

Route Info:

To walk this route you must be competent with map and compass. Avoid walking if weather looks inclement.

Start:

Start at the Fernworthy Reservoir car park, (Grid ref SX669838)

Distance and timings:

The shorter route (12km) will take a minimum of six hours, depending on how much time you spend exploring the moorland bogs. The longer route (15km) will take between 7 and 8 hours.

Terrain and description of paths:

Ground conditions range from firm stone tracks to rough, wet, boggy terrain and a reasonable level of fitness is required. Good route-finding skills are also needed.

Essential equipment:

Waterproofs, warm clothing, sturdy boots, compass, OS 1:25000 map- OS Explorer OL28. Boots with gaiters are recommended during or after wet weather.

Dogs:

Please help us protect wildlife and livestock by keeping dogs on short leads during the lambing and bird breeding season (1st March – 31st July)

The information in this leaflet was correct at the time of going to print. Whilst every care has been taken to ensure accuracy, the Magnificent Mires project and its partners cannot accept responsibility for any inaccurate, incomplete or out of date information, or any loss or damage that may result from reliance on it. Please be aware that you may find some walks challenging and that you should take care to exercise within your own limitations. Please remember that you walk all routes on Dartmoor at your own risk. You should always wear suitable clothing and footwear and carry a good map (Ordnance Survey or equivalent) and compass when walking on open moorland. This leaflet is not suitable as your only means of navigation.



Bog Walks:

Fernworthy Reservoir to Winney's Down route

Follow this bog walk to Winney's Down. The main route covers 12km along forest tracks and open moorland with spectacular views of vast areas of remote moorland and opportunities to visit some blanket bog and valley mire habitats.

Enjoy your walk in the spectacular Dartmoor landscape but prepare to get your feet wet!

This adventurous route takes you to Statt's House on Winney's Down (SX621824) where you can explore the remains of peat cutters' shelters and look for some amazing bog habitats. From Winney's Down there are a number of options to return to the start. The easiest route is to retrace your steps to Sittaford Tor but an alternative route, suitable for more experienced moorland walkers, takes you down to the East Dart River to look at a valley mire and derelict industrial workings from the tin mining period. This route can be quite a strenuous walk and will add 3km to the main route. From Sittaford Tor there is a choice of two different return routes. One will pass the double stone circle at Grey Whethers and the other will simply retrace the original route back to the start.

Why are bogs important?

Dartmoor's bogs are of international importance, home to remarkable wildlife, they also provide vital services to our everyday lives.

There are two main types of bogs on Dartmoor, valley mires and blanket bogs. Many of Devon's major rivers start their journey on blanket bogs. Their ability to absorb and store water at the top of the hills helps to reduce the risk of flooding and drought.

The bogs also act as a carbon store to help combat climate change. As bog plants grow, they absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. The plants then die but are only partially decomposed as the waterlogged, acidic environment stops bacteria and fungi breaking down the dead plant matter. This partially decayed plant material forms the peat deposits which act as a carbon store.

This leaflet is part of a series of bog walks created by the Magnificent Mires project. To find out more visit:

www.devonwildlifetrust.org/magnificent-mires

Discover the Dartmoor story at www.dartmoorstory.org



Magnificent Mires

Celebrating the internationally important blanket bogs of Dartmoor

Fernworthy Reservoir to Winney's Down route

Challenging circular walk - 9miles (15km)



circular walking route



Devon
Wildlife Trust

Funding raised by
The National Lottery
and awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund



DPA
Friends of Dartmoor
est. 1981



DUCHY of CORNWALL

The Magnificent Mires project is led by Devon Wildlife Trust in partnership with Dartmoor National Park Authority, Dartmoor Preservation Association and The Duchy of Cornwall. The project is supported by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund.

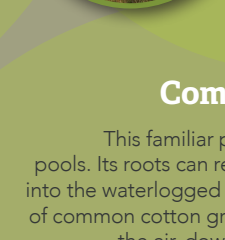
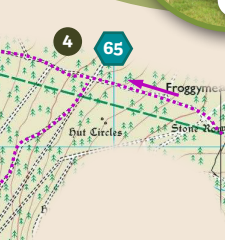
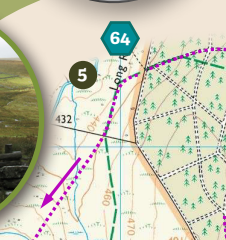
Fernworthy Reservoir to Winney's Down route

Trail Route

© Crown copyright 2017 OS 100059287
 Photos by Matt Parkins unless otherwise stated

Sundews

Sundews are insect eating plants. The peat in which they grow is nutrient poor so the sundews supplement their diet by luring unsuspecting insects with their glistening dew-covered tendrils. Once trapped in the plant's sticky dew, the insects are then liquidised and absorbed.



