

Route Info:

To walk this route you must be competent with map and compass. Avoid walking if weather looks inclement.

Start:

Fox and Hounds car park near Lydford (grid ref SX525867)

Distance and timings:

The main route is 10km but there are various spur routes (3km) that will take you to explore the mires and bogs. The walk will take a minimum of 5 hours, depending on how much time you spend exploring the moorland and bogs. On the return journey, you can extend your walk by visiting Great Links Tor, the highest point in this part of Dartmoor. This route will take a little longer. If the weather turns bad, use outward route as return route.

Terrain and description of paths:

Ground conditions include stone tracks, grassy slopes and rough, wet, boggy terrain so a reasonable level of fitness is required. Good route-finding skills are also needed.

Essential equipment:

Waterproofs, warm clothing, sturdy boots, compass, OS 1:25000 map, OS Explorer OL28. Boots with gaiters are recommended during or after wet weather.

Dogs:

Please help us protect wildlife and livestock by keeping dogs on short leads during the lambing and bird breeding season (1st March – 31st July).

The information in this leaflet was correct at the time of going to print. Whilst every care has been taken to ensure accuracy, the Magnificent Mires project and its partners cannot accept responsibility for any inaccurate, incomplete or out of date information, or any loss or damage that may result from reliance on it. Please be aware that you may find some walks challenging and that you should take care to exercise within your own limitations. Please remember that you walk all routes on Dartmoor at your own risk. You should always wear suitable clothing and footwear and carry a good map (Ordnance Survey or equivalent) and compass when walking on open moorland. This leaflet is not suitable as your only means of navigation.



Bog Walks: *Lyd Head and Rattlebrook*

Follow this bog walk towards Lyd Head. There are some fascinating mires to explore near the head of the River Lyd and around the Rattle Brook. Also in the area are the old Rattle Brook works where large areas of blanket bog were once worked to produce peat. The Rattle Brook railway line was constructed to extract the peat and the old track along the bed of that line forms the route for the start of this walk.

Enjoy your walk in the spectacular Dartmoor landscape but prepare to get your feet wet!

Why are bogs important?

Dartmoor's bogs are of international importance, home to remarkable wildlife, they also provide vital services to our everyday lives.

There are two main types of bogs on Dartmoor, valley mires and blanket bogs. Many of Devon's major rivers start their journey on blanket bogs. Their ability to absorb and store water at the top of the hills helps to reduce the risk of flooding and drought.

The bogs also act as a carbon store to help combat climate change. As bog plants grow, they absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. The plants then die but are only partially decomposed as the waterlogged, acidic environment slows bacteria and fungi breaking down the dead plant matter. This partially decayed plant material forms the peat deposits which act as a carbon store.

This leaflet is part of a series of bog walks created by the Magnificent Mires project. To find out more visit:

www.devonwildlifetrust.org/magnificent-mires

Discover the Dartmoor story at
www.dartmoorstory.org



Magnificent Mires

Celebrating the internationally important blanket bogs of Dartmoor

Lyd Head and Rattlebrook Circular walk - 8miles (13km)



circular walking route



Devon
Wildlife Trust

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DPA
Friends of Dartmoor
est. 1981



DUCHY of CORNWALL

The Magnificent Mires project is led by Devon Wildlife Trust in partnership with Dartmoor National Park Authority, Dartmoor Preservation Association and The Duchy of Cornwall. The project is supported by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Lyd Head and Rattlebrook Trail Route

