

Avon Wildlife Trust

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

① point of interest

— reserve boundary

P 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!

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!

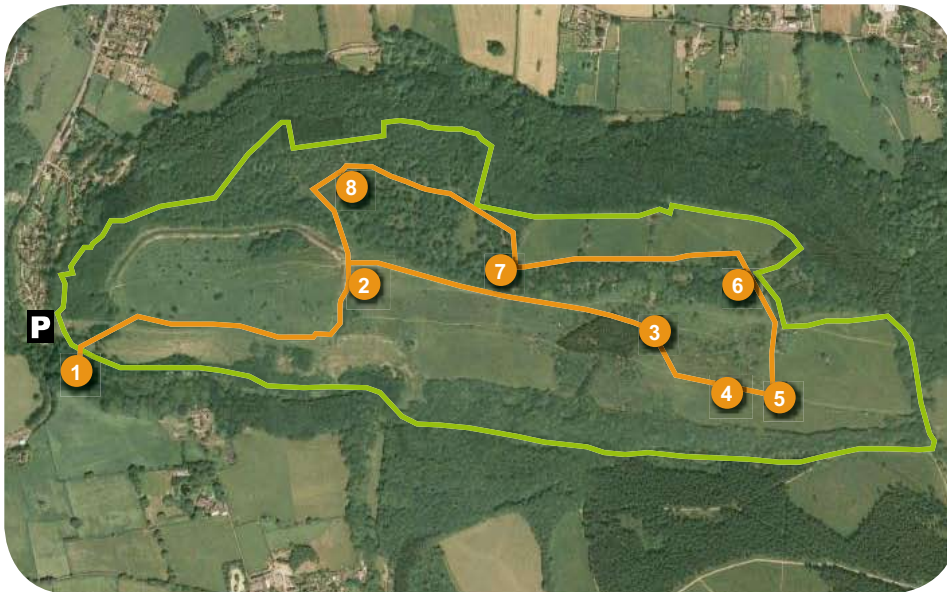
Why don't you... look for fossil coral in the Bath stone exposures?

look out for...



Avon Wildlife Trust

Dolebury Warren *for butterflies in summer*



OS grid ref: ST455 590

Walk details

duration: 3 hrs

grade: challenging

Key to map

— walk

① point of interest

— reserve boundary

P car park

scale

400m

Begin at the car park at the end of Doleberrow (1). Go over the stile and climb the flight of steps through the woodland to the top of the hill. Ahead is a large bank, the remains of an Iron Age hill fort. Walk all the way along the top of the bank, turning left to the highest point of the hill. This is the best viewpoint on the reserve, you can see for miles around and it's the reason why our ancestors chose this site for their fort. Listen out for the distinctive call of buzzards and ravens. They are often seen swooping down the valley and around the pine plantation to the south.

From this viewpoint (2) continue east, away from the fort, along a broad path towards the distant stand of pine. Pass through a gate and head straight on, keeping the pines on your right. At the end of the plantation follow the path that forks to the right. At the top of the slope (3) the views open up again and you can see over to Blackdown, the highest point of the Mendips. Keep an eye out for green woodpeckers that are frequently seen flying close to the ground with their characteristic undulating flight.

Turning left continue until you reach a gate (4), and go through, following the fence line to enter a second gate to your left (5). Continue on, and follow the track to a third gate (6). Turn left through the gate and begin to walk through the first of three fields. In the corner of the last field (7) you'll see a kissing gate that marks the beginning of the woodland pasture path. Follow this through the wood until you come through an old field gate (8). Turn left and head up to the top of the hill, returning to the hilltop viewpoint. Retrace your steps to the car park.

How to get there

Follow the A38 southwards from Churchill village. Take first left turn after traffic lights into Dolebury Bottom. Please drive slowly along lane and park in small car park. Follow footpaths to summit.

Access

Please keep dogs on leads. No suitable access for wheelchairs or pushchairs.

Did you know? Dolebury Warren was a medieval rabbit warren where rabbits were bred for food and fur.

