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TRACKING WILDLIFE ON THE MOOR

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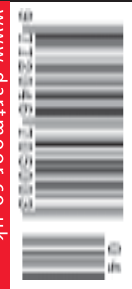
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DARTMOOR

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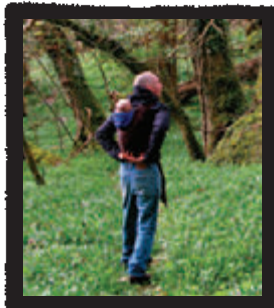
Active Dartmoor recognises the hazardous nature of Dartmoor and the inherent risks of outdoor activities.

However the magazine and its publishers cannot accept responsibility for the consequences of participating in the activities depicted in this magazine. It is the responsibility of the participant to ensure they are correctly skilled, experienced and equipped to undertake any outdoor adventurous activities.

There is no substitute for instruction by a trained and qualified provider of outdoor activities - Active Dartmoor recommends that participants should seek the professional services from the providers listed in this magazine.

Cover photograph by Dave Henderson,
Carrie Hill on Sb Wall Hound Tor

A Landscape of Legends



It's always a special moment when I find a new area to explore on Dartmoor - especially with friends, on my horse, or more recently with my baby daughter. One such event occurred a couple of days ago when a climbing friend told me about a place he described as 'The Woods'.

I thought it would be worth a look, but I didn't appreciate what was in store for me. Managed by the Woodland Trust this lost world is truly beautiful - oak woodland in spring, bluebells emerging from an emerald green carpet, tracks leading from an empty car park and granite boulders that begged to be climbed, poking through a mantle of moss and ivy. With baby's cooing we put up a tawny owl and shortly afterwards spooked a roe doe. I rarely experience the feelings I had in 'The Woods', despite 30 years of travelling the globe to climbing destinations - and here it was 20 minutes from my front door.

There is much to appreciate as well as the landscape here on Dartmoor: The culture of Dartmoor farming and the hard graft that goes into managing even the wilder spots, providing a countryside with excellent access opportunities as well as landscape beauty. The wildlife (that never fails to enthrall as it changes from season to season). The local businesses that provide first class accommodation, local food and drink - to visit Blacks Deli in Chagford before a walk out on the moor is truly divine, and this is typical of all Dartmoor's towns and villages.

Here at *Active Dartmoor* we know that the moor is an outstanding destination for people to explore. The adventures on Dartmoor rank with the very best, providing memorable experiences at whatever level you participate.

Our local contributors in this issue realise this and despite their worldly wonderings return time and time again to a home they truly appreciate and want to tell you about. In this issue Bovey based Dave Henderson explores the bouldering potential with a "tour du bloc" for this fast growing sub-sport of climbing. Travel writer Mark Stratton returns home to Chagford after a trip to the Galapagos and describes his favorite walk on The River Teign and Moretonhampstead writer Julia Wherrell finds out what makes 'The Dartmoor Classic' one of the UK's best cycle sportives.

Active Dartmoor magazine appreciates the generous support of the funders and contributors. We hope you enjoy and appreciate our efforts in this first issue and I look forward to sharing more action with you in the future.

John



The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas

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NEWS

News from around the Park

1951-2011
60th anniversary of
 Dartmoor National Park

In 1949 the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act was passed and the first UK National Parks were designated in 1951. Dartmoor was designated in October that year, the fourth area of land in the UK to receive National Park Status. This year Dartmoor National Park celebrates its 60th year.

So, in this special year, why not find out more about this wonderful place? Your starting point is the National Park Authority's new web site. Explore these pages and you're sure to be inspired. 2011 sees the launch of *Enjoy Dartmoor*, the new look free publication designed to help you make the most out of your time in the National Park during its 60th year. Pick up a copy from a National Park Information Centre - or see it online. There really is something for everyone to enjoy.
www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk

EXPLORE DARTMOOR

What better way to explore new areas of Dartmoor National Park than in the company of an experienced and enthusiastic Guide? As long as you are appropriately 'suited and booted', you won't even have to worry about map reading - just come along and enjoy the experience.

Dartmoor National Park Authority's Guided Walks and activities programme has been put together to offer the walker the best opportunities to experience Dartmoor's natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage. Walks are themed to help you make your choice.

GOOD FOR YOU – walks and strolls, some with specialist tuition

CHALLENGE YOURSELF – longer walks for fit and confident walkers

MOOR FUN – activities to appeal to the young and young at heart

INSPIRATIONAL DARTMOOR – see how Dartmoor influenced great writers, poets and artists

CLOSE TO NATURE – watch and learn about Dartmoor's wildlife

ON THE HOOF – find out more about the importance of Dartmoor's ponies

PAST TIMES – looking back at Dartmoor's people and heritage

FIND YOUR WAY – understand how to use a map, compass and GPS with confidence

JOIN A RANGER – activities and events in the company of a National Park Ranger

ON THE FARM – visit a working farm

EASY GOING TOURS – guided mini-bus tours for those with mobility problems

To find out more pick up a copy of *Explore Dartmoor*, the National Park Authority's events and activities programme, from a National Park Information Centre, or visit www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk and click on Visiting/Explore Dartmoor.

Uplands Policy Review

The Uplands Policy Review, which was launched in March by the Secretary of State for the Environment, Caroline Spelman, sets out a wide range of commitments by Government to enable the English uplands to become more economically, socially and environmentally sustainable.

The measures outlined in the Review include £6m to help hill farmers undertake environmental management schemes, and a Rural Community Broadband Fund of up to £20m which aims to give an economic boost to upland areas currently experiencing poor internet provision. DEFRA is also considering a change to National Parks to place a bigger emphasis on sustainable development.

Ruth Chambers, Deputy Chief Executive at the Campaign for National Parks, said: 'We warmly welcome the government's continued commitment to the role of the National Parks, including their work to maintain vibrant, living and working communities and on tackling climate change.'

Original Mountain Marathon

The Original Mountain Marathon (OMM) took place on Dartmoor over the weekend of 30 and 31 October 2010 contributing £140,00 into the local economy.

The race is undertaken in teams of two and is a navigational event on foot, taking place over two days. The organisers, who liaised with Dartmoor National Park Authority and Natural England to ensure that any negative impact on sensitive areas was avoided, also liaised with those who would be directly affected by the event and sought permissions from relevant farmers and landowners, commoners associations and the Commoners' Council. The organisers also worked with

the police, Dartmoor Rescue Group and the military to ensure that the event went smoothly.

Okehampton Camp was used as the Event Centre for the weekend, with land at Peekhill Farm and Willsworthy Range designated as overnight camps for the Saturday.

Good route planning minimised the impact, with a number of different courses which spread the competitors out over a wide area and away from areas susceptible to damage.

Around 3,000 competitors took part from across the UK and from countries including Denmark, Sweden, Netherlands, and France.

The average spend per competitor was £47.00.



VIXEN TOR UPDATE

The public inquiry into access at Vixen Tor sat for three days in Princetown during November 2010 and was due to resume again before Christmas 2010 but was cancelled due to the bad weather. At the inquiry in November, DCC outlined their case for making the Order and those in support of the Order gave their evidence. Some of the objector's evidence was heard before the close of the inquiry on the final day.

The inquiry is now due to resume in July, when the remaining objections will be heard. The Inspector will then make his decision based on the evidence heard as to whether public rights exist, or not.

UK HILLWALKING LAUNCHED

UKClimbing Limited has launched UKHillwalking.com. This follows on from the company's popular climbing and mountaineering web site UKClimbing.com

UK Climbing states:

"Our aim is to bring our readers both the best of hillwalking, climbing and mountaineering from around the World and the best experience that Web technology can provide.

There is an emerging Dartmoor Tor tick-list with reader stats, map extracts, tor details, daily weather forecasts and uploaded photos from readers. To visit the site go to www.ukhillwalking.com



Forestry Commission advisory Panel

Members of an independent panel of experts that will make recommendations on forestry policy for England have been announced today by Environment Secretary Caroline Spelman.

The panel, to be chaired by the Right Reverend James Jones, Bishop of Liverpool, brings together a wide range of interests and expertise covering the environmental, social and economic aspects of forestry. They will advise Government on a new approach to forestry policy in England, including looking at how woodland cover can be increased and at options for enhancing public benefits from all woodland and forests. The panel will make its recommendations to the Secretary of State in the Autumn.

EASY-GOING DARTMOOR Encouraging access for all

Are you keen to explore Dartmoor but feel unsure because you have limited mobility or have a child in a pushchair? Don't let these factors deter you! Dartmoor National Park Authority has teamed up with Dartmoor For All to develop the *Easy-Going Dartmoor* guide to encourage access for all.



Easy-Going Dartmoor provides useful details on over ten suggested walks and street access in Dartmoor villages and towns. Each of the self-guided walks is accompanied by a map which illustrates what you can expect in terms of gradient, surface and obstacles. This information allows you to make an informed decision on which site is best for you.

The walks range from easy-going strolls to more adventurous walks. For users of tramper vehicles (electric all-terrain buggies), there is a wonderful route along the Tyrwhitt Trail, the dismantled railway out of Princetown, where you can enjoy a more challenging route whilst listening to an informative audio route description.

Easy Going Dartmoor and the Tyrwhitt Trail audio route can be downloaded free of charge from the Dartmoor National Park Authority website at www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk (click on Visiting/Enjoying Dartmoor/Access for All). For further information please contact the Access & Recreation Team on 01626 832093 or email recreation@dartmoor-npa.gov.uk

Dartmoor For All is a group that has been formed to address issues involving access for people with mobility problems in the Dartmoor area.

PROTECT NEW LIFE

The breeding season for moorland birds on Dartmoor coincides with the lambing season and, with the official arrival of spring, the moorland will be full of new life.

Many visitors and local people exercise their dogs when enjoying Dartmoor. Although a dog may not be actively chasing livestock, its presence can still cause disturbance. During the lambing season pregnant ewes are particularly vulnerable. A frightened animal may abort or abandon its young – a tragedy for the animal and a financial loss to the farmer.

The law requires that dogs be kept under close control at all times. During the moorland lambing season (1 March to 31 July), and lambing season on enclosed farmland (1 December to 30 June),

During these times please try and:

- keep to tracks and paths as much as possible,
- keep your dog on a lead
- resist picking up any new born lambs - the mother may reject a lamb that has been handled
- avoiding young birds on the ground or distressed parent birds, by walking around the area and moving away quickly, allowing the parents to return;

• Inform other walkers about what you have seen.

The Dartmoor Commoners' Council and the Dartmoor Livestock Protection Society have worked in partnership to raise awareness of the importance of keeping dogs under close control when visiting access land. A new leaflet has been produced entitled '**Please keep your dog under control**'

If you witness any disturbance of livestock or interference with please call Livestock Protection Officer Jane Cole on 07873 587561.



CENTRAL GROOVE BOLTED!

A large loose block identified at the belay on the classic rock climb 'Central Groove' at the Dewerstone on the southern edge of Dartmoor, has been stabilised by a large stainless steel bolt.

There were serious concerns about the risk of the block falling onto the busy gearing up area at the base of the crag. The National Trust as landowners sought advice from a geotechnical consultant who found that removing the block may cause further instabilities so pinning was the recommended course of action.

The British Mountaineering Councils latest South West Area meeting (on 30th January in Bristol) voted in favour of pinning the block, which was subsequently fed back to the National Trust. Despite a well established Dewerstone tradition of no drilled equipment, it was felt in this case pinning the block was an acceptable solution to an unusual problem. The bolt clearly states it is not to be used by climbers. ■

HILLS AND TORS

- 1 Belstone Tor
- 2 Combestone Tor
- 3 Cox Tor
- 4 Easdon Tor
- 5 Haytor Rocks
- 6 Hound Tor
- 7 Kestor Rock
- 8 Leather Tor
- 9 Saddle Tor
- 10 Sheeps Tor
- 11 Yes Tor

- 12 Avon Dam Reservoir
- 13 Burrator Reservoir
- 14 Fernworthy Reservoir
- 15 Meldon Reservoir

- 16 High Moorland Visitor Centre
- 17 Plant World
- 18 Dartmoor Prison Visitor Centre
- 19 Dartmoor Railway
- 20 Museum of Dartmoor Life
- 21 Miniature Pony Centre
- 22 Becky Falls
- 23 Canonteign Falls
- 24 Go Ape!
- 25 Dartmoor Pony Heritage Centre
- 26 Devon Guild of Craftsmen
- 27 River Dart Adventures
- 28 Buckfast Abbey
- 29 Dartmoor Zoo

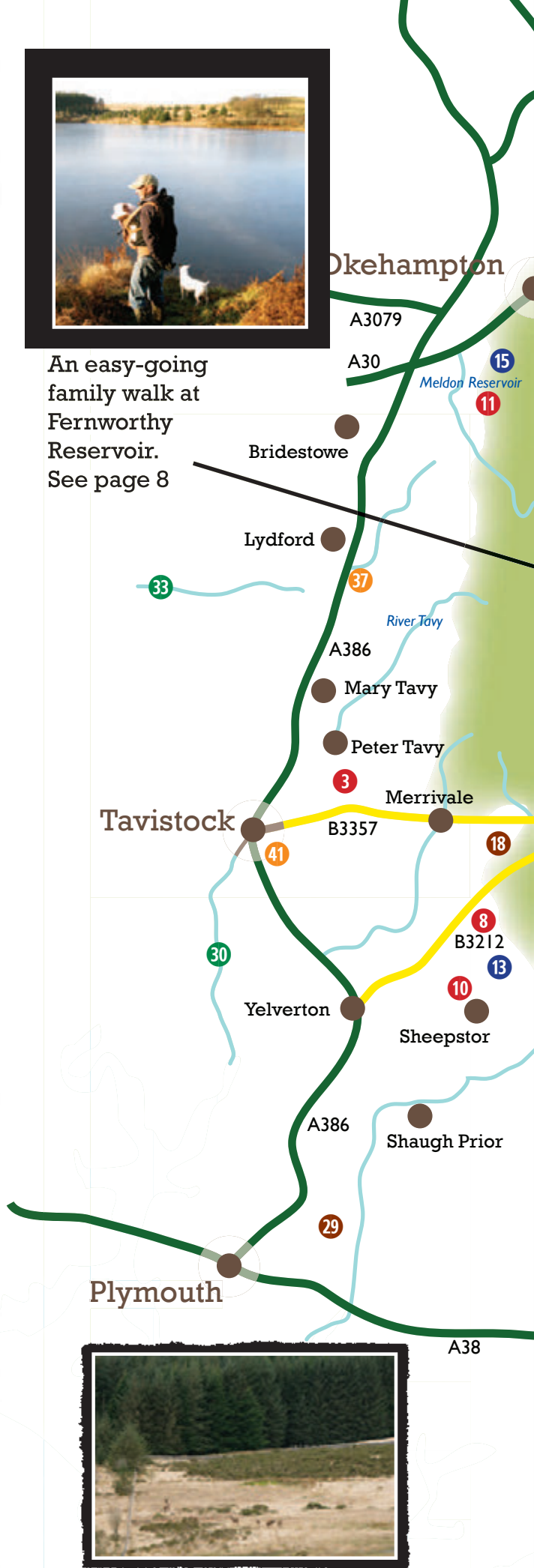
- 30 Buckland Abbey
- 31 Castle Drogo
- 32 Finch Foundry
- 33 Lydford Gorge

