

Walk the Mull of Galloway West

Distance: 4km/2 miles

Time: One and a half hours

Grid Ref: NX155304

Park your vehicle at the Mull of Galloway car park on the outskirts of this Nature Reserve. Follow the fence on your left and go through the 'kissing' gate close by.

The fencing has been erected by the farmer to protect livestock, and is electrified. However, this does restrict the walker very little and other such gates are in place at strategic points, ensuring a choice of walk.

You will see a small number of worn tracks to the west of the fence and, for the most part you will walk along one of them. However, it is worth venturing away from it to see more of the coastline. These cliffs are dangerous and extreme care must be taken.

The views along this stretch are beautiful and spectacular and there is much evidence of its forming. The rock, greywacke, is either grey or red in colour, dates from 400-500 million years ago, when it was deposited horizontally in beds a few feet thick, deep on the ocean bed. There followed a period of deformation which produced major

folds and faults, altering the beds to almost vertical layering. This is clearly seen in the cliffs of the Mull of Galloway.

During spring and early summer the cliffs are alive with the sounds and sights of breeding sea birds, and coloured with a mass of wild flowers. In autumn migrating birds are seen over the water, whilst in winter the Mull is spectacular with its crashing waves and searing winds. Winter can also be the time for frosty mornings, clear blue skies and a clean atmosphere which allow for excellent views from this coastline to Ireland and the Mull of Kintyre.

You can divert from this coastline to climb 'Kennedy's Cairn', through another gate, and get a higher viewpoint. Return to the coastline or continue westwards to the road and back to the nature reserve. If the former, you will be treated to further delights - rock formations, rock pools, and the sight of West Tarbet. When you catch sight of this bay in its rugged surrounding you have to walk inland, following the fence, through another gate, and you can continue walking towards West Tarbet, returning to the car park along the road.

Alternatively you can cross from the

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gate to the road, making your way across open ground.

This walk takes approximately one and a half hours, and can be extended by crossing the road, walking down to East Tarbet and following the track southwards, alongside Luce Bay. This track can be wet and muddy and there is a scramble to be made upwards to reach open ground before reaching

the road, and then the car park, from the east of the Mull.

Please note that all walk times are approximate and appropriate footwear should be worn. Always advise someone of your intended route and provide an estimate of when you will return. Care should be taken around the coastal routes and we would ask you to adhere to the countryside code at all times.

Please be especially aware of gates and mindful of farm property and livestock.

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