

Nature walk in Flaxley Woods

(2 hours walk)

So, you came here to get away from it all? This is it. This is a really peaceful walk, through the trees, you may not even see a soul! Just the sound of the birds and the wind in the treetops and good for bird watching with some nice views across towards Longhope especially when there are no leaves on the trees. There are deer and boar in the woods, and with luck you may have a sighting. There are some fallen trees along the way, and you will need to be able to step over them.

Information for dog owners: There are no stiles, but you may need to step over some fallen tree trunks. No livestock, but there will be wild animals in the woods, and you may meet horse riders.

From the car park cross over the Common with Shapridge Farm on your left. Walk ahead until you see a rough track leading downhill past a cottage. Turn left at the bottom and look for a small concrete bridge across the stream. Go over this bridge and continue uphill until you reach a Forestry Commission track. Turn left and follow this track uphill. You will get to a junction in the tracks and there is a footpath on the right. *There is also a marker post for the Greenway. *Go straight on downhill through the trees. At the bottom of the hill, you'll meet another track. Turn right and follow this track above the fields. This is where you may have to climb over some fallen trees. After some time, the track rounds a right-hand bend and heads into the wood's uphill.

This track leads you onto a larger more significant track. Turn right uphill, and at the top turn left heading back the way you came earlier. Look out for the footpath you came on earlier and head back home. Or, in case you cannot find this path, go right to the bottom of the hill turn right through the Forestry Commission barrier and then immediately right up past the kennels. After the kennels take the first left uphill past Woodside Cottage back to the cottages.

Birds

- Black cap – beautiful loud warbling song in spring!
- Lesser spotted woodpecker – a tiny woodpecker that is much rarer than the greater and the green ones. I have seen one here once, but it is hard to spot and is a passerine so you will be lucky to see it! Fingers crossed.
- Tree Creeper – which makes its nest behind the bark of a tree – quite precarious!
- Wren – with its strident song! They are shy, but there are lots of them nesting down by the stream at the lower end of Flaxley Woods.
- Haw Finch – birders come from all over to see these finches. There are flocks feeding in winter at Parkend, but we have seen individuals both at the local church and even in our garden in summer! Maybe they are nesting nearby?
- Buzzards – if you see a large bird of prey, it is probably a common buzzard. You could also see a goshawk in the woods, or a red kite, or the smaller hobby (falcon) in the open areas.