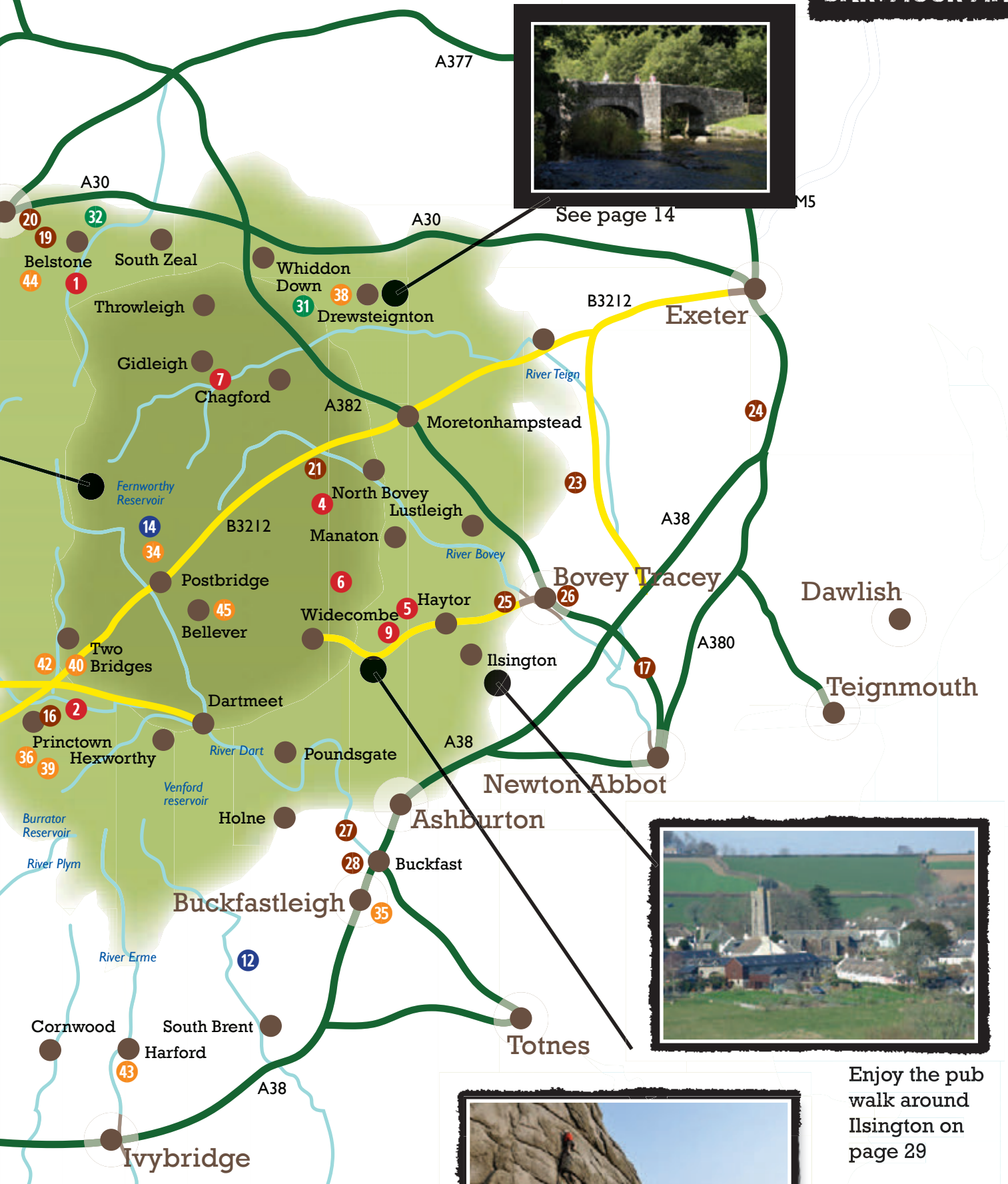
- 34 Runnage Farm
- 35 South Dartmoor Bunkhouse
- 36 Plume of Feathers Bunkhouse
- 37 Fox and Hounds Camping
Barn Hostel, Lydford
- 38 Drewe Arms hostel
- 39 Fox Tor Café, Princetown
- 40 Sparrowhawk backpackers
- 41 Tavistock bunkhouse
- 42 Spirit of Adventure, Powder
Mills nr postbridge
- 43 Harford Bunkhouse
and Camping

44 Okehampton YHA
45 Believer



An easy-going family walk at Fernworthy Reservoir. See page 8

Tracking deer on Dartmoor –
page 20



See page 14



Enjoy the pub walk around Ilstington on page 29



See our feature on climbing on page 16

POTTER'S WALK

Gazing across Fernworthy Reservoir to Thornworthy Tor with the sun low in the sky and a gaggle of Canada Geese coasting nearby, I can't think of a better place on Dartmoor than Potters Walk for a gentle stroll or for exploring with young children

Built in 1993, this *BT Countryside for All* award winning short circular walk was named after Sydney Potter who lived and worked at Fernworthy for over 50 years. The land around bears the marks of many earlier settlers as well.

Start out from the main reservoir car park and picnic site – a gentle grassy slope with a scattering of picnic benches. This makes a great base for any family members not inclined to walk. The route heads out along a well-surfaced path

beside the water to the historic Fernworthy Dam. On the right before the dam are hut circles that have been dated back to 2000 BC. If water levels are low, more hut circles and ancient boundary walls appear out of the mud on the reservoir edge along with the old road and its bridge that lead the way to the cold comfort of Teign Head Farm out on the high North Moor.

The impressive structure of Fernworthy Dam was constructed between 1936 and 1942 and looking at it today you would never guess that it

was made of concrete and only faced with granite quarried from the site. There are tales from the builders that the wooden launders that carried the South Teign over the construction site would thump and shake in the autumn months as salmon and sea trout fought their way upstream to old spawning sites.

Although there is no public access across the dam and the longer reservoir walk drops down into the valley to cross a small bridge below, Canada Geese can often be seen braced against the water flowing over

the spill way. Fernworthy is also popular with a range of other birds including mallard, grebe, coot, cormorant and heron.