Common cotton grass

This familiar plant likes Dartmoor's boggy pools. Its roots can reach up to 60cm downwards into the waterlogged peat. Air canals in the stems of common cotton grass help it take oxygen from the air, down the plant and into its roots – a bit like a snorkel!



Sphagnum moss

Twelve species of sphagnum moss can be found on Dartmoor, ranging from vivid greens to dark velvety reds. Look out for the variety known as cuspidatum or 'drowned kitten moss'. This is one of the more easily recognisable sphagnum species and looks like wet fur. You can spot it in and around pools.



Trail Main Route

- 1 Start at the Fernworthy Reservoir car park. Grid ref SX669838 - Note: there are charges for the use of this car park and a toilet facility is available through the summer.
- 2 Follow a footpath from the car park alongside the reservoir, keeping on the stone surfaced path through an area of woodland. Follow the sign to the bird hide then cross a wooden footbridge where you turn right through a meadow.
- 3 After visiting the bird hide, continue to walk through the gate and onto the road near a large barn. Turn right and follow the road over Sandeman Bridge until, at the end of the tarmac, you find the main forest gate.
- 4 The stone surfaced forest track takes you through the sitka spruce forestry plantation, but an ancient stone circle and standing stones can be seen in an open glade. Keep following the track, crossing straight over a number of cross-roads until you reach the edge of the forest.
- 5 Looking across the moorland, you can see the enclosures and ruins of Teign Head Farm. On the high ground to the left is Sittaford Tor. Walk through the gate and follow the path towards the tor. Pass between a pair of granite gate posts and keep right, heading towards the tor. Cross the water course with care, either wading the shallows or jumping over a narrow section. As you ascend, Grey Wethers stone circles can be seen on the left.
- 6 Reaching the top of Sittaford Tor, there are many good places to enjoy the all-round views or take shelter as the weather allows. Looking to the west, patches of blanket bog are visible, possibly highlighted by cotton grass blowing in the wind if you are there in the summer. The next section of the route continues to the right of a derelict stone wall. You can also see the remains of Statt's house on the hill in the distance; your destination. As you descend into the small valley, pick your way carefully through the boggy areas, placing your feet on clumps of vegetation where possible.
- 7 Crossing the water course here is potentially hazardous after periods of rain. The ground is usually water-logged but in wet periods the water can be quite deep. If necessary, walk a distance upstream to find a suitable crossing point.
- 8 Reaching the ruin of Statt's House you will find another good place for a rest, to take shelter and to enjoy the expansive view. You are now surrounded by blanket bog and, in such a remote area of Dartmoor, you can begin to appreciate the lives of the peat cutters who built the stone building many years ago. Explore the area of high ground known as Winney's Down, there are many fascinating bog features around this area. Look out for a small plaque on a short granite post at the top of the peat pass, or you may want to go and find another derelict stone building 300m to the northwest.
- 9 From Statt's House, head south to meet the East Dart River. The ground by the river can be very wet so it may be easier to move away from the river to slightly higher ground. Look out for a mire in the valley and some nearby derelict tin workings. Continue following the river downstream until you find the waterfall. Look for the leat, a largely dry channel, and follow it along the contour, gradually leaving the river.
- 10 Stay close to the leat channel, except where you need to cross Winney's Down Brook. The views of the east side of Dartmoor are well worth stopping to appreciate. After a rest, follow the leat again until you see a stone wall where you turn left and follow the wall back to the top of Sittaford Tor.
- 11 From Sittaford Tor, you have the option of re-tracing your earlier steps or visiting Grey Wethers stone circles on the way back. If you choose the second route, leave the southeast side of Sittaford Tor and, keeping the stone wall on your left, head towards Fernworthy Forest.
- 12 The stone circles will appear in front of you. After visiting the stones, head back to the forest where you will find a gate. Walk into the forest, follow the track as it curves left, then right on the stone surface. When you meet the cross roads, turn right, re-trace your steps and enjoy the last glimpse of the open moor which, along with tired, wet feet, will remind you of your walk.

Map Key

Route: 
 Grid References: 