

Ravenglass Club Site – The Eskdale Trail

Camping and Caravanning



Route Summary



Let the train take the strain on a scenic ride from Ravenglass to the upper reaches of this beautiful wooded valley and then wander back to the site gate beside the swift-flowing crystal clear waters of the River Esk.

Route Overview



Category: Walking

Length: 14.040 km / 8.78 mi

Last Modified: 21st September 2017

Difficulty: Medium

Rating: Unrated

Surface: Rough

Date Published: 19th June 2017

Description



A rewarding linear walk incorporating a ride on the famous Ravenglass and Eskdale Railway to the start point up the valley and returning on foot to the site gate.



Distance: 8.9 miles/14.3 km

Time: 3 ½ - 4 hours

Terrain: Quiet lanes, bridleways and tracks. Some trackless access land where footpaths are faint. One steep ascent.

1. From Ravenglass Club Site's gate, turn right through the gate posts then left down a path and right into the station ticket office. Catch the train to Dalegarth. An adult single fare to Dalegarth costs £8 at the time of writing. Timetables are subject to seasonal variation so check the RER website www.ravenglass-railway.co.uk for details. Look out for shy red squirrels in the woodland alongside the track on the 50-minute journey to Dalegarth.

2. At Dalegarth turn right at the station exit and head west down the road for 200m, then take the footpath down a track on the left signposted Eskdale Trail. Take the right fork, signposted Dalegarth Falls and cross the bridge keeping right. Follow the track round to the left through a gate then cut back sharply to the right through a gate on to the

bridleway signposted Eskdale Trail/Forge Bridge.

3. Continue west along a wide gravelly trail, through a succession of gates for just over a mile. Go past a wobbly suspension bridge to the road at Forge Bridge. Follow the road left to Forge House, then take the bridleway on the right signposted Muncaster Castle and continue west over the bridge to Muncaster Head.

4. At this point, the easy option is to continue along the waymarked trail to Muncaster Castle and back along the footpath to the site. But to follow the more adventurous (and demanding) high route, 100m after the farm, leave the Eskdale Trail to take the footpath through a gate on the right, almost doubling back and through a farmyard. Head along the track, taking the left fork in the path and climbing steadily up on to Muncaster Fell through a very boggy gateway. Then head west on to the summit plateau to pick up a faint path skirting to the south of the first summit of Silver Knott.

5. The paths are vague over the summit, but continue west across the fell on the most obvious path as it threads its way between the hillocks and knolls towards the main summit. Pass through another boggy gateway and take the right fork skirting right of the boggy area and subsidiary summit at Ross's Camp.

6. The true summit of Hooker Crag is marked by a cairn and trig point, which become visible from the rise south west of Ross's Camp. The intervening hollow is very boggy so find and follow the path that skirts to the right. From the top, views extend north to Sellafield nuclear complex and west out over the complex estuary of the rivers Esk, Irt and Mite and out across the Irish Sea. Sometimes, the Isle of Man is clearly visible, but the best views are back east up the valley, especially in the late afternoon, when the sinking sun illuminates the entire valley and the huge fells at its head.

7. From the trig point, drop down on the path to the left and continue south west, skirting the edge of a conifer plantation. Head through a gate and past the south end of tranquil Muncaster Tarn, going straight on, following the gravel track signposted Muncaster/Esk Trail. The track descends gently to a main road. Turn left and walk along the pavement for 400m then cross the road and enter the castle grounds via the main gate.



8. Continue down the drive, past a church and administrative buildings and across the lawn, following a signpost to Ravenglass uphill through the Himalayan gardens. Walkers can purchase a special ticket for access to the castle and its attractions.

9. Exit through the kissing gate and follow the grassy path south west skirting to the right of the knoll, descending half right to cross a stile and head into the woods. Descend through the woods on the footpath then go past a farmhouse and take a half right on to a gravel track heading almost west-north-west. Follow this track for 500m to reach a lane then take a right on to the road heading north to The Walls – an ancient Roman bath house and the highest Roman remains in Britain. Continue north along the path beside the road for 500m then turn right into the Club Site.



Waypoints

