



Polstead Club Site Dedham Vale walk

Route Summary

A 6-mile walk taking in the splendour of the south Suffolk Countryside in the Dedham Vale AONB. The walk will take you through wooded river valleys carpeted with Bluebells, through a quintessential Suffolk village with thatched and timber-framed houses. Walk created by Skye Strolls Ltd

Route Overview



Category: Walking
Length: 9.580 km / 5.99 mi
Last Modified: 9th July 2018
Difficulty: Medium
Rating: Unrated
Surface: Moderate
Date Published: 29th April 2018

Description

The Camping and Caravanning Club Site at Polstead is on the northern edge of the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a conservation area not only resplendent in flora and fauna but also in history. Walk along enjoying the sound of Skylarks singing as they hover overhead, while keeping an eye out for signs of Water Vole and Otters along the streams and rivers.

You'll make your way along a small valley that is a tributary of the River Box, with extensive views across the south Suffolk countryside, which is not a flat as some might think. Passing Polstead Hall, a 16th Century grade II listed building, imagine yourself 1,400 years ago travelling to listen to St Cedd preach at 'The Gospel Oak'. Unfortunately, this tree has now collapsed, but a new oak tree has been planted in its place.

While relaxing in the peaceful surrounds of this glorious little backwater of Britain, keep your eyes and ears ready for the abundant birdlife that inhabits the area, including Greater and Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers, Nuthatch and Nightingales. The trees in the area are predominately Ash and Maple, but you may also find the Black Cherry that Polstead village gives it name to.

As you meander through the quiet and peaceful village of Polstead, spare a thought for Maria Marten, who met an

untimely death here in 1827. Known as The Red Barn Murder it has been the subject of some controversy as well as appearing in books and on film. This village may not always have been as quiet as it now seems.

After passing the village you enter a small valley. If you're fortunate to be walking along here at the right time of year the reward will be a truly spectacular carpet of Bluebells.

Waypoints

1 Start at Camping and Caravanning Club site Reception

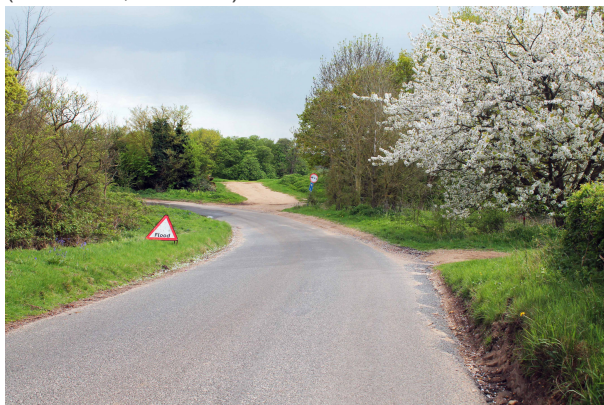
(52.02497; 0.89555)



Leave the Camping and Caravanning Club Site via the main entrance turning right along the road – please take care as it can be busy at times. After some distance you will come to a sharp left-hand bend with a small unmade lane to the right.

2 Junction with Homey Bridge Lane

(52.00963; 0.89145)



Take this unmade lane down to the river. After passing over or through the river take the footpath on the left and enjoy the peace and calm of this secluded haven as you make your way along the river's water meadows. On reaching the

road, turn left at the side of Scotland Place then after a short distance take the signed path through a hedge on your left. This takes you between paddocks and lakes then gradually uphill passing Scotland Hall.

3 Adjacent Scotland Hall

(51.99639; 0.90806)



After passing through a gateway at the side of Scotland Hall, pause and look behind at the view over the River Box towards Stoke by Nayland church. Continue along the well signed path through the woods until reaching the road. Turn left just after the road junction and make your way through gentle undulating countryside to the village of Polstead. Pass through the village, maybe pausing at The Cock Inn for refreshments. At the far side of the village just after the children's play area a path is signed to your left.

4 Leaving road to enter Dollops Wood

(52.01013; 0.90309)



After leaving the road you will gradually descend into Dollops Wood, which is renowned for a spectacular display of Bluebells in the Spring. Gradually make your way up this hidden valley, enjoying the birds chirping and the sun providing dappled shade for the last stretch of the walk. At the road, continue straight on and the Camping and Caravanning Club Site will be found a short distance further on.