Why don't you... see if you can find the warrener's hut?

look out for...



buzzard



biting stonecrop



small blue

Avon Wildlife Trust

Folly Farm *for yesterday's countryside*



OS grid ref: ST610 603

Walk details

duration: 2 hrs

grade: moderate

Key to map

— walk

① point of interest

— reserve boundary

P car park

scale

200m

From the car park walk up through the woodland plantings into Folly Wood (1). Look for early purple orchids and bluebells in spring. Turn left at the top (2) and head through a kissing gate towards Round Hill which overlooks Chew Valley and the Mendips (3). Turn your back to the view follow the crest of the hill back towards Folly Wood. Pass through the kissing gate and enter another plantation, bear to the right, following the wide ride as it runs through the wood (4). Before reaching the deer gate, turn right again, with the small conifer plantation on your right and leave the wood via the large deer gate. Turn left and then right over a small bridge into an open field. Turn left and keep the hedge to your left to the end of the field (5). Continue along the ridge with the slope to your right (6) and bear right where the path divides. Follow the path down the hill, and look out for heath spotted orchids in spring and devils bit scabious in summer. Gently bear right and then left until you cross a small foot bridge, pass through the bottom of another field (7) and reach the kissing gate of the Access for All Trail (8). Turn right and follow this surfaced path along the edge of Folly Wood, passing the badger watching platform to your left. Crossing the bridge by the stand of hornbeam turn right and return to the car park passing the Folly Farm Centre (9).

How to get there

From Bath on A368, or south from Bristol on A37 turn right at Chelwood roundabout onto A368 towards Bishop Sutton. After 2 miles look out for sign on left on small lane shortly before Stowey.

Access

Please note – NO dogs at Folly Farm. Please park in marked car park. Good access for wheelchairs and pushchairs along Access for All Trail.

Did you know? Folly Farm is one of only a few *ferme ornees* in the UK - an idealised or ornamental farm within a landed estate, which would combine beauty with usefulness. It was developed in the 18th century by Sir Henry Strachey of Sutton Court.

Why don't you... look for an inspirational course at www.follyfarm.org

look out for...



devil's bit scabious



marsh fritillary



badger

Avon Wildlife Trust

Goblin Combe *for shady valley and airy views*



OS grid ref: ST475 653

Walk details

duration: 2 hrs

grade: moderate

Key to map

— walk

① point of interest

— reserve boundary

P car park

scale

100m

From the car park walk back down to the road, bearing right and past the Goblin Combe Environment Centre, following the footpath signs that lead you through a gate and into the Combe bottom until you enter the reserve (1). Continue along the path where gnarled yews grow – it is here where the mysteriously named moonwort flower was first ever recorded. The uncommon white admiral may be seen in July.

As the path divides, stay in the valley bottom, keeping to the route turning off left after 40m. Here the ferns of the combe are at their best with hart's-tongue and male ferns covering the greatest area and limestone fern can be found growing amongst the moss-covered scree (2). Winding your way up the footpath, follow the yellow markers on the trees to the grassland area through a kissing gate (3). Common blue butterflies, along with marbled white and silver washed fritillaries can be seen here in summer, and in the purple heath areas you'll hear woodland and common green grasshoppers singing during July and August. In the shorter areas of turf and bare rock, grayling butterflies can occasionally be seen. Cross the grassland to the interpretation board (4), turning left just before this along the path at the top of the grassland. This leads to the top of the Combe (5) – take care – the cliff to the left is very steep. The views from here take in the western end of the Mendips northwards across to the coast of South Wales. Look for the buzzards that freely orbit in the thermals over the combe. In the autumn you can hear groups of crossbills flying between the conifer plantations.

From the viewpoint follow the path to the right going down across a stone wall. Follow the path to the bottom of the Combe, taking care when walking down the steep flight of steps (6), until you again reach the reserve entrance. Turn right and retrace your steps.

How to get there

Park in quarry car park on the left near the Goblin Combe Environment Centre (signposted from the A370).