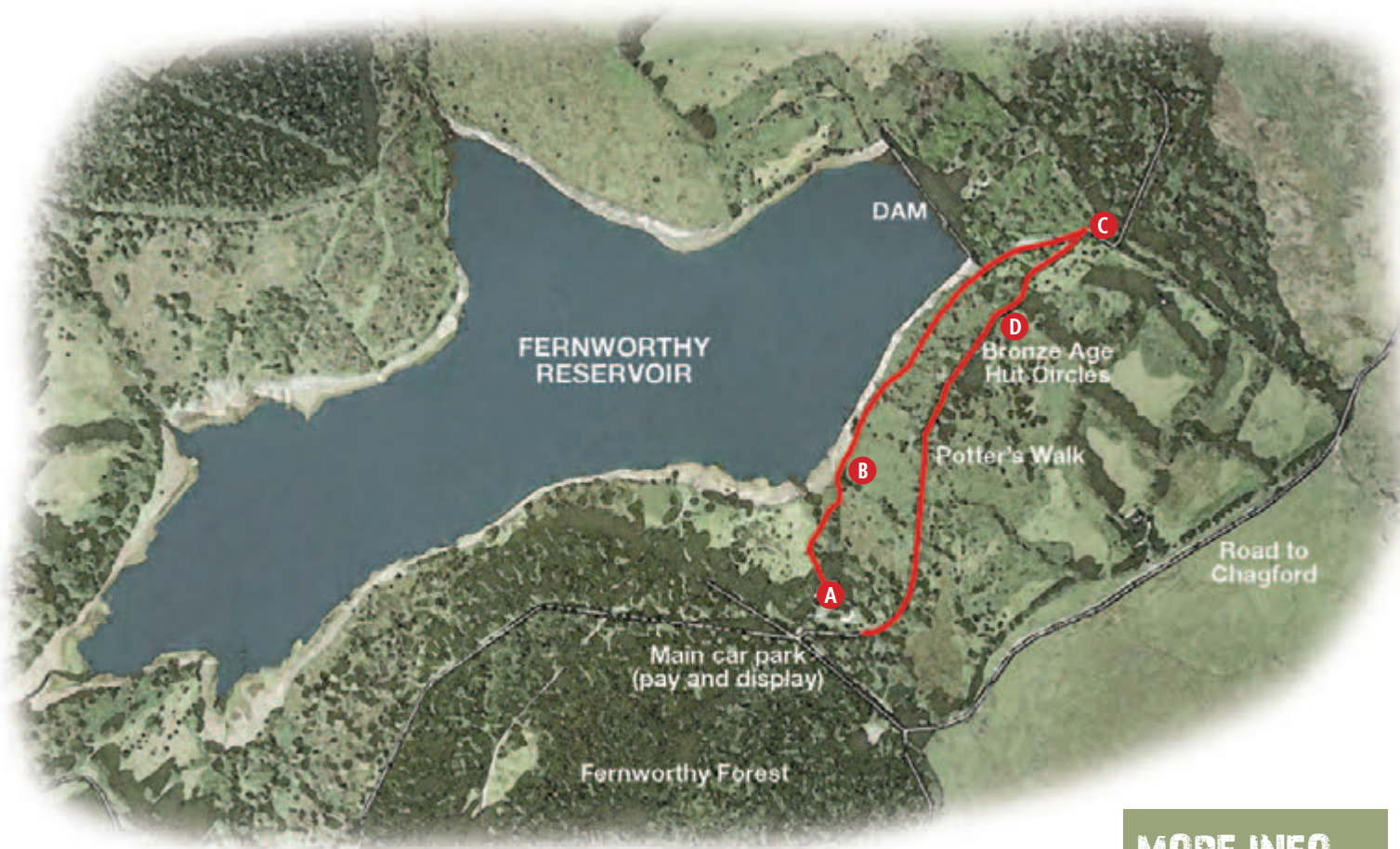
From the Dam the route follows the tarmac access road for a short distance before turning right along a grassy ride. A few hundred metres along here, a high fence on the left protects the sheer drop into one of the disused quarries that provided granite for the Dam. Whatever the weather the still, deep water below appears an eerie green colour.

Heading back to the car park



there are several places to stop and enjoy the views. Look out towards Thornworthy Newtake and the open moorland towards the Longstone and Shoveldown over the skyline, or up the reservoir to the surrounding plantation of ska, Western Hemlock and threatened Larch of Fernworthy Forest. Planted in 1931 the unique combination of relatively mild south westerly weather and high rainfall have made Fernworthy one of the most productive forests in the UK, growing an extra 5000 tones every year. Many tons of timber are felled and lorried out through

Chagford during the winter months and the Forest is now a mosaic of mixed aged stands interspersed with access tracks. These offer many opportunities for longer walks where Red and Roe deer are a common sight in the early mornings and late evenings. During warm summer evenings the scrub and younger conifers around Potters Walk provide an ideal habitat for the visiting nightjar. Stand quietly and listen for its enigmatic churring and watch carefully for the ghostly white wing clap as it flies against the back drop of blue-black trees. ■



- A** Park in the main car park (pay and display) and leave through the picnic site.
- B** Stop a while and look out over the reservoir to Thornworthy Tor. Then follow the path alongside the reservoir to the dam. Look out for great crested grebe and swallows dive-bombing hatching insects.
- C** Walk past the dam, rhododendron and berberis before turning sharp right.
- D** Pass the old quarry from where stone was taken to construct the dam. Then pass the bronze age hut circles which date back 4000 years. Imagine what it would have been like to live up here in these granite circles.

FOOT FILE

LENGTH: 0.75 miles
SURFACE: Rolled growan (local granite sand), grass and tarmac
ACCESS: Mostly relatively flat. No steps, gates or stiles. Well spaced resting places.
FACILITIES: Free parking with disabled parking bays, public toilets (including disabled), picnic area with accessible picnic benches. Bird hides and brown trout fishing close by.

MORE INFO

For more information on this and other reservoir sites contact
 South West Lakes Trust:
 01566 771930;
www.swlakestrust.org.uk

For more detailed access information on this route and other similar routes see *Easy-Going Dartmoor* on the Dartmoor National Park Authority website: www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk



Dave Henderson has been climbing on the moor and further afield since 1993 and has witnessed the increasing popularity of bouldering in the region. Rumour has it he wears marigolds in the bath to stop his hands going soft!

BOULDERING

When out for a Sunday or evening walk around the high tors of Dartmoor, you may be startled to see packs of scruffy, hoody wearing youths shuffling around carrying what appears to be futon style mattresses on their backs. They are often seen huddling beneath the granite rocks staring and picking at their finger tips. More likely they will be standing with their arms outstretched in what appears to be a strange worshipping ritual beneath one of their kind climbing and reaching for the top of a boulder. It is as though the Cirque du Soleil has laid out its stage on the moor.

Those that fail to climb a small boulder, will fall to the floor landing on their dusty mattress and into the steadying, strong arms of their worshippers. They will sometimes curse, fervently inspect the rock and then begin scrubbing the nubbins of granite with a soft toothbrush. Re-holstering the brush on a small bag strapped around their waist, they rub their shoes on a towel, dip their hands in the bag and pull them out in a cloud of white dust before getting back on the rock and climbing to the top. How strange; what on earth are they up to?

Rock climbing today is not the

pastime it used to be. These days it has evolved into a series of independent sub-sports, the simplest being bouldering – the art of messing around without a rope on boulders and small rocks. Typically, a boulderer will be looking for rocks of a height that would be safe(ish) to fall from – but it is not the height that appeals, more the difficulty in getting up there. At the cutting edge, Bouldering is about power and gymnastic ability where core strength is the key to success and the durability of finger tips is a limiting factor. Here on Dartmoor, we are lucky enough to have acres of the very best quality granite – perfect for bouldering and set in the stunning moorland scenery. There is a fantastic variety of venues and ‘boulder problems’ – the term for a route up a boulder – ranging from high, overhanging and difficult problems to easy angled slabs of rock better suited to the beginner.

