

Ramblers Gems



A Spring Vale Rambling Class Publication

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Why Evergreens?

Our deciduous trees, the oak, ash, beech and birch have now all lost their leaves and the tree skyline forms a filigree like silhouette against the pale winter sky. Exceptions are the evergreens, the pine, spruce, holly, rhododendron laurel etc. Why does this happen? Well it is mainly to do with the water content or lack of it. Deciduous trees originate in warmer climates but in very cold dry weather with less daylight, they just cannot retain water in their leaves which is needed to convert the sun's energy into chemical energy allowing the plant to grow. As this process slows down, their leaves first lose their chlorophyll, producing the autumn colours and eventually they all drop off. Evergreens originate in the cold northern climate and have developed ways of storing water during the very harsh winters. Pine needles are really leaves rolled up tight allowing them to preserve water within their cells. Other species have a waxy coating to preserve their water. This enables the evergreen to still convert the weaker sun's energy by photosynthesis, retain their chlorophyll and thus stay green.

Eleanor



A Short Ramble



In early 2020 we paid our fee
And delighted with the syllabus were we.
We looked forward to the walks on offer
And the opportunities they would proffer.

We enjoyed dressing up in period gear
To help commemorate the 125th year.
Joined by the Mayor and all seemed good
As we headed off out of Sunnyhurst wood.

A few days later and Lockdown began
Life as we knew it became, 'You no longer can'.
The Ramblers Gems keeps us all entertained
And we patiently wait to be much less constrained!

Julie C



Chatsworth for All Seasons!

I know that SVRC have done walks from Chatsworth House, but I do not know how often, in what years, the routes taken or how many walkers took part.

The **Spring Walk** I have done takes the path past Queen Mary's Bower to cross the river and on to the delightful estate village of Edensor. Passing the church, you cross the parkland designed by Capability Brown (where I have seen deer) and you get great views back to the house and the Hunting Tower before you climb up to New Piece Wood. You proceed to Carlton Pastures, and Carlton House passing through the little hamlet of Carlton Lees.

Recrossing the river, you continue through the pretty village of Beeley. Particularly attractive is Beeley Brook as it tumbles over small waterfalls opposite the neatly kept cottage gardens on Brookside (just off the walking route). There is field walking to Beeley Hilltop Farm and then on to the open access land crossing Beeley Moor, famous for the grouse shooting and goblins! Various legends have sprung up including one that refers to 'Hob' as a kindly goblin who made his home in Hob House Barrow and gave assistance to the local community.

In Stand Wood the walk passes the Swiss Lake and Emperor Lake, the aqueduct that feeds water to both the Cascade and the Emperor fountain, the Dell, Sowter Stone and then you descend via the Hunting Tower to the house to enjoy the grounds & much more...

There is so much to see on this walk, and I would not pass on an opportunity to revisit the walk. Not a lot of flat walking and, as we found out, there is not a lot of shelter as you cross the open access land on a ridiculously hot day in May!



Christmas at Chatsworth is an incredibly special time. Each year the house is decorated to a different theme. They host a Festive Market and for me this is the best time to visit. There is no festive market this year, but I will not be saving any money as you can still shop via the trader list on the website. I guess a virtual Christmas market is better than no Christmas market!

The decorative themes have covered Around the Globe with explorers Phileas Fogg and Amelia Earhart (2019 my least favourite), Once Upon a Time fairy tale theme (2018 comes in at 3rd), 'Oh Dickens! It's Christmas' (2017- 2nd favourite), The Nutcracker (2016), The Wind in the Willows (2015 was my absolute favourite), Alice's Wonderland at Chatsworth (2014), Narnia 'The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe' (2013), Pantomime (2012), Deck the Halls (2011), A Russian Christmas (2010) and previously Victorian decorations.

2001 was the first Christmas at Chatsworth open to the public. The event was a simple affair organised as a measure to increase visitor numbers following the devastating outbreak of foot and mouth disease which had effectively closed the countryside off to tourists and walkers. It was themed as 'A Traditional Christmas'. The theme has become grander with each passing festive season, involving many dozens of Christmas trees, yards of great garlands, copious amounts of fairy lights and very elaborate large-scale theatrical props.



My coach trip was cancelled before the latest Lockdown but Chatsworth will be opening their doors from 3rd December. Christmas scenes will flow through the house with music for all ages. There will be a warm and inviting Christmas Eve scene in the State bedchamber, a decadent festive table in the Great Dining room so maybe I will have to go by car and enter into the 'Spirit of Christmas at Chatsworth'.



Barbara S

Trails Quiz Answers

The National Trails are long distance walking routes through some of the best landscapes in England and Wales. The answers are underlined.

Note from Editor. I apologise for the numbering of the questions that went astray in the last edition.

