

The Mack Walks: Short Walks in Scotland Under 10 km

Bin Forest-Ferny Knowe-QueenTree Trail (Aberdeenshire)

Route Summary

An easy figure of eight circuit in mature mixed conifer and broad-leaved woodland around the low hills of Ferny Knowe, Clean Hill and Boddum Hill, on the flanks of the Bin Hill near Huntly.

Duration: 2 hours.



Route Overview

Duration: 2 hours.

Transport/Parking: Frequent Stagecoach bus services between Aberdeen and Inverness. We assume that the driver will do a request stop on the nearby A96 on non-express services. Check timetables. Free Forestry Commission car-park at start/end of walk.

Length: 5.540 km / 3.46 mi

Height Gain: 177 meter.

Height Loss: 177 meter.

Max Height: 199 meter.

Min Height: 150 meter.

Surface: Moderate. On hard-surfaced paths and good forestry roads. Any muddy sections few and far between.

Child Friendly: Yes, if children are used to walks of this distance.

Difficulty: Easy.

Dog Friendly: No public roads or farmland to concern the dog owner on this walk.

Refreshments: Options in Huntly.



Description

This route offers a gentle walking excursion in a large area of pine forest with mixed woodland on the slopes of the Bin Hill (314 m) and associated lower hills. Not to be confused with the Bin of Cullen, this Bin Hill is just west of Huntly, accessed from the nearby A96 road. The Bin Forest contains many of Aberdeenshire's most impressive grand Douglas Firs. Some date back to the original planting of the forest in the 1840s, and are among the oldest in the country. The original "grandmother" fir trees ("Queen Trees") planted here grew from seeds brought back from North America by the intrepid Scottish botanist and gardener David Douglas, born in Scone in 1799. Unfortunately David died as a relatively young man of 35, crushed by a wild bull in a pit-trap in Hawaii in 1834 ... but that's another story!

Amongst other botanical achievements, David Douglas was responsible for bringing the Sitka Spruce and Douglas Fir to Northern Europe. We suggest that you consider combining this short walk with a visit to the attractive town of Huntly, a planned settlement, established in 1769 to support industrial and agricultural changes. A circuit of The Square takes in the main points of interest: the Memorial Fountain; the Duke of Richmond statue, the Gordon Arms building, the Huntly Hotel building, the Brander Library and the old Post Office.



Waypoints

(1) Start walk at the forest information board

(57.46540; -2.82632)

From the Bin Forest Forestry Commission car-park, find the information board shelter at the northern end. Take the path into the trees just to the right of the info boards signed for the Blue and Red Trails.



(2) Go left at first paths junction

(57.46504; -2.82258)

In about 270 m, at a paths junction, go left. Keep following the main path with signposts for Blue/Red Trails as it goes around the hill known as Ferny Knowe. (266 m)



(3) Left for Blue Trail

(57.46588; -2.81677)

After a little more than 1.1 km, go left and downhill to join the Blue Trail (note: you will return to this point later in the walk to take the Red Trail). (1.4 km)



(4) Right at t-junction

(57.46786; -2.81270)

After 300 m, go right at the t-junction to go around Clean Hill. (1.7 km)



(5) Left and gently uphill at forest info board

(57.46631; -2.80640)

In 400 m, at an information board, go left and gently uphill.
(2.1 km)



(6) Left again

(57.47119; -2.80538)

In 700 m, at a t-junction, go left again. (2.8 km)



(7) And left again

(57.47205; -2.81374)

In 500 m, go left and gently downhill. (3.3 km)



(8) Right and downhill

(57.46784; -2.81263)

In another 500 m, go right and gently downhill (you walked up this stretch earlier!). (3.8 km)



(9) Left onto Red Trail

(57.46581; -2.81673)

Now, in 300 m, turn left to follow the Red Trail around Boddum Hill. (4.1 km)



(10) Left to return to car-park

(57.46498; -2.82258)

After 1.2 km, go left to take that path that returns to the Forestry Commission car-park where you started the walk. (5.3 km)



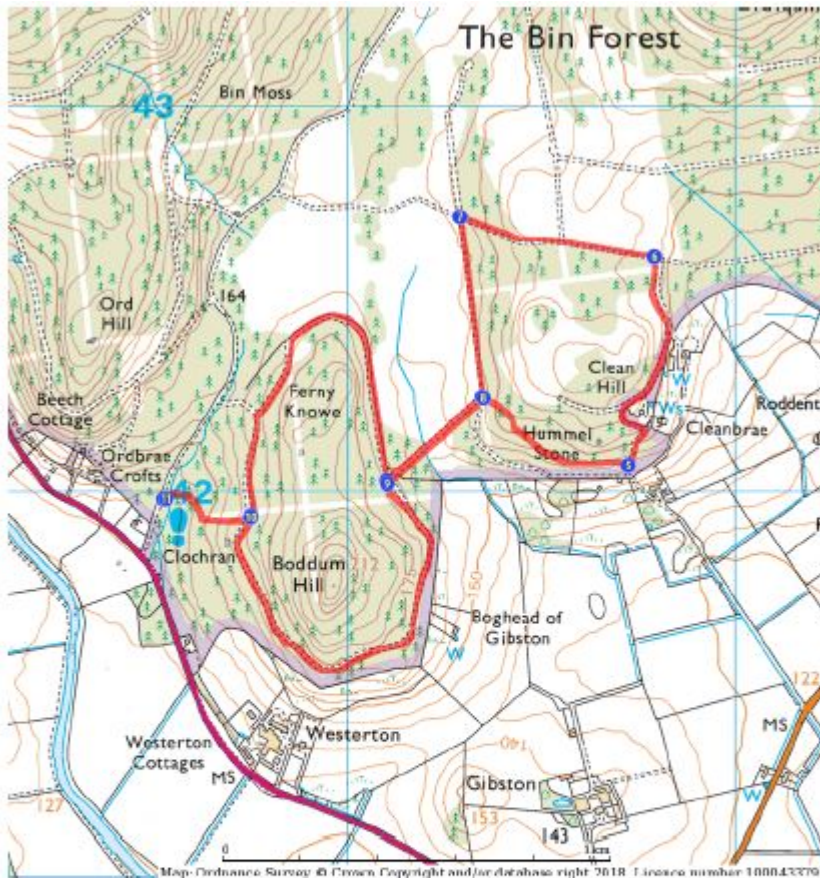
(11) Finish walk back at car-park

(57.46539; -2.82623)

In 200 m, you will have returned to that car-park where you started the walk. (5.5 km)



Route Map



Links:

[Photos from walk](#)

[Download Route Guide](#) (PDF with illustrated Waypoints)

[Download GPX file](#) (GPS Exchange Format)

[Access Walk on Viewranger](#)

[Access Walk on Wikiloc](#)