Bouldering can offer many attractions: it’s a good form of exercise, a reason to explore the tors of Dartmoor but most of all it is challenging, fun and rewarding. Whether you want to take it very seriously and to a high standard or just fancy popping out now and then for a bit of a climb and a chinwag with others escaping from an evening’s TV, it really doesn’t matter. At Bonehill Rocks, Lapwings can be seen wheeling and diving over the nearby marsh as the sun sets over Hameldown and the beckoning Rugglestone pub.



Dave Henderson



God's own Rock

The rough granite found on the tors is an igneous rock that is linked at depth to the same granite which is found on Lundy, Bodmin, Lands End and the Scilly Isles. Its rough character of large feldspar crystals and excellent friction is very similar to the rock in the high mountains of the Mont Blanc range in the French and Italian Alps. It can be a little unforgiving on soft hands but locals soon become accustomed and hardened to it. The secret is not to do so much that you wear your skin out, and also to climb with a smooth, precise style to avoid the sharpest of granite crystals.

Dave Henderson



History

On Dartmoor, bouldering has become increasingly popular over the last 15 years and now attracts visitors from around the country and from all corners of Europe. Prior to this, many local climbers bouldered on the moor but more as a form of practice for bigger climbs than as an end in itself. These days a growing number of climbers only ever go bouldering and do not fetter themselves with ropes and equipment usually required to scale bigger cliffs.

Boulder Problems and their Names

Problems, like all climbs follow lines of weakness in the rock or link enigmatic features to provide a logical line to the top. Those climbers with imagination and a keen sense of observation find the very best problems that others will seek out and attempt to follow. Climbing the classics and sinking your hands into the solid holds of past problems is akin to shaking hands with the early pioneers.

Many boulder problems have names, normally given by whoever climbed them first. Sometimes this may describe the feature being climbed, such as The Wave at Bonehill Rocks. Others may appear to have random or amusing names but these will often follow a theme. Saddle Tor, for instance, had a problem named Bjorn Again (an Abba tribute band) climbed by a chap called Bjorn Aikman in 1987; more recent problems here have followed the theme in a tongue-in-cheek way with names such as Dancing Queen and Super Trouper.



Dave Henderson



Bouldering know-how

Find a rock (preferably above a flat landing area) and climb about on it. It really is as simple as that! Beginners should progress slowly choosing shorter problems that traverse sideways rather than go up. First timers would benefit from a mentor with experience and knowledge. All climbers serve an apprenticeship and bouldering is no exception - the aim of the game is to go with someone who knows what they're doing.



AREAS

Nearly every tor has some form of bouldering, here's a selection of the most popular:

BONEHILL ROCKS
Only a very short walk from the car park and with a huge amount of bouldering. Although a lot of the problems are a little tricky for the beginner, there are a handful of problems well suited to children on boulders flanking the hill.

HOUND TOR
A 5 minute walk from the car park leads to the obvious jumble of rocks, home to a variety of bouldering at all levels of difficulty. There's also the added attraction of the Hound of the Basketmeals burger van - cheeseburgers from here are the staple diet of many a local boulderer!

SADDLE TOR
This venue boasts some really difficult, impressive bouldering on the buttock-like formation of the main tor. Some of the hardest boulder problems on Dartmoor can be found here - the right hand side of the right buttock is taken by a problem called Dancing Queen, a rite of passage for an aspiring hard boulderer. There are also, however, a handful of easier problems located around the north west side of the tor.

SMALLACOMBE ROCKS
Found midway between Haytor and Hound Tor, this large hillside is covered in boulders. There is plenty of climbing to be had here and the venue is quiet and remote.

COMBESHEAD TOR
Located 2 miles to the east of Burrator Reservoir this area, one of the best in the South West, has a large amount of bouldering in a beautiful setting. Many of the problems are high so it is perhaps not the best place for a novice.

COMBESTONE TOR
Found high above the Upper Dart Valley, a short distance from Venford Reservoir, this tor is a stone's throw from the car park and home to a selection of fun bouldering.



Bouldering is challenging, fun and rewarding.

Spotting
The strange worshipping ritual mentioned in the introduction is in fact 'spotting' - the idea being that the spotter tries to control a falling climber so they land safely, ideally feet first onto a mat. Spotting is about trust - its a solid, braced stance with arms up ready and a keen eye watching the climber. Spotting is not a time for texting or chatting! In itself it can be dangerous if done incorrectly - practice and experience is key - as well as not spotting really clumsy people!



Jane Hirst

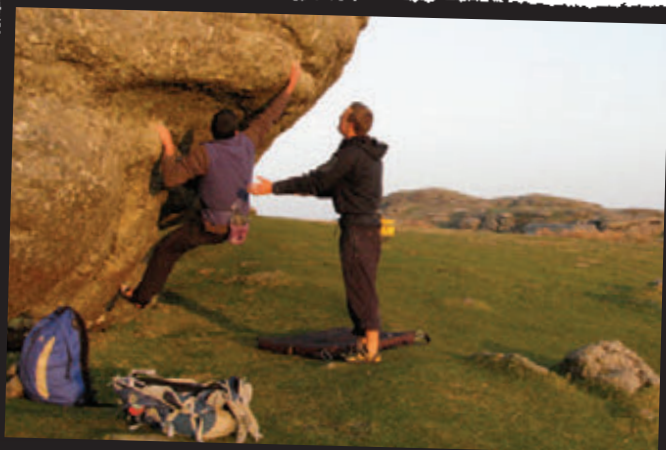


Traversing
This sideways form of bouldering can be useful if you don't like going too high or just want to make a different challenge. The nature of the rock on Dartmoor often lends itself to traversing along horizontal cracks.

Bouldering With Children
Bouldering is an ideal way to introduce children to rock climbing and is great for getting some exercise in the fresh air and making a day on the moor more fun. Children climb very naturally left to their own devices and can rapidly gain confidence in moving around on the rock. Spotting encourages trust, friendship and empathy as well as team work amongst children.



Jane Hirst



TOOLS OF THE TRADE

BOULDERING MATS

These portable crash pads, made from foam, are designed to make falling off a little more comfortable. Although they certainly don't remove risk, they can be effective at heights up to about 3 metres.

There's a large range of different manufacturers and models to choose from. What you're looking for is a good firm foam - generally speaking the harder, the better. This may sound counter intuitive but the problem with softer foam is that it doesn't slow you down enough before it's run out of 'squidge'.

Those looking for value for money should consider looking at www.alpkit.com. Other brands you will come across include Black Diamond, DMM, Moon, Pod and Metolius - these all make a range of good quality mats.

SHOES

Although you can start bouldering in normal shoes, you will soon benefit from a pair of climbing shoes. These make things much easier; the smooth, grippy rubber soles allowing you to stand on the small holds or even gain purchase from just 'smearing' onto apparently flat surfaces. A good-fitting pair should be snug but not uncomfortable and as sizes vary between manufacturers it is pretty much essential that you try them on first. Trailventure in Ashburton and Kountry Kit in Tavistock are good local retail outlets.



TOWEL AND MAT

Wet and dirty shoes make bouldering a lot more difficult - and not very pleasant for those following you. Most boulderers will carry an old towel and bit of carpet/door mat (a rubber-backed one is ideal) to clean and dry their shoes before each boulder problem.

