

Bell Sykes Hay Meadow Walk

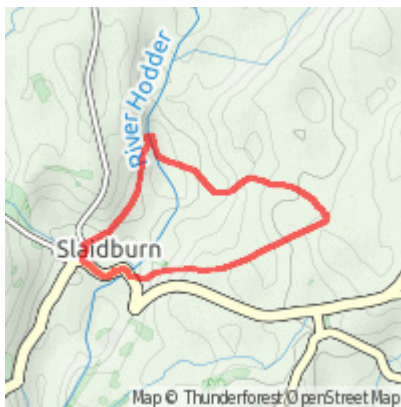
Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty



Route Summary

Roads, tracks and fields. Can get very muddy in parts. Take care on unpaved road sections. Expect livestock and keep dogs under effective control. "Walking safely" information available at www.forestofbowland.com Walkers are advised to carry OS Explorer map OL41.

Route Overview



Category: Walking

Length: 3.650 km / 2.28 mi

Last Modified: 6th February 2018

Difficulty: Medium

Rating: Unrated

Surface: Undefined

Date Published: 6th February 2018

Description

This walk guides you through flower-rich meadows at Bell Sykes Farm. These meadows are designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) because of the wide variety of meadow species that they contain. This set of meadows is one of the most important in Lancashire due to the large number of fields all in one place. The best time to walk is from late May and June through to when the meadows are cut in late summer. You will be able to see a wide variety of species flowering, starting with meadow buttercup and yellow rattle, followed by hawkbits, meadow cranesbill, meadowsweet, great burnet, meadow vetchling and knapweed. On a sunny day you will also see a huge number of insects, butterflies and feeding swallows.

The meadows at Bell Sykes are the Coronation Meadows for Lancashire, chosen for their species diversity and public access. Green hay harvested from these meadows has been used to restore over 50 hectares of meadow both here and in other parts of Bowland.

Waypoints

1 1.

(53.96643; -2.43792)

Starting from the car park, turn right onto the road and continue ahead to the cenotaph in the centre of the village. Turn right here and keep ahead and over the bridge.

2 2.

(53.96772; -2.44045)

Turn immediately right through a metal kissing gate. Keeping to the trees on your right keep ahead until you reach the end of the tree line and then begin to bear slightly left and continue ahead.

3 3.

(53.96992; -2.43627)

Keep to the left-hand boundary edge until you reach a lane. Take a right continuing over a cattle grid and ahead again over a bridge.

4 4.

(53.97320; -2.43471)

After the bridge, immediately turn back on yourself around a low wall to the right and through a wooden gate to follow the river. Keep on the track ahead until you reach Bell Sykes Farm. On the way you will pass through two meadows, the first contains large drifts of meadow cranesbill, the second has meadowsweet in the damper areas as well as patches of melancholy thistle.

5 5.

(53.97033; -2.42886)

Go through the metal gates into the farmyard. After passing the back of the farmhouse take a left through a wooden gate and up a tree lined rough track and through another wooden gate at the top. See if you can spot the grind stone used to sharpen scythes for cutting grass.

6 6.

(53.97110; -2.42619)

Keep ahead and then bear right up the steep hill.

7 7.

(53.97053; -2.42239)

Keeping to the left of the beck, keep ahead to the wooden gate (can get very wet and muddy here).

8 8.

(53.96999; -2.42094)

Continue ahead along a well trodden path to reach a wooden stile to the right of a derelict barn and take a right when you join the lane.

9 9.

(53.96915; -2.41961)

When you see a waymarker post on your right, a short way along the lane, take a right, slightly back on yourself towards a ladder stile over the wall. Head diagonally right to a further ladder stile in the wall.

10 10.

(53.96773; -2.42403)

Head towards the right field corner in the next field and through the gate.

11 11.

(53.96698; -2.42637)

Keeping to the left field edge continue ahead to reach a stone stile. This meadow has been restored using species rich hay from other meadows on the farm. See if you can spot the meadow flowers coming through the grasses. In the next field head slightly diagonally left to a wooden kissing gate. This is one of the meadows used in the restoration project.

12 12.

(53.96646; -2.43294)

Continue downhill to Poor'sland business units, turning right once you reach the road then over the bridge to return to Slaidburn village.

