



Bowhill Country Estate

The 60,000-acre estate at Bowhill is one of four owned by the dukes of Buccleuch, whose lands extend to 280,000 acres. The enormous house, extended and remodelled by generations of Scottish architects, squats on the banks of a loch, near the confluence of the Ettrick and Yarrow rivers. The house is open in July only. The policy woods, designed by John Gilpin, have extensive conifer plantings, carpeted with snowdrops and planted with drifts of rhododendrons and azaleas. The Victorian kitchen garden has been recently restored. There are river walks and a network of paths; mountain bikes are available for rent.



Broadwoodside Steading

This is one of Scotland's most exciting contemporary garden projects. The long narrow garden is constructed around a restored steading complex just outside the attractive East Lothian village of Gifford. The derelict farm buildings were converted and extended in the 1990s with a two-part enclosed courtyard inside and a series of garden rooms outside. The building conversion was designed by Nicholas Groves-Raines, whose offices and home at Liberton House, Edinburgh, have a fine garden (see p. 402). Fine features of the Broadwoodside buildings include the corner tower, gatehouse and the trademark ochre render. The gardens have been a long-term project since 1999, driven by the team of owners Rob and Anna Dalrymple and highly motivated gardener Guy Donaldson. Guy showed me round the various sections, pointing out the many successes and few failures which have demanded a re-think due to issues of drainage or climate. The west end of the garden consists of an apple orchard,

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Bowhill, Selkirk,
Scottish Borders, TD7 5ET
(map, pp. 360–61)

Buccleuch Heritage Trust
Daily: April, July and August;
May–June weekends and bank
holidays; all 10am–5pm.
House open in July only. ££
3 miles west of Selkirk on the
A708 Moffat/St Mary's Loch road
T: 01750 22204
F: 01750 23893
E: bht@buccleuch.com
www.bowhill.org
Tearoom

Broadwoodside Steading

Gifford, East Lothian, EH41 4JE
(map, pp. 360–61)

Robert and Anna Dalrymple
1 day SGS most years
and by appointment; ££
On the B6355 on the western
outskirts of Gifford, towards
Saltoun and Pencaitland. Turning
by the deer signpost and golf
course
E: mail@broadwoodside.com

with each variety planted in a square of grass which is filled with naturalised spring bulbs, a series of *Narcissus* cultivars, followed by the blue of *Camassia*. In late summer the reds and greens of the fruit contrast beautifully with squares of grasses with billowing bronze and yellow seed heads. Next to the orchard, the narrow paddock has a long, narrow 'canal' of blue *Iris sibirica* with red poppies sown through it. From here you'll catch sight of what looks like part of a Greek temple in the distant corner of the field next door, which is in fact the Victorian portico of Strathleven House in Dunbartonshire, rescued by the Dalrymples and adding a neoclassical feel to the hinterland of an otherwise very contemporary garden. Ian Hamilton Finlay's influence can be seen in the statuary and stonework in the garden, such as the stone carving on a slate cube which is actually a 'Latin joke' (twould be a shame to say more). The western boundary of mature lime trees was once part of the famous lime avenue leading to the gates of Yester House. A pair of beech hedges runs towards the 'dogs' tomb' with the centrepiece of a finial rescued from the Holyrood brewery, demolished to make way for the new Scottish Parliament. Along the north side of the steading a short row of 'knuckled' or pollarded limes are underplanted with snowdrops, 'West Point' tulips and a fringe of *Muscari*, provide a stunning spring display, followed by geranium, *Nepeta* and *Phlomis* in summer. Rows of hornbeams lead down the drive, meeting at the point at the bottom, at a beech pyramid. The enclosed kitchen and cutting garden at the south end of the building complex features a rectangular point surrounded by arched willows which are cut back to a framework in winter and become wildly lush by later summer. I'm not sure that this shows off the pond to its best advantage, but it is a bold planting





statement. The narrow section of walled garden on the west side of the house has a fantastic combination of white *Pulmonaria* along the fieldside wall and opposite along the house, *Euphorbia* and purple *Cotinus*. Further on, the boundary wall is lined with a bog garden, kept moist by field-water run-off, contrasting with the Mediterranean plants such as lavender and *Santolina* along the side of the house. The top end has an elm monument carved by Ralph Curry and the small formal garden here features squares of box topiary and grasses, once again underplanted with spring bulbs. The climax of any visit to Broadwoodside is the two-part inner courtyard, entered via pillarboxed doors. The upper courtyard consists of a pattern of squares of lawn, cobbles or planting. Some sections contain a central standard tree, underplanted with box balls, grasses, *Pachysandra* or box, and the central square contains an aviary. The planted squares contain a single spring bulb variety: snowdrops, tulips or *Allium* and the effect in April is magical. The lower courtyard is a lawn with a cruciform paved path, with trained fruit and roses around the perimeter as well as a cloud-pruned *Ceanothus*. This is one of Scotland's finest contemporary private gardens, with excellent structure, imaginative use of objects, and some of the most eye-catching planting in Scotland. It is a masterclass in 'less is more' patterned plantings, showing how a limited palette in each area creates some unforgettable combinations. I can't think of anywhere which uses spring bulbs better and the garden has a very long period of interest, probably at its best from April to July. This is cutting-edge garden design combined with imaginative planting; who could ask for more?