Access

Footpaths along floor of Combe can be very muddy and slippery. Take care, and do not approach cliffs and scree slopes

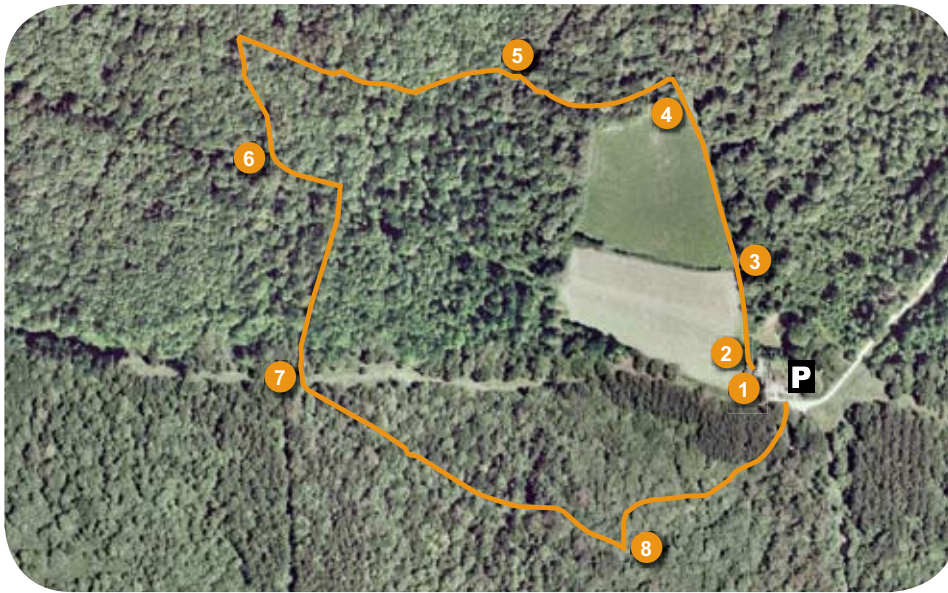
look out for..



Why don't you... count the butterflies – over 30 species to be found!

Avon Wildlife Trust

Lower Woods *for ancient woodland walks and meadow flowers*



OS grid ref: ST746 882

Walk details

duration: 1.5 hrs

grade: easy

Key to map

walk

point of interest

reserve boundary

car park

scale

100m

This woodland is owned by our neighbouring Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust but jointly managed by both of us. It is a very large reserve with 23 woods and coppices separated by ancient grassy trenches and rides. Two clearly waymarked walks start from the Lodge.

Stanley Walk (red waymarks 1-20) is the easiest and starts at the gate (1) into the meadow (2) and follows the woodland rides. In April and May the route is flanked with carpets of bluebells.

At (3) you pass through Stanley Orchard and on to a small hunting gate (4) a reminder that hunting has taken place in Lower Woods from early times. At (5) note a large poplar grown to replace ancient oaks felled for timber during the second world war. The Walk (6) was created in the 1690s with a clear view to Wickwar Church. Go through Little Stanley Wood and cross the ancient Plumber's Trench (7) This area is full of butterflies and meadow flowers such as common spotted orchid in summer. In East Stanley Wood the 'island' (8) is also rich in wildflowers, including autumn crocus.

How to get there

Lower Woods are about a mile east of Wickwar. Main vehicular access to parking at Lower Woods Lodge, via a track off the Wickwar to Hawkesbury road.

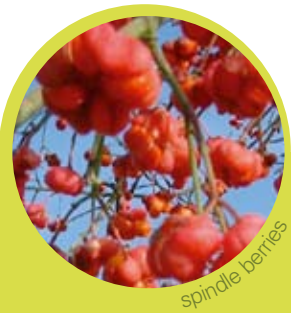
Access

Mainly level and on grass, but puddles likely.

Did you know? Gloucester Wildlife Trust has produced a comprehensive guide to the reserve which includes all three waymarked walks – to download this go to the Lower Woods reserve page.

Why don't you... listen out for nightingales in May?

look out for...



spindle berries



dormouse



common spotted orchid

Avon Wildlife Trust

Prior's Wood *for bluebells in the spring*



OS grid ref: ST490 745

Walk details

duration: 1.5 hrs

grade: easy

Key to map

— walk

① point of interest

— reserve boundary

P car park

scale

400m

From Portbury village turn right after passing the gatehouse on your right and continue up the track between the fields. When you enter the reserve by the interpretation sign **(1)** turn left off the main track and follow the waymark to the top of the hill **(2)**, across another ride and down a flight of steps and into the heart of the wildlife rich woodland.

At the bottom turn right onto the woodland path. In the spring either side of this path bluebells blur into a haze up and down the slopes, with areas of white flowered wild garlic and patches of wood anemone. A column of mature oak and sweet chestnut rise from the ground, and in high summer very little light penetrates the rich green canopy above. In places where trees have naturally fallen, glades have formed, and it is here during the summer that spotted flycatchers can be seen catching insects on the wing. As you follow this path it gently **(3)** rises and bends to the right, bringing you out again onto the main ride **(4)**. Turning left here past a replanted area. Continue onto the reserve entrance by the Children's Hospice South West **(5)**. However, do not leave the reserve, but turn right and descend the path that takes you down to the stream.

Cross the bridge **(6)** and follow the path up the hill, taking the first right onto the main track. Following this takes you into an extensive bluebell area that is truly breathtaking in the spring. At the end of this path **(7)** cross a new bridge that takes you up a slope and along a narrow woodland path which eventually rejoins the ride near the first sign **(8)**. Turn left and retrace your steps.

How to get there

From Portbury take the Clapton-in-Gordano road, parking on layby just after last house in Portbury village. Walk back to the gated lane, turning onto a track that leads into the woodland.

Access

Some of the paths can be muddy, slippery and steep sided.

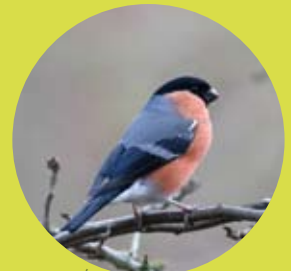
Did you know? Prior's Wood was once part of the great Tyntesfield Estate near Wraxall. Timber from the woodland was processed in the saw mills of the estate.

Why don't you... come back in autumn on a fungus foray?

look out for...



bluebells



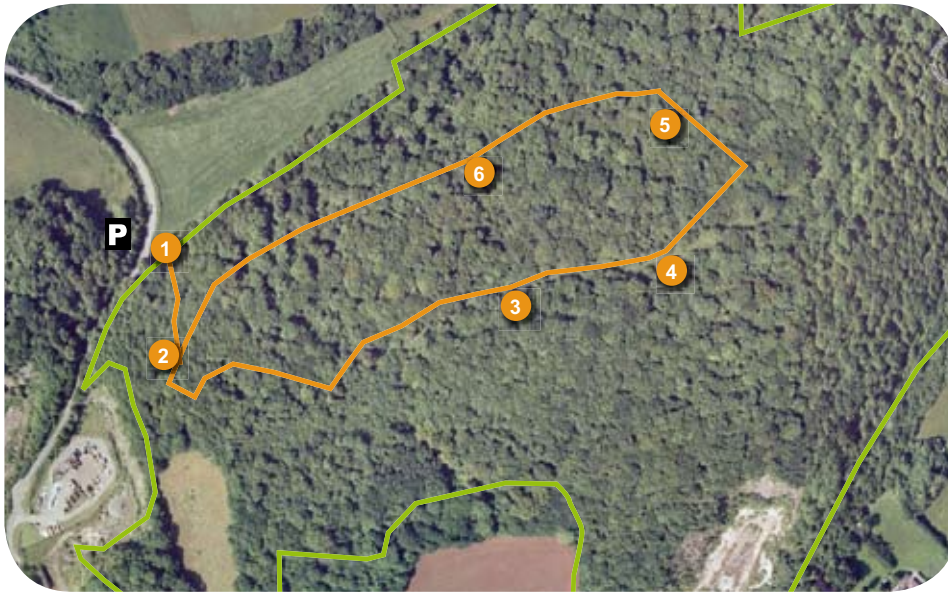
bullfinch



chiffchaff

Avon Wildlife Trust

Weston Big Wood *for woodland rides and wild garlic in spring*



OS grid ref: ST456 750

Walk details

duration: 1.5 hrs

grade: easy

Key to map

— walk

① point of interest

— reserve boundary

P car park

scale

100m

Access into this woodland is best from the Valley Road entrance (1). Pass through the kissing gate and climb the flight of steps that takes you through a glade of small-leaved lime. At the top of the path (2) follow the brass topped way-markers to the right following the winding path deep into the wood. Eventually you arrive at the sun-drenched main ride (3) and turning left you'll pass embayments (4) that are rich in summer butterflies. At the top of the ride remain on the main path as you pass back into the wood and through carpets of bluebells and ramsons. After a short distance you will reach a crossroads by a large ancient oak (5). Turn left at this point and walk along the path (6) back through the heart of the wood and to the top of the steps that will lead you back down to the entrance. Look out for signs of badgers along the walk.

How to get there

From B3124 Clevedon to Portishead road, turn into Valley Road.

Go past amenity site and park on left.

Access

Steps into wood. Paths can be muddy, slippery and steep sided. Keep well away from quarry sides.

Did you know? Black Rock Quarry was once a dusty, noisy hive of industry with rock blasting and stone crushing machines, and a major employer for the town of Portishead – who'd believe that in today's peaceful woodland?

Why don't you... bring wax crayons and paper to take brass rubbings from the waymarkers?

look out for...



purple gromwell



silver-washed fritillary

tawny owl



Avon Wildlife Trust

Willsbridge Valley *for streamside wildlife and a sculpture trail*



OS grid ref: ST665 708

Walk details

duration: 1.5 hrs

grade: easy

Key to map

— walk

① point of interest

— reserve boundary

P car park

scale

50m

Start at the entrance of the Mill **(1)** and climb the flight of steps up to the teaching pond. Continue along the path with the pond to your left and after 10 metres turn sharp left onto the Heritage Sculpture Trail and through a field gate **(2)**. Follow the surfaced path up the gradient that leads between the woodland edge and the pasture.

Past the giant anthill sculpture on your right go through an opening onto the old dramway (the old Avon and Gloucestershire railway) **(3)**. Turn left and continue along the track – look out for the sculptures celebrating the valley's industrial history. After about 100 metres turn left over the viaduct **(4)**. Turn left again once you have crossed the bridge, and the path leads you back to the mill alongside the Siston Brook where you may see dippers or even a kingfisher. Look out for the old quarry with fossil remains of club mosses **(5)**.

Back at the Mill explore the Wild Waste Garden **(6)**, which demonstrates how household waste can be put to creative use.

How to get there

Take the A431 Bristol to Bath road, turning into Long Beach Road.

Car park on left.

Access

Wheelchair access via Willsbridge Hill to most of valley.

Did you know? Willsbridge Mill has a fascinating industrial history - it was built in 1814 as a corn mill on the site two much older iron mills. The dramway connected the Coalpit Heath collieries with the River Avon just south of Willsbridge. It was a working mill until the floods of July 1968 which demolished the dam behind the Mill.

Why don't you... go pond dipping and discover the watery world of the mill pond?

look out for...



Avon Wildlife Trust

Clapton Moor *for wetland wildlife and Gordano Valley views*



Setting off up the hill from the Black Horse pub **(1)** the first part of the walk is dominated by the noise of the M5 motorway opened in 1970 and bringing major changes to the valley's wildlife in its wake.

A hoard of 3000 roman coins was found here **(2)** in the 1930s. A short distance further on descending the southern ridge of the valley is like walking back in time as magnificent views of the Gordano Valley come into sight **(3)**. This sense of timelessness is reinforced by a walk around 13c St. Michael's Church **(4)** with its ancient headstones and views of historic Clapton Court **(5)**, the site of the old manor house dating back to the 11c. After the Court the route ascends once again towards the motorway **(6)** and gives views of the valley and Clapton Moor nature reserve before descending once again and entering the reserve**(7)**.

This reserve is managed to maintain wet conditions over the lower fields and encourage lapwing, redshank, and snipe to breed. The walk runs around the boundary of the reserve but take a detour to the bird hide **(8)** to get better views of the wet meadows. From the reserve the walk runs along a wildlife rich drainage rhyme **(9)** before joining Clapton Drove **(10)**. Walk along the drove for 500 metres

OS grid ref: ST458 735

Walk details

duration: 2.5 hrs

grade: moderate

Key to map

— walk

① point of interest

— reserve boundary

P car park

scale

300m

Why don't you... spend time in the bird hide looking for snipe and redshank?

The Clapton Circuit (which includes Clapton Moor) offers panoramic views of the Gordano Valley, a uniquely rich area of countryside with a surprising wealth of wildlife just 12 miles from the centre of Bristol. An historic manor and church, relics of iron and coal mining, a hoard of Roman coins and the wetlands of Clapton Moor all combine to make this an especially fascinating walk (see www.avonwildlifetrust.org.uk/claptoncircuit for more information).



Clapton Court

Did you know... the wildlife-rich rhynes in the wet meadows are the watery equivalent of field hedge boundaries? They also provide drinking water for cattle.

with contrasting views of industrial Avonmouth and wind turbines in the distance. Leaving the Drove through a kissing gate on the right (11) the walk passes two 17c farms and the remains of 17c coal mining activity before arriving back at the Black Horse pub where well earned refreshments can be enjoyed.

How to get there

From Portishead take the B3124 towards Clevedon and turn left into Clapton Lane at the roundabout by Gordano School. In the village of Clapton-in-Gordano take the second road on the right and the Black Horse pub is 300 metres on the right. Park carefully in Wood Lane opposite the pub entrance.

Access

Apart from the route around the reserve access into the reserve is restricted to the path that leads to the hide which is suitable for wheelchair users. The lower fields on the reserve get very wet so boots are advised.

look out for...



snipe



migrant hawk



redshank

Avon Wildlife Trust

Walborough and Purn Hill *for coast paths and hilltops*



From the Boatyard **(1)** on Uphill Way, walk south along the surfaced path onto Uphill Cliff **(2)**. Keep on the path and after passing through a small gate **(3)** climb up the hill. Just before the top, turn right through a stile **(4)**, onto Walborough Nature Reserve. Follow this path around the side of the hill, down through a kissing gate and over a bridge **(5)**. Walk diagonally across this field. At the interpretation board rejoin the surfaced path **(6)** and leave the reserve, heading south through the kissing gate. The path takes you across part of the Bleadon Levels. Continue until you reach the road that leads to the sewage treatment works **(7)**. At this point turn left. Follow this road until you reach the main entrance **(8)**. Turn left onto the main road (take care here) and follow this until you reach the A370 **(9)**. Turn right and immediately cross the road, turning left at the road junction down Bleadon Road towards the village of Bleadon **(10)**. After 100m turn left through a gate and into a field **(11)**. Walk up the footpath to Purn Hill Nature Reserve **(12)**.

Follow the path and turn left to up a flight of steps to the summit. **(13)**. Turn right and heading northwards walk along the spine of the hill, passing through a gateway and out of the reserve through a kissing gate onto Purn Lane **(14)**. Turn left and walk down the lane.

OS grid ref: ST316 579

Walk details

duration: 3 hrs

grade: challenging

Key to map

— walk

① point of interest

— reserve boundary

P car park

scale

400m

Why don't you... bring your binoculars and see how many waders you see at Walborough?

A circular walk between two of our nature reserves with marvellous views across the Axe and Severn Estuaries from Walborough, and across the Somerset Levels to the Blackdowns and Quantocks from Purn Hill. The sea is once again being allowed to inundate the low-lying field behind the Victorian sea wall at Walborough, to expand the salt marsh. This is called 'managed retreat'.



Did you know... white rock rose (above) is only found on two other sites in the UK?

At the bottom you reach some houses **(15)**, turn right and follow the old road until you reach the A370. Carefully cross the road and turn right, crossing over the railway bridge before turning sharp left at the next junction **(16)**. Walk down the lane and towards the bottom turn right along a sign posted bridleway **(17)**.

Follow this old country by-way until you reach the point where you left Walborough Nature Reserve. As you enter turn slightly left, walking diagonally across the first field. Cross the bridge and turn left, passing two gates, and retrace your steps following the edge of the rising hill. After 150m, bear to the left **(18)** and descend the path, passing a small quarry on your right, along a boardwalk and over a stile onto the old sea wall. Walk along the wall with the existing saltmarsh on your left **(19)** and newly created 'managed retreat' on your right. Stay on the coastal path and return to the beginning of the walk by passing alongside the boatyard **(20)**.

How to get there

Follow signs to Uphill village from the southern end of Weston-super-Mare. Uphill leads towards the south end of Weston beach. Head towards the beach but park near the large sluice gates on the left or by Uphill Way.

Access

A surfaced path on part of Walborough – open access to grassland but please keep off salt marsh to avoid disturbance to birds. Some road walking so take care, steep climb to Purn Hill.

look out for...

