

BAT TRAIL-11

Tamar Valley Drakewalls Walk



Photo: Tamar Valley AONB

The steeply sloping and heavily wooded landscape of the Tamar Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) forms the boundary between Devon and Cornwall. Mining history is key to the story of the valley and the remains around the former Devon Great Consols mine are important for the local greater horseshoe bat population.

The old mine at Devon Great Consols supports a key maternity roost for greater horseshoe bats. Wooded valleys, river corridors, networks of hedgerows and cattle-grazed pastures that surround the roost are great for feeding bats and help them to find their

way around the landscape.

Take a stroll around the Drakewalls Mine site and find out more about the habitats and landscapes that are great for greater horseshoe bats and other bat species in the valley.

**DEVON
GREATER
HORSESHOE
BAT PROJECT**



ROUTE INFO

Start: Tamar Valley Centre, Drakewalls (NOT the Tamar Trails Centre). Free Parking

Distance and timings: 0.5 miles

Circular Walk: Yes

Terrain & Description of paths Good trail for families but not wheelchair friendly

Obstacles and Gradients: Some steps, moderate downhill gradient

Public Transport: Gunnislake train station nearby. Bus stop here too.

Toilets: Tamar Valley Centre, Weekdays only 10am - 4pm.

Refreshment & Other Facilities: No refreshment stops. Visitor info at Tamar Valley Centre