5. **How many official national trails are there currently in England and Wales?**
A) 13 B) 15 C) 17 D) 19
6. **Which symbol is used to waymark the official national trails in England and Wales?**
A) Oak leaf B) Diamond
C) Acorn D) Cairn
7. **What are Scotland's equivalent of the national trails in England and Wales called?**
A) The Great Trails B) The Great Walks
C) The National Walks D) The National Routes
8. **The route of which national trail follows Britain's oldest road?**
A) The Peddars Way B) The Ridgeway
C) The Cleveland Way D) The Cotswold Way
9. **If you had seen Helmsley Castle, the White Horse of Kilburn and Whitby Abbey, which trail would you have walked?**
A) Cleveland Way B) Yorkshire Wolds Way
C) Pennine Way D) Thames Path
10. **If you started with a pint in the Nags Head and finished with a drink at the Border Inn, you would have stumbled along which route?**
A) Offa's Dyke Path B) Hadrian's Wall Path
C) Pennine Way D) Glyndwr's Way
11. **Which of the national trails is the only one to follow a UNESCO World Heritage Site?**
A) Offa's Dyke Path B) Hadrian's Wall Path
C) The Ridgeway D) Glyndwr's Way
12. **Which of the National and Great Trails lets you walk coast-to-coast across a country?**
A) Hadrian's Wall Path B) Great Glen Way
C) Offa's Dyke Path D) All of them

1. **Which of the National Trails, was the first to be opened, on April 24th 1965?**

A) Hadrian's Wall Path B) Offa's Dyke Path
C) The Ridgeway D) The Pennine Way

2. **Which of the national trails is the longest waymarked footpath?**

A) Thames Path B) Pennine Way
C) South West Coast Path D) Pembrokeshire Coast Path

3. **Legend has it that King Arthur was born along the length of which national trail?**

A) Cotswold Way B) Thames Path
C) Yorkshire Wolds Way D) South West Coast Path

4. **What is set to be special about National Trails' English Coast Path project?**

A) It'll be longer than America's Pacific Crest Trail
B) It'll be the longest coastal trail in the world
C) 2021 is the Year of the Coast to mark it opening
D) All of them

Barbara S

The England Coast Path is the latest long distant National Trail and opening in sections. This new path will join Wales in having a long distance trail along it's entire coastline, a distance of around 4,500 km. The path is made possible due to new laws that allow open access to the English coastline, including what's known as 'spreading room' which will allow for future changes in the coastline.

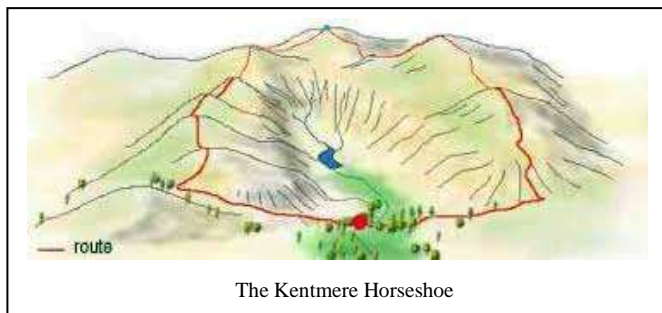
The path aims to stay as close to the coast as possible. In many places that means you will be walking right alongside the coast. In some places the path heads inland, usually only for short distances. The open sections of the path are well signed, look out for the distinctive acorn waymarkers. Away from towns and villages you will usually find the path has a natural, unmade surface, some areas will get muddy in wet weather. Closer to where people live you might find smooth surfaced paths, and in towns and villages you may be walking on promenades or pavements alongside roads. The work to open the England Coast Path is ongoing, with all the sections being added to the footpath network when available.

A Cautionary Tale

To understand the locations described in this story it will help if you have access to O.S. Map Outdoor Leisure 7 English Lakes North sheet to follow this narrative.

Some years ago, before mobile phones and GPS devices, three 'experienced' walkers Dave, Nick (not Nick Burton!) and myself decided to do a 'classic' walk from Kentmere in Cumbria. This is known as the Kentmere Horseshoe circling Kentmere Reservoir clockwise via Yoke, Ill Bell, Froswick, High Street, Mardale Ill Bell and Hallow Banks, back to Kentmere. A hilly route of about 12 miles. It was January, but the forecast was for moderate winds, some cloud & rain showers.

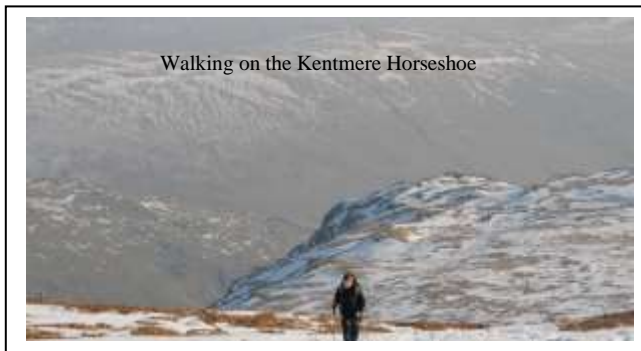
Arriving in one car at about 11 a.m., we parked in the village near to the phone box (remember the red ones?). Fully kitted up for a winter walk, we set off north then west over Crabtree Brow, then north on a good obvious footpath, steadily climbing towards Yoke, Ill Bell and Froswick. Excellent views opened up to the east over the reservoir to Kentmere Pike & Harter Fell.



However, at this point the weather began to close in, with increasing cloud and a strengthening wind which veered from west to north-west. It then began to snow in the wind, horizontally from left to right. We quickly took a compass bearing from a wildly flapping map, as we needed to follow High Street north-easterly, then east to Mardale Ill Bell. Visibility came down to a few yards as the snow increased in amount and severity. **WE SHOULD HAVE TURNED BACK.** But we 'knew where we were' having all been in the area before (in excellent weather).



Anyway, the disorienting effect of the horizontal fast moving snow led us to follow a path more north-west, of course we thought we were still going north-east. We then made a second mistake; we began to **DISBELIEVE THE COMPASS!** Sounds crazy now, but we did. Someone said there might be iron bearing rocks nearby. After another half hour of driving snow, the cloud/mist parted, and we saw a small tarn far to our right. We thought it was too small to be Kentmere Reservoir, so it probably was Blea Water much further to the east.



No walls about, so we huddled together for some food and a hot drink in the open fellside. This must have rewired our brains, as we then made a good decision to descend from Stony Cove Pike, south-west towards the A592, Kirkstone Pass and the Kirkstone Inn at its summit. The snow eased off a little, but it was 3p.m. and starting to go dark. After the Kirkstone Inn (closed) we followed the A592 in the dark towards Troutbeck, some 4 or 5 miles.



Up and up it went for about 2 miles, until we came to the Garburn Pass, which we had been on some 7 hours earlier.

Back in Kentmere village, it was 7p.m. so I used the phone box, to call home with a collection of 20p pieces. Then, we set off home, calling at Lancaster for Dave, and Preston for Nick.

There is a lot to be learned from this escapade, but perhaps the most important advice is - **NEVER** be afraid to turn back in bad conditions, either of weather or terrain. A planned walk is not obligatory, only an option.

Alan R

A Gift for Christmas

Are you stuck for a Christmas present for a fellow walker that you either love/live with or simply like, or do you need to drop a hint about a small gift for yourself then just leave this page on a coffee table. Here are a few suggestions.

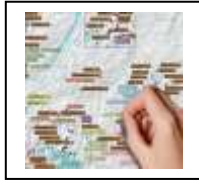
A custom-made OS Map centred on a location of your choosing. This could be based on your home around a postcode or a favourite walking area.



A copy of the OS Puzzle Tour of Britain Book. This modest book contains over 300 puzzles based on maps drawn from across Britain. It would help someone to understand maps and build confidence in reading the map, while solving a tricky puzzle.



Scratch Off Wainwrights. If someone you know is bagging the Lakeland peaks as classified by Alfred Wainwright, this could make an ideal gift. This is a large wall map which provides a complete set of the peaks with name bars to scratch off. There is also one for the Munros.



A LED Head Torch. These handy tools provide an extremely bright powerful beam that will last for hours. They are small and light and easily fits into any rucksack without the bulk.



A Powerbank Charger. This little device is a reliable way of providing emergency power to a phone, GPS or camera when it decides to give up the ghost. They must be fully charged when you leave home but can be a life saver.



Waterproof Phone and map case. These are a vital tool to keep that precious phone and map safe from the perils of a wet winters day walk. The phone case will still allow touch screens of a smartphone to operate.



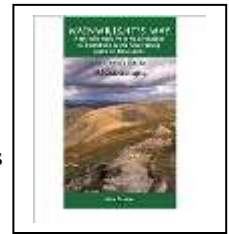
A small Walkers Medical Kit. In these days of added responsibility, it is important to always carry a first aid kit to stop bleeding from cuts and scrapes and protect those blisters.



A Walk Stool. This is a lightweight three-legged telescopic stool that extends into a sturdy seat. It does fold down into the size a compact camera tripod. It will save sitting on wet grass. A one up from the sit-map.



A copy of Nick Burtons Book 'Wainwright Way' This small book is a journey on foot through Alfred Wainwrights life from Lancashire to the Lakes. It contains sections of his early life when he lived in a terraced house in Blackburn. A good read from a local writer.



Rite in the Rain. These are waterproof notebooks that allow you to write in any weather. This is ideal for when writing notes on the move. You will also need that waterproof pen or pencil.



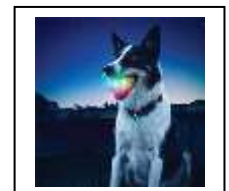
Small 10 x25 Binoculars. Lightweight high definition binoculars are always useful for identifying that bird at a distance. Is it a bird, is it a plane or is it just superman? These handy units will let you know the answer.



A monthly subscription to Country Walking or the Great Outdoors Magazine. This will provide pages of walking routes, advice and material reviews. And they don't have to remember to buy it.



And finally, for the dog how about an LED ball to be able you to play fetch at dusk or an LED disk for their collar to keep them trackable during that night time walk?



Michael C