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Sundews

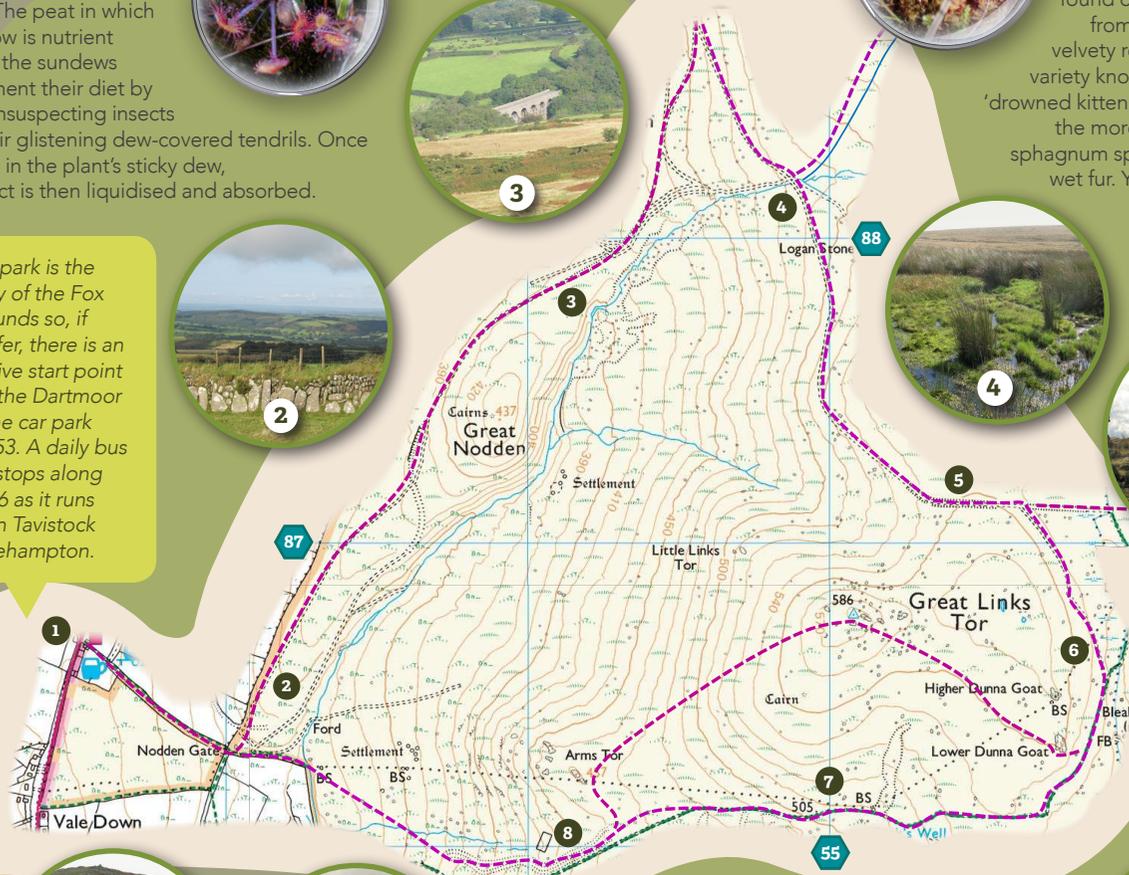
Sundews are insect eating plants. The peat in which they grow is nutrient poor so the sundews supplement their diet by luring unsuspecting insects with their glistening dew-covered tendrils. Once trapped in the plant's sticky dew, the insect is then liquidised and absorbed.

The car park is the property of the Fox and Hounds so, if you prefer, there is an alternative start point behind the Dartmoor Inn at the car park SX526853. A daily bus service stops along the A386 as it runs between Tavistock and Okehampton.



Sphagnum moss

Twelve species of sphagnum moss can be found on Dartmoor, ranging from vivid greens to dark velvety reds. Look out for the variety known as cuspidatum or 'drowned kitten moss'. This is one of the more easily recognisable sphagnum species and looks like wet fur. You can spot it in and around pools.



Common cotton grass

This familiar plant likes Dartmoor's boggy pools. Its roots can reach up to 60cm downwards into the waterlogged peat. Air canals in the stems of common cotton grass help it take oxygen from the air, down the plant and into its roots – a bit like a snorkel!



Trail Main Route

- 1 Start at the Fox and Hounds car park near Lydford (grid ref SX525867). Begin by walking up the lane between the buildings. Though this walk does not enter the military firing range, please take notice of the information boards.
- 2 Pass through Nodden Gate and turn immediately left on a grassy track that follows the stone wall. King Wall is an excellent example of the stone built boundaries in this area. Follow the wall until the cairn at the top of Great Nodden comes into view. Walk towards Great Nodden until you meet the stone track of the old Rattlebrook railway.
- 3 Continue your gradual ascent of the track. On the hill above you are some old mineral workings that follow the emerging River Lyd and you may see the Lake viaduct in the valley below. The track cuts sharply right, going up the hill.
- 4 You will begin to see patches of blanket bog while you climb the track. At the point where the River Lyd runs beneath the track, stop to appreciate the view, catch your breath and decide which route you would like to follow to explore Lyd Head. Following the main water course can be tricky so you might prefer an easier route, following the smaller of the two streams flowing down from Corn Ridge.
- 5 Back on the main route, follow the old railway past Gren Tor and through the cutting. Cross the embankment over the mire at the head of Rattle Brook and visit the remains of the peat workings in the blanket bog. This is an ideal place to stop for a break and explore the landscape.
- 6 Cross the Rattle Brook again and take a peat path on the left. From here, you can look down on the mire at Rattle Brook. You can see Green Tor and the ruins of Bleak House on the other side of the brook. There is also a view over vast expanses of blanket bog, looking towards Fur Tor on the distant ridge.
- 7 With Lower Dunna Goat on your right, you can choose which return route to take. The main path curves right and over the ridge past the old mineral workings then descends between Arms Tor and Brat Tor. The more adventurous route takes in Dunna Goat, another area of blanket bog and Great Links Tor; the panoramic views are worth the extra effort though.
- 8 Leave the main path where it descends between Arms Tor and Brat Tor and find the old channels of the mineral works. This interesting route winds its way steadily down the hill and provides excellent views of West Devon and Cornwall. Cross the small stream and make your way to the ford over the River Lyd. If the water level is high, use the small footbridge about 500m downstream. Return to the start through Nodden Gate via public footpath to vale Down. Enjoy well-earned refreshments at the Fox and Hounds!

Map Key

- Normal Route:
- Shorter Route:
- Grid References: