

The Mack Walks: Short Walks in Scotland Under 10 km

North Third Reservoir-Lewis Hill Crags (Stirling)

Route Summary

This is an easy walk with a very manageable ascent to impressive crags above the picturesque man-made loch. In good weather, and on a clear day, wonderful views throughout the walk are guaranteed.

Duration: 1.5 hours.



Route Overview

Duration: 1.5 hours.

Transport/Parking: No local public transport to this location. Park in the lay-by at the walk start/end point. If needs be, there are other lay-bys on the access road, but take care not to block a passing place.

Length: 5.380 km / 3.36 mi

Height Gain: 136 meter.

Height Loss: 136 meter.

Max Height: 246 meter.

Min Height: 167 meter.

Surface: Moderate. Good paths, may be muddy in places.

Difficulty: Easy.

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

Dog Friendly: Yes, but keep dogs on lead on public roads and near farm animals.

Refreshments: Numerous options in Stirling.



Description

This is a short but exhilarating walk around the North Third Reservoir, in farming countryside to the west of Stirling. Although man-made, the reservoir has attractive wooded islands, and occupies a beautiful setting, set off by the impressive crags on the west face of pine-clad Lewis Hill, an outlier of the Touch Hills. The short ascent to the crags is soon rewarded by some stunning views opening up to the picturesque reservoir, the surrounding farmland, and further afield, in the north-west aspect, to stand-out mountains such as Ben Ledi, Stuc a'Chroin and Ben Vorlich. The now disused North Third Reservoir is described as follows on the Scottish Places gazetteer: "*It impounds the Bannock Burn by way of an earth embankment dam, and extends to an area of 54.4 ha (134 acres). Built in 1911 by Grangemouth Town Council to supply drinking water to that town, the height of the dam was raised in 1934 and again in 1936, to give a capacity of 3364 million litres (740 million gallons). By 1951 it was providing 9 million litres (2 million gallons) per day. It is now operated by Scottish Water. A filter system was constructed in 1931, including a now B-listed pump house. At the same time, a Bronze Age battle-axe was discovered, which is now housed in the Royal Museum in Edinburgh. This pump house became disused in 2000 and was sold in 2006. Water was subsequently diverted to Touch Water Treatment Works ...*". The recreational trout fishery on the Reservoir is also now closed. All in all, this is an attractive walk with fine views from the crags and the banks of the reservoir.



See: <https://www.scottish-places.info/features/featurefirst15648.html>

Waypoints

(1) Right off minor road - up path

(56.06767; -3.99609) <https://w3w.co/imitate.valuables.nails>

The walk starts about 1.2 km from the junction (signposted 'North Third Fishery') with the New Line Road from Stirling. Close to a couple of roadside lay-bys, and marked by a high post and a short section of wooden fencing, a narrow path ascends up the hillside in a northerly direction. Follow this path as it gently goes uphill through fairly open mixed woodland.



(2) Stay on main path - left and steeply uphill

(56.07142; -3.98997) <https://w3w.co/nutty.trifle.caked>

In about 650 m, the path takes a sharp left and goes much more steeply uphill. An indistinct path carries straight on into the bracken in a forest fire break. Continue to follow the path going sharp left and going steeply uphill. At various points views will unfold down to the North Third Reservoir and soon you will have reached the extended summit area on top of the rocky crags above the reservoir. You will begin to see the white-painted trig point ahead of you. (641 km)



(3) Trig point

(56.07606; -3.99255) <https://w3w.co/hillside.ritual.remotest>

In another 650 m, you will have arrived at the distinctive, white-painted trig point at the summit of Lewis Hill. There are wonderful views down to the picturesque reservoir, the surrounding farmland, and further afield, in the NW aspect, to mountains such as Ben Ledi, Stuc a'Chroin and Ben Vorlich. When you are ready to move on, carry on taking the path along the extended crag-top area in a northerly direction. Eventually the path starts to dip down and descend into woodland. (1.3 km)



(4) Left and downhill

(56.08170; -3.98787) <https://w3w.co/galloping.materials.snoring>

In 800 m, at a paths junction in a clearing, take the path going left by a post. This path continues to descend through the trees towards the reservoir. (2.1 km)



(5) Cross dams - then take path around reservoir

(56.08116; -3.99348) <https://w3w.co/love.confident.pigment>

In 400 m, you will have descended to the first of two stone dam walls for the reservoir. Follow the path immediately behind the first, then the second of the reservoir dam walls, passing a tower building on your left before the end of the second dam wall. After the second dam wall follow the path as it bends left and then carries on around the banks of the reservoir. You are now walking in a southerly direction. Eventually you will pass a boathouse and quite soon after that you will arrive at a cordoned-off unsafe bridge. (2.5 km)



(6) Cross stile by closed bridge

(56.07366; -4.00183) <https://w3w.co/lamplight.forgiven.light>

After walking around the reservoir for 1.7 km, you will arrive at a cordoned-off unsafe bridge (as at 2019). Follow the grassy path to the right of the bridge where there is a stile into the field on your right. Cross the stile and follow the field-side path uphill, heading towards the minor access at the next corner of the field. (4.2 km)



(7) Over gate and left up access road

(56.07340; -4.00594) <https://w3w.co/storybook.vibrates.duet>

In about 300 m, at the corner of the field, cross over the wooden gate to reach the tarred minor access road. Turn left here to follow the road back to your start-point. (4.5 km)



(8) Finish walk back at start point

(56.06771; -3.99623) <https://w3w.co/imitate.valuables.nails>

In 900 m, you will have arrived back at your start-point. (5.4 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](#)