CHALK

This is the white powder carried in a small 'chalk bag' tied around the waist. It is used to increase grip, or friction, by drying the hands. When bouldering, it is often sufficient to rub your hands in chalk (just enough to make them go white but not cake them) at the start of a boulder problem and leave the chalkbag on the ground - this avoids the potential for chalk spillage if you fall off. Any excess chalk should be brushed off the rock using an old toothbrush. As chalk has a drying effect on the skin, it is wise to wash your hands after you've finished bouldering and apply a small amount of hand cream.

SPOTTER

See opposite page for details - so always make sure you've got one of these when you go out bouldering! ■

MORE INFO

GUIDES

Many bouldering areas around the country have dedicated guidebooks to boulder problems. On Dartmoor, most areas are covered by free online guides found at the www.javu.co.uk

GRADES

Boulder problems are graded for difficulty using a few different systems so in guidebooks you may come across numbers like V7 or 7a. Basically, the higher the number the harder it will be.

ENVIRONMENT AND ACCESS

To reduce the impact on the Dartmoor landscape when bouldering, follow the Countryside Code and, in addition, try to minimise erosion caused whilst climbing. This is best done by using a bouldering mat at the bottom of the problem.

Use an OS map in conjunction with your guide to ensure you have a right of access. Fortunately most locations on the moor - apart from one or two notable exceptions - are on open access land. Information about climbing and access can be found on the BMC website and the National Park has a code of conduct for climbers. If you take your dog make sure its remains under close control and on a lead during the lambing and bird nesting seasons.

PROFESSIONAL INSTRUCTION

www.dartrock.co.uk

Dartmoor guides www.dartmoorguides.co.uk

Vertical Frontiers www.verticalfrontiers.com

Ibex outdoors www.ibexoutdoors.co.uk

FURTHER INFORMATION

www.javu.co.uk

www.ukclimbing.com

www.thebcm.co.uk

www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk

There are oodles of bouldering clips on youtube too



Dave Henderson



Mark is a globetrotting freelance travel journalist and photographer writing for many national newspapers and magazines. He lives on Dartmoor with his partner and two slightly naughty horses.

TEIGN & TURRETS

The Teign is Dartmoor's most iconic river. From a bleak moorland spring, it meanders some 50km to the South Devon coast at Teignmouth. This four-hour walk in its upper valley takes in wondrous views and the glorious vision of a certain Mr. Drewe



Photo: NTPL/John Millar

lies shortly before Dogmarsh Bridge near Sandy Park where you'll find a fine inn and accommodation.

Beyond the A382 crossing we enter the National Trust's 240ha Castle Drogo estate and continue ahead keeping the Teign to our right. The estate's *raison d'être*, the castle, looms high on your horizon to the left. But before reaching it our walk along riverside pasture enters a billowing forest of oak, hazel and birch, which is as beautiful as any British woodland. There are inspiring views along this wooded gorge yet first its time for a spot of hard work. Before the Teign's newish suspension-footbridge, a multiple signpost leads us uphill first signed 'Hunter's Path', then 'Castle Drogo'. This climb is breathless both in energy and anticipation.

I defy even the craggiest cynic not to be moved by such imperious views once the 'Hunter's Path' levels out. The spring and early summer canopy is vibrantly lime-green; it tumbles nearly 100m down the

precipitous v-sided gorge into the Teign. Walking eastwards, the juxtaposition of conifers and deciduous trees resemble a patchwork quilt.

I often walk this stretch around late April to find holly blue butterflies and rare pearl-bordered fritillaries with wing patterns resembling stained-glass windows. Conservation work completed by the National Trust along here has created a mosaic of bracken and heather to foster this rare insect. Dartmoor is a refuge for many of our most endangered butterflies including the High Brown and Heath Fritillaries. And don't be surprised to see other natives, Dartmoor ponies, pop out of the woodland along this path.

Decision time? At the next signpost junction go straight ahead towards Fingle Bridge. But for the sake of an hour's diversion it would be a pity to miss out on the anachronistic Castle Drogo itself: a ten-minute stroll uphill to your left.

In the early 1900s self-made millionaire Julius Drewe decided

With pubs, restaurants, and accommodation, the 14th-century tin-mining stannary town of Chagford is the perfect launchpad to commence our walk. Heading northeastwards out of Chagford past the Primary School, hikers first encounter the Teign when crossing Rushford Bridge before joining it beyond Rushford Mill Farm along the Two Moors Way Regional Trail. I've lost count how many times on this alder and willow vegetated stretch of river that I've seen the turquoise flash of kingfishers

or grey herons stalking the crystalline flow. More recently I surprised another paid-up member of this feathery anglers club – a little egret.

Another surprise soon waits with an enchanting sculpture called Granite Song positioned on a little river island. Resembling a cleft boulder, local sculptor Peter Randall-Page is one of many internationally renowned artists who draw inspiration from Dartmoor. His work can be seen along the Thames in London and at The Eden Project. This sculpture



Photo: NTPL/John Millar

the nearby and partly eponymous Drewsteignton village represented his ancestral home. Not only did he purchase the woodland you've been strolling through but also employed the most famous architect of his generation, Sir Edwin Lutyens, to construct the last castle ever finished in England.

Julius Drewe died shortly after its completion in 1931 but he must have been rightly delighted with this Grade I listed castle that was gifted to the National Trust in 1974. Besides an on-site café and toilets, walkers can pay to enter the stylish castle with its forbidding portcullis and octagonal towers or can mosey around the manicured Arts and Crafts-inspired gardens that feature a circular croquet lawn enclosed by a mighty yew hedge.

Excursion over, head back down to the 'Hunter's Path' signpost to continue eastwards (turn left then keep right) through oak plantation towards Fingle Bridge. On this descent, I always pause upon Sharp Tor's rocky promontory to soak in blistering views and listen to clucking ravens while sightings of buzzards wheeling above are commonplace.

Fingle Bridge is reached by turning right when the 'Hunter's Path' eventually intersects a small road. There's been an inn at Fingle Bridge since the late 19th-century while the arched packhorse bridge is at least mid-1600s and probably well beyond. Either side of the valley lays two ancient Iron Age hillforts: Cranbrook and Prestonbury stretching back millennia.



Both are calf-straining yomps uphill but let's save these for another day and enjoy a quick half of cider while watching native brown trout and salmon milling in the Teign's heather tannin-coloured flow.

It's now around 5km back to Chagford. Immediately before the bridge is a gate accessing hikers onto the right-bank (although a flatter if less scenic path alternative runs parallel on the left-bank). The 'Fisherman's Path' is one of Dartmoor's loveliest footpaths: tracing the Teign through dappled oak and hazel woodland. On sunny days the river sparkles ethereally and you'll almost certainly encounter dippers hopping between the mossy rocks while nuthatches fuss around oaks. Halfway along is an old pumping station on the opposite bank.

Drogo estate once generated hydroelectric power from the Teign and if he were alive today, old Master Drewe would be delighted with the National Trust's recent installation of woodchip burning technology to power his castle. Some of the woodland you've passed through will provide this sustainably harvested fuel source.

