

DISCOVERERS

For families exploring Richmond Park



Isabella Plantation Trail

Your task is to follow the route below, and when you reach one of our target points (marked **T**) fill in the information box. It's a good way to get to know this magical place! Take care to read the directions carefully and check your position as you go. Remember, the stream always runs down the middle of the Isabella!

Start Point: Main Broomfield Hill gate entrance to plantation.

Take a few moments to view the map and take a look at any important messages on the Notice Board.



Take **RIGHT-HAND** path, by Notice Board and seat, to find:

T1 Is this Dr Who's Tardis? Take a look around it and find the green sign. 1)

Can you **RECORD** the location of TWO other emergency phones in Richmond Park? 2)



SPOT: An ash tree with five trunks on LEFT of path, opposite the 'Tardis'.



T2 Ahead on the RIGHT can you see a tree with a 'face' and twisted bark (see picture)? Kind of tree:

RECORD the type of tree it is, and draw a picture of the face. Picture:

CLUE! The fruit of this tree has spiky shells in Autumn. It is often roasted and eaten at Christmas.

SPOT: On RIGHT at junction- 'Acer Davidii Ernest Wilson' - a tree with very faint snake-like markings on its bark.



NB. Path splits at this point – take **RIGHT-HAND** path away from main path.

SPOT: A big hole about 3-4m off the path - on the LEFT, behind a tree with flaky bark- 'Acer Griseum'. Can you think what might have made it? There are more holes nearby.

CLUE! This animal has a striped face.

Follow path round. Turn LEFT at junction with another path - then on to main path. Sharp RIGHT at log seat.

T3 Walk about 20 paces and LOOK RIGHT to see:
*'Three sisters standing in this Park
Tall and slim with glossy bark'.*

The English name for these trees is *Tibetan Cherry*
RECORD the trees' Latin name on their tags and the colour of the bark.

Latin name on tag?

What colour is the bark?



Carry on about 30 paces past 1st path on RIGHT to junction with main path. Turn RIGHT at low fence. Walk to end of low fence on your RIGHT - passing the ACER GLADE on your LEFT – to BLUEBELL WALK on RIGHT.

SPOT: At the next junction notice the 'No Entry' sign on the gate to nursery area on RIGHT. This is where new plants for the Isabella are grown. NB. There is no public access to this area!

Bear LEFT - staying on main path - Thomson's Lawn is on your LEFT. Follow the low wooden rail onto Thomson's Lawn.

T4 Look out for a very tall lady, to the right, in front of you. Her name is Dawn Redwood! This tree (Metasequoia glyptostroboides) was known only from fossil records until 70 years ago when it was discovered growing in China.

RECORD her number (it is on a post). Can you draw one of her leaves?

What is the number on the post by this redwood tree?

Draw a leaf:



T5 The rhododendrons in the fenced central beds are grafted onto dwarf stock. They are named after Snow White's 'Seven Dwarfs'.

RECORD how many of the Dwarfs' names can you remember?

Which dwarfs do you know?

SPOT: Between and to the LEFT of the Seven Dwarfs is the Tulip Tree (Liriodendron Tulipifera) (Post 14) with its distinctively shaped leaf. This tree is also known as 'canoewood' because Native Americans used its trunk to make dugout canoes.



T6 Now, look for a special tree, by Thomson's Pond, which some people describe as 'weeping'.

*'Harry Potter knows this tree
It won't be whomping you or me!'*

RECORD what kind of tree you think it is?

What kind of tree is this?

Turn LEFT on path to walk around Pond (keep 'Potter Tree' on your RIGHT). Cross stream joining the pond.

T7 Walk over the stepping 'stones'.

How many steps are there?

RECORD what they are made of and how many there are. (Count only the separate 'stones', not the wheelchair paths.)

What are they made of?

SPOT: The pond's name - in the pond at the edge of stepping stones.



Turn LEFT on path around pond (keep 'Potter Tree' on right, following the large log sign towards Peg's Pond.

LISTEN: You may be able to hear the water as you walk.

T8 Look at the big trees on your LEFT as you turn onto the path.

What type of tree is this?

RECORD the type of tree.

CLUE! It produces acorns in autumn. Can you see any tiny seedlings growing nearby?

Follow path for about 140 paces, passing 2 bridges, until you see a bench on your RIGHT. Turn next LEFT across next DOUBLE bridge to Bog Garden. Now bear RIGHT onto wooden decking (careful it might be slippery if wet!). Carry on around and then cross LEFT over more stepping stones.

T9 Can you see the Giant Rhubarb (*Gunnera Manicata*) growing in the stream on the RIGHT and LEFT? Feel its prickly stems.

What is the number on the post?

RECORD: What is the number on the partly hidden post at the front of the *Gunnera* – 5 paces from stepping stones?

SPOT: Bamboo growing on the left.



Another 15 paces to more stepping stones and a wooden plank bridge - across Thomson's Stream - to main path.

T10 Across main path, look for two trees (one a stump or 'monolith'), either side of a path.

What is growing up the trees?

RECORD what grows up them? Can you see any fruit? - It is used for making wines in Korea and Japan.

Can you guess how the wires that they are growing up might have got there? Were they flown up by parakeet, taken up by squirrel, or fired by catapult?



Cross path and walk between the two trees. Go straight ahead, bearing LEFT, cross-country through an avenue of trees towards some tree stumps and benches - to PEG'S POND.

T11 At Peg's Pond you will see ducks and other water birds.

RECORD: Name any of the ducks or other birds you recognise.

SPOT: Where's Wally? The name of the island is WALLY'S ISLAND, named after the Isabella's first Head Gardener.

What ducks and birds can you name?

Go RIGHT - around Pond. Cross over bridge. You will pass a padlocked gate on your RIGHT

SPOT: Waterfall on left (at a wooden bridge). Look out for herons and perhaps a Kingfisher!

SPOT: Bottom gate to Disabled Car Park on RIGHT.

Keep LEFT - go round pond across decking and past Toilet Block and reed beds

T12 You might like to visit these organic eco toilets! They use green technology in keeping with Richmond Park's special scientific status and environmental importance.

SPOT: Look out for **Dragon and Damsel flies** flying over the reeds.

From the large fence by the pond, turn RIGHT into the Heather Garden – keeping Main Stream on LEFT, follow path to RIGHT. DON'T go over the bridge!

SPOT: Winter-flowering heather (Post 7) on RIGHT, opposite another 'Potter Tree', and just before a meeting of paths.

Follow RIGHT-HAND path and bear left

T13 At the second crossroads (past a bridge on the LEFT and a 'monolith' with wires) look to your RIGHT for a tall oak tree, just off the path, near a big rhododendron. This tree was planted the year the Isabella was enclosed.

RECORD: Look for the well hidden metal sign near the base to find out when the tree was planted.

When was the tree planted?



Return to main path - keeping stream, on your left - towards Still Pond.

SPOT: On RIGHT past a bridge on the LEFT, can you see a silver birch tree standing on the path? It has very knobby bark.

Carry on along the path past two bridges on LEFT. Turn RIGHT at fork ahead. There will be a tree stump then a wooden bridge on your LEFT

T14 Just ahead, look on RIGHT, behind three trees and near a bench.

*'He built this Park - it's rather jolly
Now can you try to find our Wally?'*

RECORD the name of the rhododendron bush shown on the label (within the bush) and the number on a post in front.

Name:

Number:

Keep bench on RIGHT - follow stream (on LEFT) for 190 paces – passing 2 bridges on your left.

T15 To Still Pond:

*'If no wind blows you will see clearer
Why I am known as the Dark Mirror'*

RECORD what you see reflected in the 'dark mirror'.

LOOK OUT FOR: ducks and moorhen

SPOT: Pond name carved on mini waterfall log.

What can you see?



T16 Turn round to see a 'marriage' of two trees (Oak and Beech) – opposite pond behind fence? (They are not as close now as they once were!)

RECORD: Look for the fungus growing on the beech - it is called Bracket Fungus. Can you draw a picture of it here?

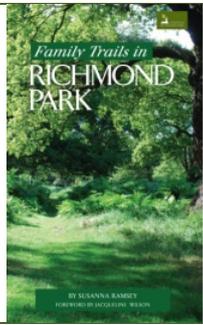
Write down the number on the post.

Picture of fungus:



Number on post:

**Walk around fence to your LEFT into an open area – Great for a picnic!
A Toilet Block is 100m further up the path behind Still Pond and there are signs for the EXITS on large logs**



Richmond Park is a National Nature Reserve and a site of Special Scientific Interest. It is also a European Special Area of Conservation.

It is important that we look after and protect it as best we can. Become a Friend of Richmond Park. See:

www.frp.org.uk/friends/get-involved



Keep up to date with Discoverers events at
www.frp.org.uk/friends/discoverers