

Discover the wildlife  
of the  
**Avon Gorge  
& Downs**



Photo by: Chris Jones

Peregrine falcon

**Welcome to the  
Avon Gorge,  
Clifton Down and  
Durdham Down...**

...one of the most  
exciting places to enjoy  
wildlife in Bristol!

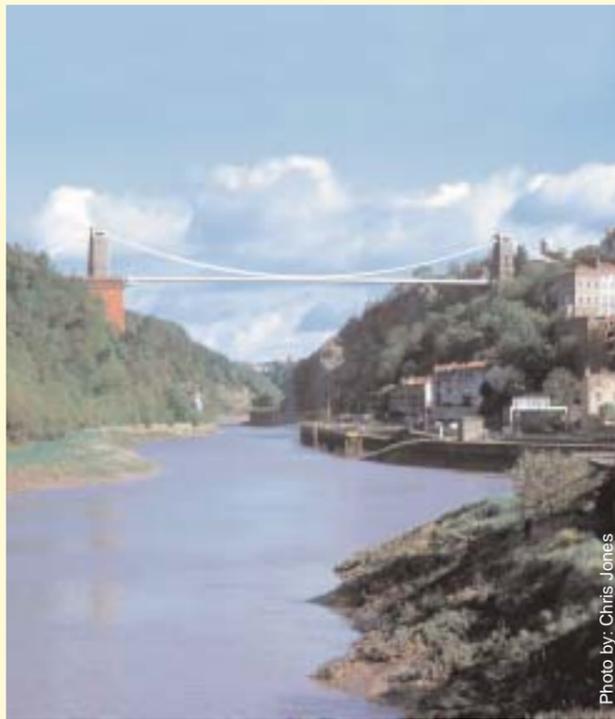


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Production of this leaflet is supported by:



Designed by Phil Jearey

**The Avon Gorge & Downs  
Wildlife Project is a  
partnership of:**



See it-Sense it-Save it



**The  
Downs  
Committee**

We are also working in partnership  
with the National Trust who manage  
part of Leigh Woods on the North  
Somerset side of the Gorge.

**This leaflet is also available  
on audio tape and disk.**

For further information or for a copy  
of our events programme contact:

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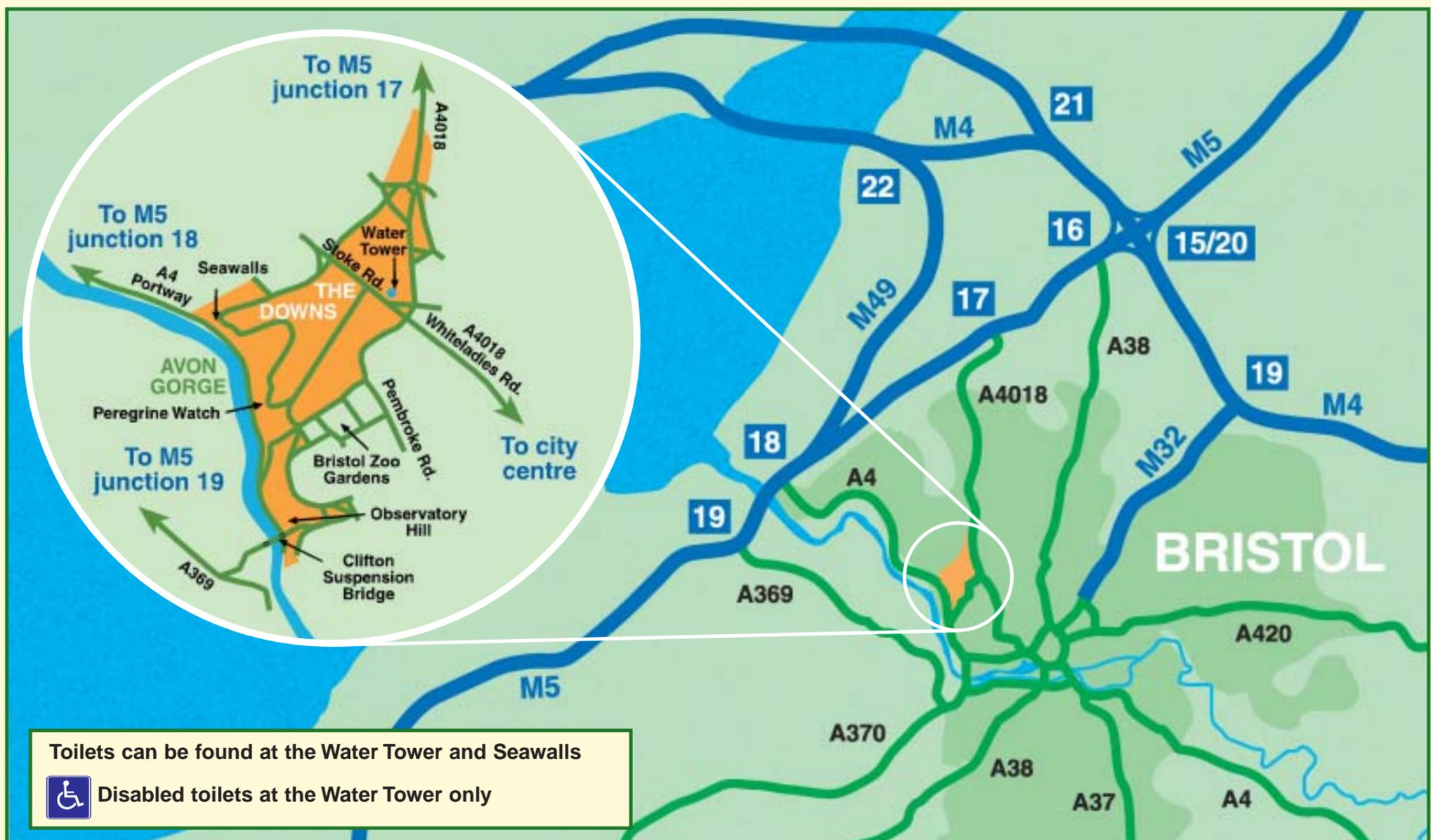
[www.bristolzoo.org.uk/conservation/avongorge.htm](http://www.bristolzoo.org.uk/conservation/avongorge.htm)