Eventually you'll recognize the suspension-footbridge reached earlier and you must retrace your footsteps back to Chagford. But just before it is a salmon leap where every November Atlantic salmon pursue epic journeys upriver to spawn in the moorland Teign. This really is a walk for all seasons. ■

FOOT FILE

LENGTH: 12km (7.5 miles)
TIME: 3-4 hrs
START/FINISH: Chagford Square
SUITABLE FOR: Moderately fit
MAP: OS Explorer OL28
PUBLIC TRANSPORT: Service 173 from Exeter Bus Station
PARKING: Chagford car park near Jubilee Hall (GR702874)

Photo: NTPL/Robert Morris

5 OF THE BEST

CASTLE DROGO

England's newest castle finished in 1930 is an eclectic mix of architectural styles.

PEARL-BORDERED FRITILLARIES

This rare butterfly's favoured habitat is woodland glades and its larvae require decaying bracken to thrive.

HUNTER'S PATH VIEW

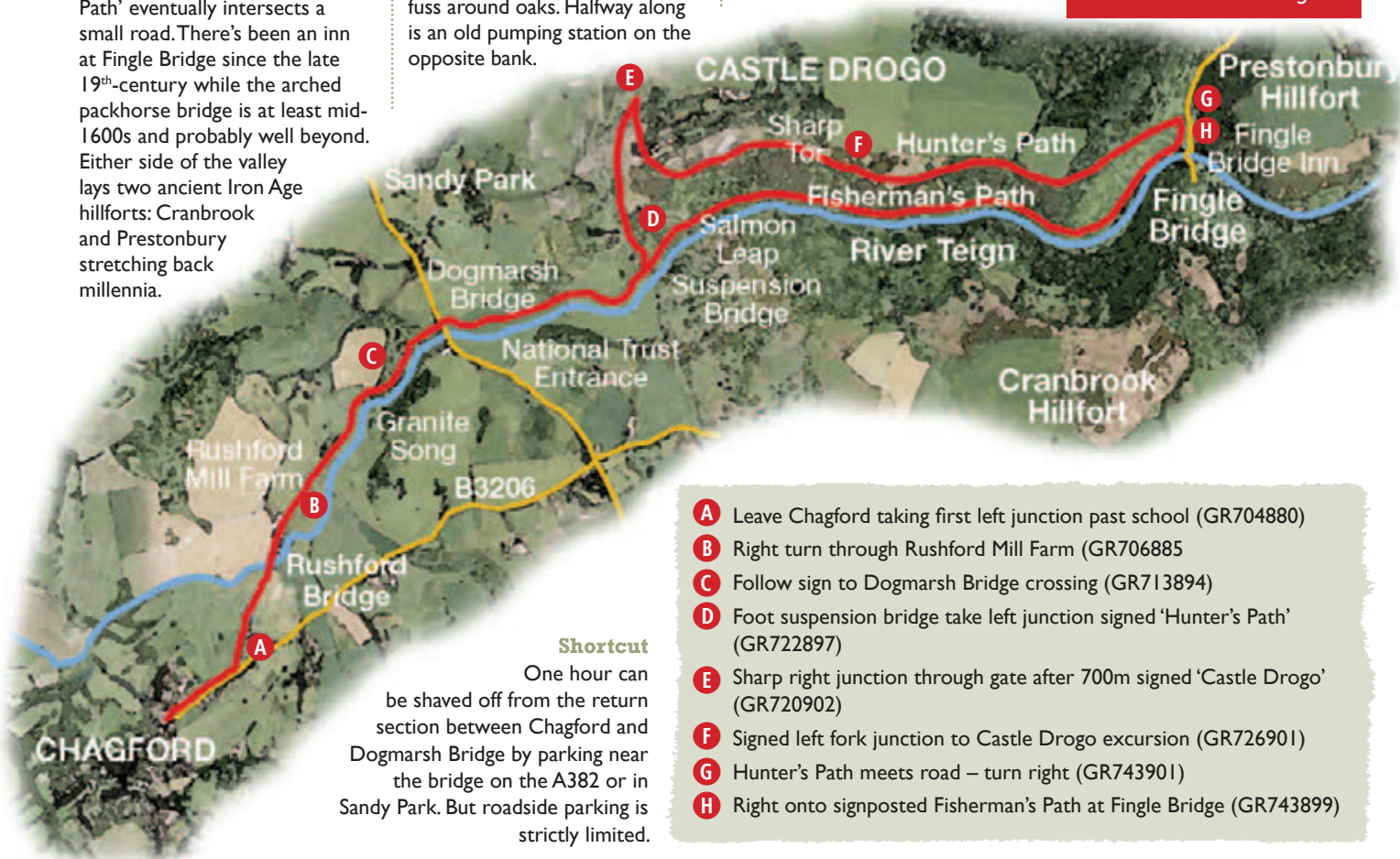
One of the best viewpoints in all Dartmoor.

KINGFISHERS

This resident fisher has upward of 8,000 pairs in the UK. Listen out for its shrill piping birdsong.

FINGLE BRIDGE

Centuries of wagons have trundled over this bridge.