OS Map: OS Explorer Map 108

Grid Reference and postcode: SX 42565 70665
Postcode PL18 9FE



Photo: Tamar Valley AONB



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Photo: Phil Richardson



Photo: Frank Greenaway



Photo: Tamar Valley AONB

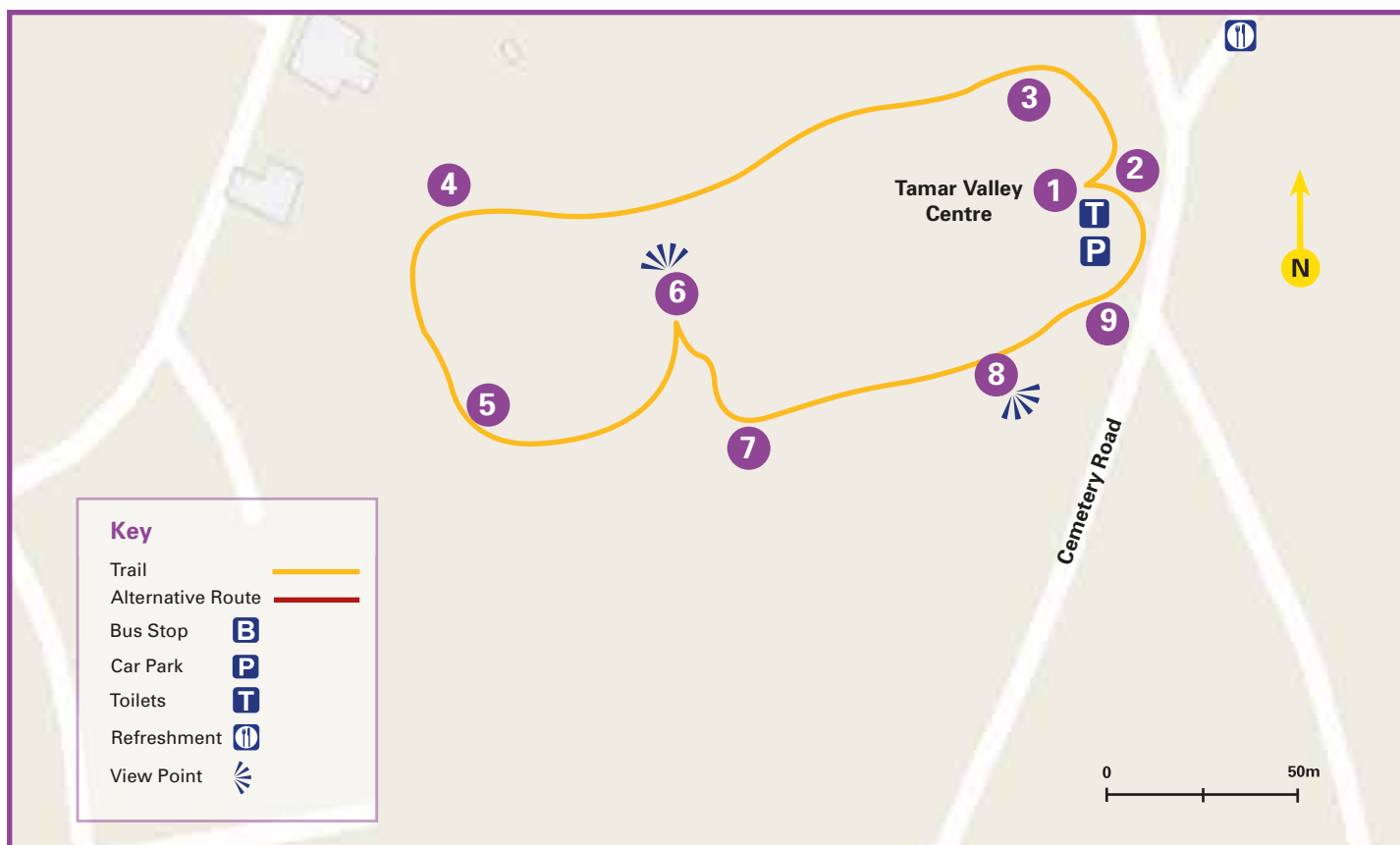


Devon
Wildlife Trust



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DIRECTIONS

1 Start at the Tamar Valley Centre and head towards the old buildings in the grounds. These are the remains of the former Drakewalls Mine. The nooks and crannies of the old buildings, pits and adits form places for bats to rest and roost. They also make good habitats for insects, which the bats like to feed on. Pipistrelles are often seen leaving these areas on their early evening feeding patrols around the mine site and beyond.

2 Head past the old buildings towards the road and look out for the old walls between you and the road. There are a number of these old walls throughout the site. Cracks and crevices are great places for insects to live and insects are great snacks for bats.

3 Keep following the path around the edge of the woodland. Abandoned chimneys and shafts are great places for bats to roost. The chimney at the rear of the old buildings of Drakewalls Mine is gated. This provides safe access for bats to a roost where they are undisturbed. There are other gates/grills around the site, keep a look out for them as you walk around.

4 Keep walking around the edge of the site until you reach another chimney. This chimney is surrounded by grassy banks and meandering woodland edges, which are great habitat for insects. Woodland edges are important features for bats to use to find their way around the landscape, connecting their roosts with their feeding grounds.

5 Continue walking behind the chimney and take the wooded route, which follows the boundary of the mine site, then take the left fork through the wooded area. Woodland

rides are important feeding areas and navigational routes for bats. They tend to be sheltered areas where insects congregate, creating the perfect bat buffet! Tree branches are also important for greater horseshoes to perch on whilst they eat their prey.

6 At the end of the wooded stretch, head towards the viewing point for fantastic views towards Dartmoor. This gives you a good opportunity to see why this area is so good for greater horseshoe bats with lots of hedges and woodland linking up the landscape. These natural routes are the 'road map' that is so important for the bats to find their way from place to place. The mixture of habitats also provides a variety of food and sustains good populations of insects.

7 As you walk down the hill towards the Tamar Valley Centre take a closer look at the grassy margins. These are home to a wide variety of insects. They are also home to a diverse range of wildflowers, this ensures a range of insects and a varied diet for bats as they emerge from their roosts and pass through the site into the wider landscape. There may be some areas of standing water nearby, which provide homes for dragonflies and damselflies.

8 When you get back to the Tamar Valley Centre, look across the road and enjoy the view down the Tamar Valley. The dense network of hedgerows, woodlands, cattle grazed pastures and the rivers and streams are important habitats for greater horseshoe bats. Add to this the range of old buildings and mine sites – it's a great place to live for many bat species.