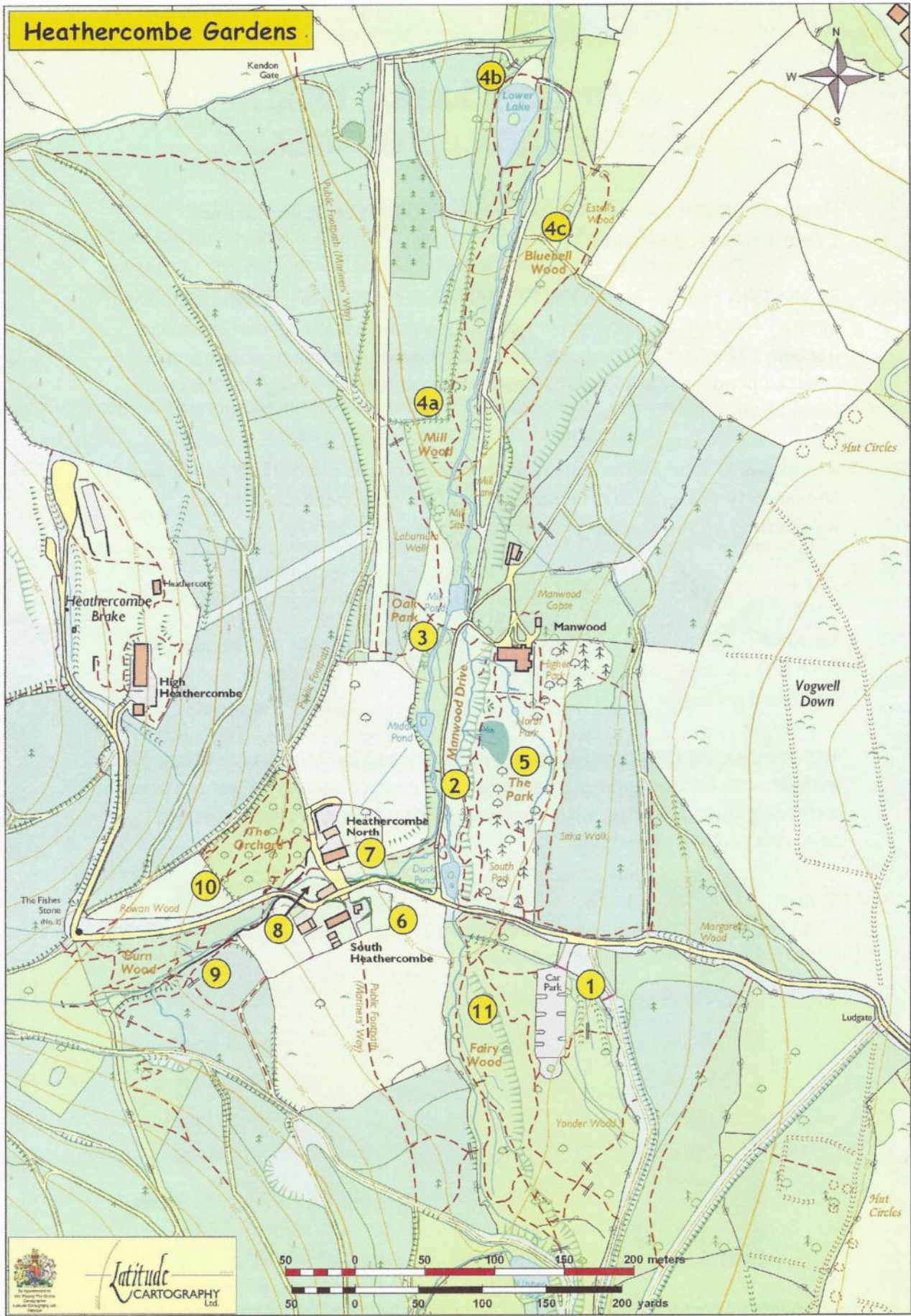
10. Orchard and Wild Flower Meadow

Daffodils, bluebells and, in June-July, orchids and other meadow wild flowers among over 50 varieties of West Country apple trees. Fine view of Heathercombe Valley from shelter at top.

11. Fairy Wood and Yonder Wood

Woodland walks, partly beside streams, along fairly level paths.

Heathercombe Gardens



TREES TO LOOK OUT FOR IN HEATHERCOMBE GARDENS

In addition to the many varieties of Rhododendron, Azalea, Pieris and other shrubs, there is a large collection of unusual deciduous trees and conifers in the Park and elsewhere in the gardens ('the arboretum').

Amongst the established trees to look out for are:

(numbers refer to the map)

Abies cephalonica (Grecian Fir)	South Park - centre (5)
Abies concolor var. lowiana (Pacific White Fir)	South Park - centre (5)
Abies grandis (Grand Fir)	Laburnum Walk (3)
Abies koreana (Korean Fir)	South Park - Sitka wood side (5)
Acer grosseri var. hersii (Hers' Snake Bark Maple)	Manwood Drive (2)
Acer palmatum Chitoseyama	Manwood Copse - opposite garage (5)
Acer palmatum Orange Dream	Lower Lake (4b)
Acer palmatum Septemlobum	Oak Park - left of bridge (3)
Araucaria araucana (Monkey Puzzle)	South Park - near road gate (5)
Cercidiphyllum japonicum (Katsura)	North Park - narrow path (5)
Chamaecyperis lawsoniana Stardust	Lower Lake (4b)
Cornus controversa Variegata	Manwood Pond (2)
Cornus kousa (Strawberry Dogwood)	Little Burn Garden (8) Cornus
Cornus Eddie's White Wonder	Little Burn Garden (8)
Cunninghamia lanceolata (Chinese Fir)	South Park- near road gate (5)
Davidia involucrata (Handkerchief Tree)	Manwood Drive (2)
Eucryphia - various	Manwood Drive (2), Sitka Walk (5)
Fagus sylvatica Dawyck Purple & Gold	Burn Wood - by lower gate (9)
Fagus sylvatica heterophylla (Fern-leaved Beech)	South Park - Duck Pond side (5)
Malus hupehensis (Hubei Crab Apple)	Heathercombe North - by footpath (7)
Metasequoia glyptostroboides (Dawn Redwood)	Manwood Drive (2) & Burn Wood (9)
Metasequoia glyptostroboides Gold Rush	Manwood Drive - Water Garden (2)
Nothofagus - various (Southern Beech)	South & Higher Park (5)
Picea omorika (Serbian Spruce)	South Park - Sitka wood side (5)
Prunus Tai Haku (Great White Cherry)	Heathercombe North Garden (7)
Quercus castaneifolia (Chestnut-leaved Oak)	Oak Park (3)
Sequoia sempervirens (Coast Redwood)	Mill Wood (4a)
Sequoiadendron giganteum (Wellingtonia)	Manwood Drive (2)
Taxodium distichum (Swamp Cypress)	Lower Lake (4b)
Wollemia nobilis (Wollemi Pine)	Burn Wood - Glade (9)