**How to get here**

**By Road** – Use the map below.

**By Bus** – The following services all run  
past the Downs - 1, 8, 41, 42, 43, 54, 55,  
99, 586 and 587. For further information  
call Traveline on 0870 608 2608.

**By Train** – The nearest train station is  
Clifton Down Station, 10 minutes walk from  
the Downs. Call National Rail Enquiries on  
0845 748 4950 for further details.



Toilets can be found at the Water Tower and Seawalls

Disabled toilets at the Water Tower only

## Gorge-ous plants

From Observatory Hill and Seawalls you can enjoy stunning views of the Avon Gorge. Just below where you are standing, rare wildflowers grow on the craggy ledges. Two of them, the delicate Bristol rock-cress and the lollypop-like Bristol onion, aren't found anywhere else in the UK.

## Unique to the Gorge

The Gorge is also home to Wilmott's and Bristol whitebeams, two species of tree that grow wild here and nowhere else in the world.

## Cliff hanger

In the winter you may see daredevil conservationists working from ropes on the cliffs. Working on behalf of the Avon Gorge and Downs Wildlife Project, these specially-trained workers protect the rare plants by clearing invasive scrub and non-native weeds.

## Marvellous meadows

In summer why not come to the Downs for a picnic. At this time of the year the meadow areas are brimming with wildflowers. Notice how many different kinds there are. Orchids, oxeye daisy, scabious, harebell and wild thyme all thrive here.

After the plants have had time to flower and set seed we cut the meadow areas to make hay.

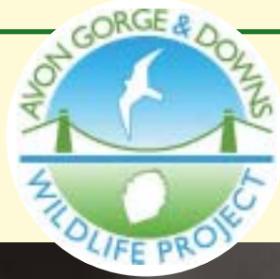
## Bugs and beasties

Summer is also the time when you may come across some of our more delicate inhabitants. We have counted 21 species of butterfly here. Look out for marbled whites, brimstones, common blues and meadow browns.

## Caring for wildlife

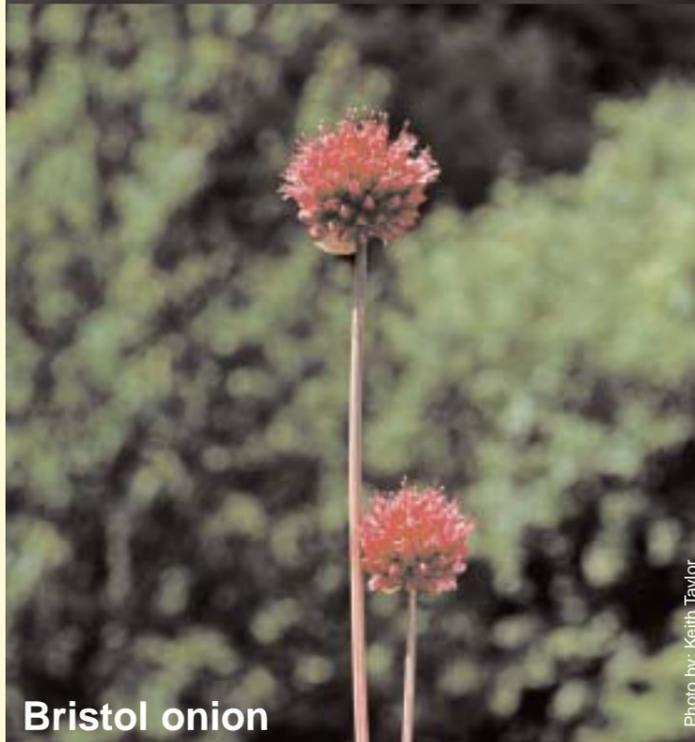
The Avon Gorge & Downs Wildlife Project looks after the Bristol side of the Avon Gorge and the Downs. We have three roles:

- Surveying and monitoring wildlife
- Habitat management
- Education



Brimstone butterfly

Photo by: Avon Wildlife Trust



Bristol onion

Photo by: Keith Taylor



Photo by: James Barke

## Brilliant birds

We've identified 22 species of birds breeding on the Downs. Look out for unusual residents such as green woodpeckers and bullfinches whilst you're here.

## Super speedy

From the Peregrine Watch you may be lucky enough to catch sight of a super speedy peregrine falcon. For the best chance of seeing one of their spectacular aerial displays, visit in May and June.

## Bird café

Many other birds also come to the Downs to feed. Look out for flocks of rooks, jackdaws and gulls probing the football pitches for juicy worms and grubs.

## Mammal magic

An early morning stroll might reveal some of our more secretive animals. Foxes, hedgehogs, weasels and roe deer have all been seen. Endangered lesser and greater horseshoe bats also roost in the Gorge. The easiest mammals to spot, however, are acrobatic grey squirrels.

## Special designations - what's in a name?

The Avon Gorge is such an important place for wildlife that it has been given the national designation of a Site of Special Scientific Interest. It's also recognised internationally as a candidate Special Area of Conservation. The Downs are designated locally as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest.