



Hummingbird House

hummingbirdhouselet.com

Etherow Country Park (7½ miles: moderate)

Through Marple Bridge and Mill Brow to the Etherow valley, returning via Brabyns Park.

Allow 4 hours. Several moderate climbs and significant road walking.

- 1** From the front door, turn right, then left into Marsland Road. Walk past the end of Marlborough Close on the right.
- 2** Beyond house number 2, turn left onto a tarmac path between the gardens, which leads to Kingsbridge Close. Follow the road out to Dale Road.
- 3** Turn left, then right into Bowden Lane and cross the railway line.
- 4** Pass Rose Hill Primary School then turn left into Seven Stiles Drive, then immediately right onto a tarmac path that runs behind the houses.
- 5** Keep right at the end of Whiteoak Close onto the continuing path, and keep right again at the end of Aspenwood Close; the path runs below the cricket club. Carry straight on at a junction of paths until you skirt an electricity substation and meet Ashwood Crescent.
- 6** Cross straight over onto the path opposite, between hedges. This path leads alongside allotments then emerges onto a road.
- 7** Cross and follow Grosvenor Road to a mini-roundabout at the junction with Winnington Road.
- 8** Cross straight over down a driveway. Beyond the last house continue along the track beyond the bollards. Pass a pond on the right and cross a road then cross the canal at lock 7.
- 9** Cross the towpath through the gap in the wall and bear right then down a flight of stone steps.
- 10** Turn left down a track, then swing right to cross the railway bridge.
- 11** Immediately beyond the railway, turn right onto an unmarked path. Follow it round to the left (ignoring a narrow path on the right). The path heads downhill to emerge at a car park.
- 12** Walk down the right-hand side of the car park, then turn right past Brabyns Park Play Area. Pass to the left of a pond then take the upper path on your right, past a pet's graveyard and out to the road.
- 13** Cross at the traffic island and turn left, past the Midland pub to Marple Bridge.
- 14** Cross the river and turn right in front of the Norfolk Arms. Walk along the road past various shops and the Royal Scot pub.
- 15** By Marple Bridge Surgery, turn left into Hollins Lane.
- 16** Walk uphill past the United Reformed Church and then past the entrance to St's RC Church.
- 17** Pass the entrances to Fernwood (right), Hollins Mount and Constable Drive (left), Oaklands Avenue (right), and High Wood Fold (left).
- 18** After the last house on the right, turn right through a gate into a driveway.
- 19** After 100m or so, just before a paddock, turn left onto a waymarked footpath into the trees. This narrow path joins a small stream and winds its way down into the valley.

- 20 At the bottom, you meet a driveway by a bridge. Turn left, and walk up the hill, passing a waterfall below a house on the right.
- 21 When you reach the road by the Hare and Hounds pub, turn right. Cross the end of Holly Vale then on a bend take the next left, Gird Lane (between a house on the right and a former chapel, now a dwelling, on the left, and signposted "Except for access").
- 22 Follow the road uphill as it curves to the right and, beyond the last house entrance, follow the rocky trackway ahead. After a section of bare bedrock, the path levels off and continues between dry-stone walls to a road.
- 23 Cross straight over into Ernocroft Lane, and follow it for half a mile.
- 24 Walk past Ernocroft Farm as the lane starts to descend, then turn left into a farm track with a footpath waymark. Pass above the head of a wooded valley and to the right of a house, then in front of the farmhouse on the right.
- 25 Beyond a gate, join a farm track below a bank, passing a walled spring. The path curves right and leads down to a stile onto the main A626 road.
- 26 Cross carefully and turn right along the pavement.
- 27 After 200m, turn left into Etherow Country Park.
- 28 Follow a broad path down the left-hand side of the wood, ignoring minor paths off to the right.
- 29 This path heads downhill through the trees. On meeting an obvious path at a crossroads, turn right, again ignoring lesser paths to both sides.
- 30 At a fingerpost indicating the Tramway Trail off to the left, go straight on.
- 31 On meeting a track at the edge of the wood, turn left and walk down to the River Etherow.
- 32 Turn left in front of a circular stepped weir, then turn right to cross the river.
- 33 Turn immediately left down steps and follow the path downstream. Cross a bridge over a spillway and follow the path between the Etherow on the left and a millstream on the right, ignoring a couple of bridges over the latter.
- 34 At a triangular pond with a pond-dipping platform, take the right-hand path.
- 35 Walk along the lakeside; to the right the millstream widens to form a second lake as you approach the far end.
- 36 Turn right towards the visitor centre then turn left across the car park to a path leading down to the road.
- 37 Turn left along the pavement. Cross the entrance to Compstall Mills and continue over Compstall Bridge.
- 38 After a hundred metres or so, cross the road and take a track off to the right signposted to Brabyns Park and marked "Private Road Residents Only".
- 39 Follow the track below gardens and then above riverside fields. The track bends left past a house entrance and crosses the historic Iron Bridge past the bridge cottage into Brabyns Park.
- 40 Follow the surfaced path ahead, taking either track over a hollow. Carry on after the two paths rejoin.
- 41 Cross the open parkland towards a wooded bank.
- 42 As you reach the trees, keep to the wider, lower path below the wood, which leads to a metal barrier to a road.
- 43 Turn right then immediately left onto a path that curves left, widens and climbs gradually through the trees.
- 44 On meeting another track, turn half-right past some bollards. This track leads up to the railway bridge you crossed earlier. From this point on you are retracing your earlier steps. Cross the

railway and continue along the track then turn right up steps in the retaining wall below the canal to return to Lock 7.

- 45 Cross into Grosvenor Road and follow it to the end.
- 46 Cross Manor Road and take the footpath between the metal barriers opposite.
- 47 Follow the path alongside allotments.
- 48 Cross the next road (Ashwood Crescent) and continue on the path opposite, shortly passing an electricity substation. Ignoring a path on the right, continue past Marple Cricket Club on your left.
- 49 Bear right to the end of a cul-de-sac (Aspenwood Close), where you turn left along a tarmac path.
- 50 This leads in turn to Whiteoak Close, where you turn right and left, through metal barriers onto another tarmac path between the houses and gardens.
- 51 When this emerges on Seven Stiles Drive, turn left.
- 52 Cross Bowden Lane at the T-junction and turn right, passing Rose Hill Primary School on the left, and cross the railway.
- 53 Turn left along Dale Road, then right into Kingsbridge Close.
- 54 Bear left then, when the road bends right, take the path ahead, which leads to Marsland Road.
- 55 Turn right, then right again, to return to Hummingbird House.

