

Walk:

WOC 12

Location:

Glas Fynydd Forest off Trecastle Mountain Road

Directions:

Turn right out of castle, first left at Tafaŷ y Garreg pub on the mountain road to Trecastle. You will climb up a winding single track lane, cross a cattle grid, and out of the woodland bit into open mountain with a winding stream off on your left. You climb for a few miles into the mountain – a very scenic road - and then you start to descend again, eventually crossing over another cattle grid. Immediately after the cattle grid the road descends through a woodland area.

Within a few hundred yards of this second cattle grid, you will turn off left down a small minor lane. So once you have crossed this second cattle grid, look out for the first road on your left (unsigned), drive down it for a quarter mile at most, and park up in the first left lay-by you come to.

Having parked up you will know if you are in the right place as there are some farm fields on the left here, with white and grey llamas or some similar creature in the field.

Immediately to the left there is an old residential caravan and a large tin barn. Park here and take the woodland track into Glas Fynydd Forest (not signed as such). You will pass a small windmill at the top of the field on your left, where the woodland path branches right for one circular walk, or goes straight ahead for what, for us, is not a circular walk on account of a boggy area a mile or two along.

(Note: There are further woodland walks in this area which I have not fully explored. These will be added as additional walks later. If you wish to explore them, take the first road off to the right after the second cattle grid. This road eventually takes you to Crai (one more right turn to get to Crai) for a circular drive back to the castle. For the as yet undiscovered walks, a few hundred yards along this lane you will find woodland walks to the right. The one on the left does not go on for more than 30 minutes before coming out on the road you are on, further down. But the woodland walks on the right look promising. More later.)

Distance (miles):

Maybe 8 miles – cannot verify on sat nav.

Time (hours):

15 minutes approximately.

Length of Walk:

2 hours and 15 minutes for a circular walk as described below.

Dates Walked:

09/09/2009, 11/09/2009, 26/09/2009 (?), 28/11/2009, 28/01/2010,

Parking:

Free

Pop in to:

Nothing else here but check out the Llamas!

Description:

There are some extensive woodland tracks here so plenty of choices. We have continued in a straight line past the llama field, ignoring the right hand fork at the top of the field, and continuing left into the woodland. This climbs a bit but not too steeply, eventually coming into an open area with open mountain on your left (not accessible due to there being no path on to it and access to the mountain is blocked wire sheep fencing). You cannot go on much further as soon after this the path becomes very muddy and boggy, so we have not attempted a circular walk here, though one would be possible without a pram I'm sure.

The circular walk we have done (albeit in the opposite direction) was from the lower lay-by (the second one on from the Llama field lay-by). You can follow left left left

from the second lay-by and end up at the Llama field. So it follows you can go right after the llama field and follow the path right right right at all relevant turnings, where eventually you will come back on to the small lane at the second lay-by. Do not be too concerned that at one point you seem to be curving around away from the road and deeper into the forest. Eventually the path does curve round to the right and bring you back to the road. Just be sure that any navigable gravelled path to the right that you can take, you do take, as otherwise you will end up going off to the left, deeper into the forest.

To return to the car, once you have exited the forest at the second lay-by down, you would turn right on to the small lane and walk up the hill for a mile or so, to the first lay-by where your car is parked.

I recommend doing the walk clockwise from the Llama field, as it will then be downhill through all the woodland tracks mostly, with the uphill stretch being limited to the short section of the lane back to your car.

We however have gone anticlockwise from the second lay-by, around to the Llama field, having first gone clockwise but given up the first time after an hour or so because we seemed to be going deeper and deeper into the woodland. We only discovered the circular route when we tackled the walk from the second lay-by, and after about an hour and a half recognised the path we had come along on an earlier visit from the other direction.

Alternatively you can just walk along in one direction for an hour and then walk back.

Not much in the way of views as you are in the woodland all the time. However it is conveniently close to the castle. Nice wide gravelled paths. Also in the September / October period, a generous abundance of blackberries along some of the paths.

The main advantage of this walk is its proximity to the castle, and the fact it is sheltered by the woodland so not as windy or as exposed as the open mountain walks. A good choice for a windy day. Very nice in the snow as well.

Also there are many additional woodland paths leading in different directions which the more adventurous could explore, though always take a torch for these walks as you can end up in these woodlands for hours. A good natural sense of direction is useful on many of these woodland walks, this one being no exception.

It also helps to have done some of the paths in other directions, so you begin to recognise when you are on a path you have already been on, on a previous walk. So there would be no harm doing one walk in one direction from one lay-by, and turning around, making a note of the time taken to get to the point you turned around at. Then the next time take the second lay-by, and keep on going till you get to a point you recognised from the earlier walk. This is how some of our circular walks are discovered – in two attempts.

Would also be suitable for a mountain bike ride and possibly a segway. It would not be too far to get here from the castle on bikes, but a fair climb up the mountain road.

Pictures taken on 09/09/2009:

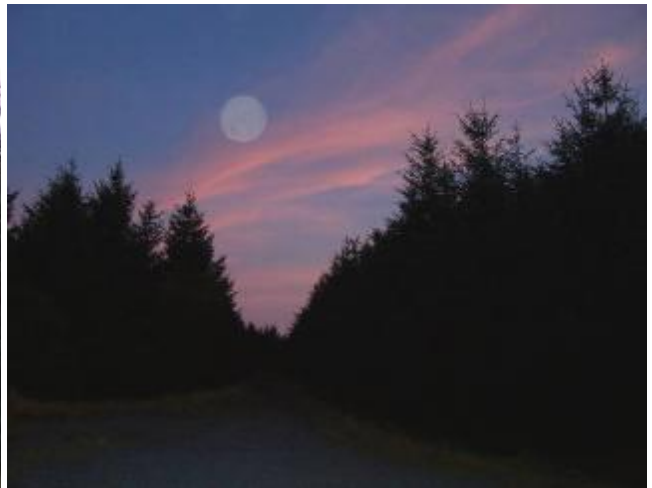
Interesting white sheep and on the right picture, a field full of are llamas.



Pictures taken on 11/09.2009:

At this point (pic on left) you have a choice of going straight on, which dead ends in a boggy area. With good boots and no pram you could venture through the boggy area and attempt another circular route – though we have not done this.

To the right there is another path, really the main path. Follow this bearing right at all the main turnings, and you will come out on the road you parked on, a few hundred yards further down. You may be tempted to turn down some very minor tracks as it feels you are walking forever away from the main road. But do not worry, you will eventually come out on the road you parked on, provided you follow the main path you are on, bearing right. You then walk up the road until you get to your layby. Allow 2 hours for the circle. Most of it is downhill, with the only uphill bit being the road. We have done this walk from the bottom (anti-clockwise) but we suggest you start at the llama field layby and go round it clockwise. There are loads of blackberries in season on the roadside, also some parts of the walk are rich in blackberries.



Pictures taken on 26/09/2009:

Picture on left shows the straight ahead option. Path becomes more and more rustic and deeper into woodland before coming to an open area with open mountain on the left. Beyond this the path becomes boggy and flooded and we felt it was time to turn back.



This field has some very curious llamas.