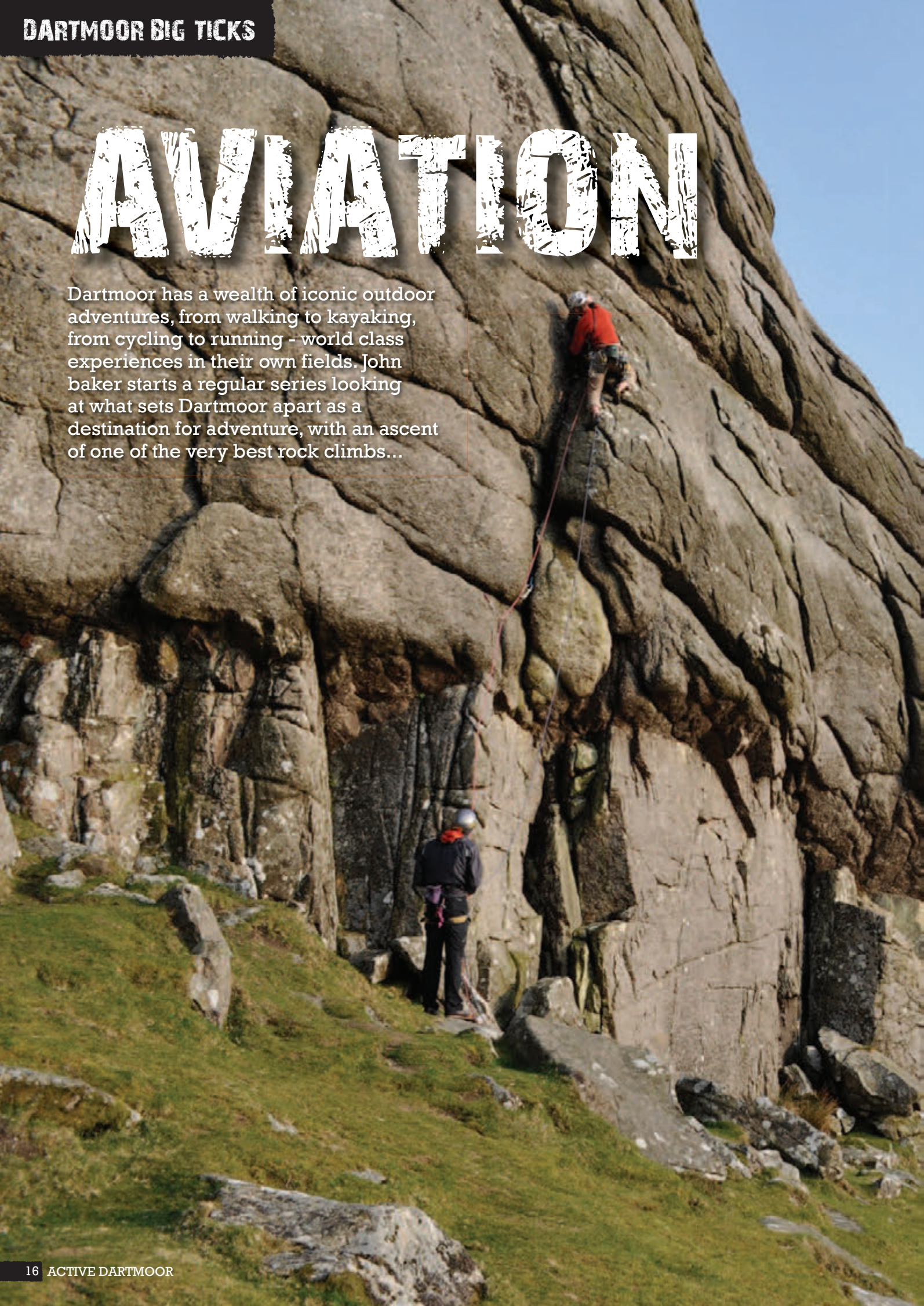
Shortcut

One hour can be shaved off from the return section between Chagford and Dogmarsh Bridge by parking near the bridge on the A382 or in Sandy Park. But roadside parking is strictly limited.

- A** Leave Chagford taking first left junction past school (GR704880)
- B** Right turn through Rushford Mill Farm (GR706885)
- C** Follow sign to Dogmarsh Bridge crossing (GR713894)
- D** Foot suspension bridge take left junction signed 'Hunter's Path' (GR722897)
- E** Sharp right junction through gate after 700m signed 'Castle Drogo' (GR720902)
- F** Signed left fork junction to Castle Drogo excursion (GR726901)
- G** Hunter's Path meets road – turn right (GR743901)
- H** Right onto signposted Fisherman's Path at Fingle Bridge (GR743899)

AVIATION

Dartmoor has a wealth of iconic outdoor adventures, from walking to kayaking, from cycling to running - world class experiences in their own fields. John baker starts a regular series looking at what sets Dartmoor apart as a destination for adventure, with an ascent of one of the very best rock climbs...



A breakthrough in its time." The written description rings in my head as Ben and I walk up to Low Man on Hay Tor - I am finally going to climb "Aviation" one of the great British rock climbs - here on my home turf of Dartmoor.

First climbed in 1961 by Dave Bassett and Henry Cornish, Aviation wings its way up the forbidding face of Low Man. It is two pitches totaling 80m of sustained and varied climbing, graded Extremely Severe. From the busy and popular Haytor, this insignificant lump looks anything but extreme, but drop round the corner and the character becomes more serious, more remote and a tad intimidating. No visitors picnic here beneath the overlapping slabs of steep granite which boast the biggest and steepest face on the moor and the finest collection of hard climbs.

The face is undercut for most of its length - since the main granite mass, like some domed and petrified muffin sits on a plinth of softer grit like rock, which weathers faster than the feldspar above. Pat Littlejohn, a pioneer from the bye-land of the North Moor and now the director of the International School of

Mountaineering in Leysin, states in Devon Rock Climbs "many routes here have ferocious starts. Above the bulges the face is vertical and is well supplied with cracks and flakes to give exhilarating climbing."

To our west, farmers are busy swaling on the open moor and the damp, acrid smell of smoke from burnt gorse and molinia lingers on in the air. Carrying packs we look up at the evening

sun over Hameldown and hurry on as curlews attempt to bewitch us with their mewing call whilst flying over Saddle Tor to the damp ground around Bonehill.

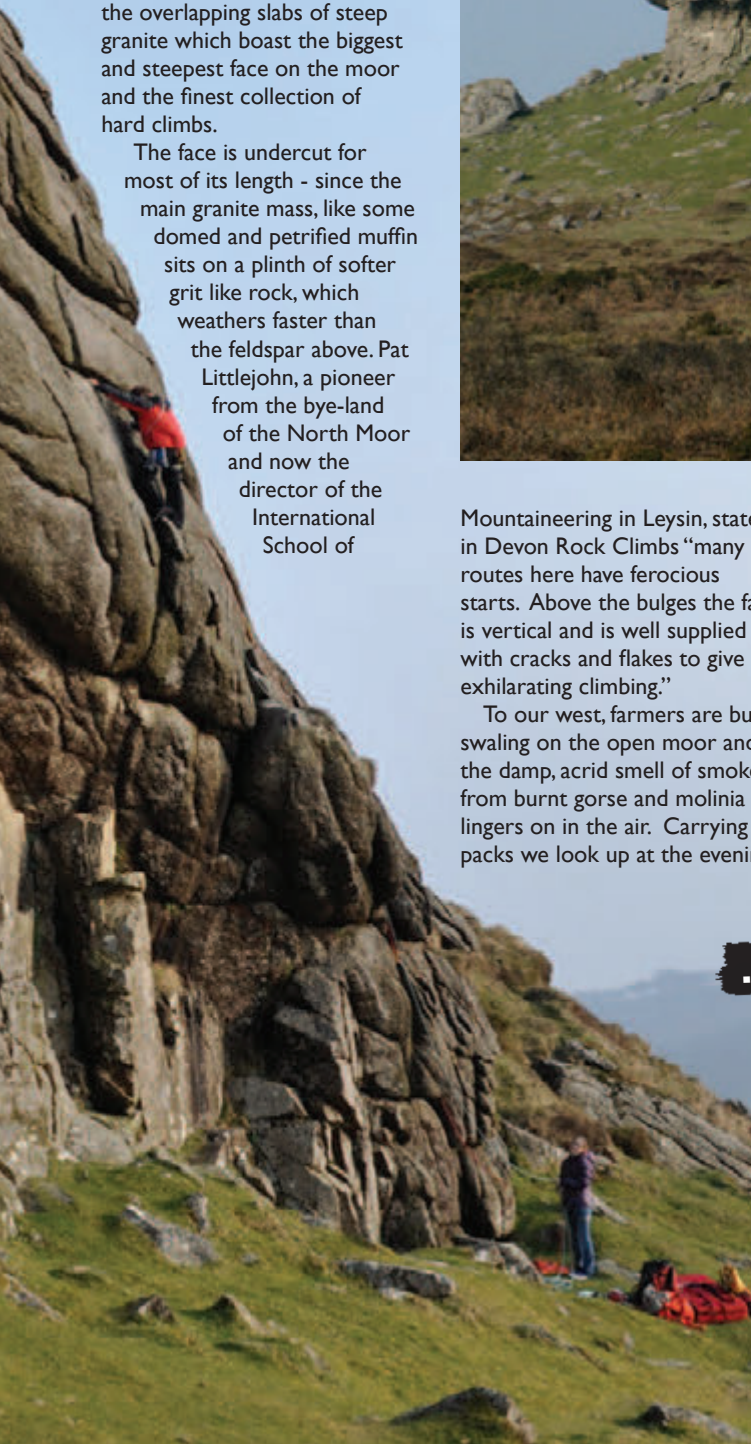
"I'll lead the first pitch," I call after Ben, an Aspirant British Mountain Guide. He is fitter and younger, but I know that the second pitch - which, therefore by turn, will be his - is harder and more scary.

"OK, of course John," he calls back. "Age before beauty every time!" I scowl, lengthen my stride and get to the crag before him.

We wriggle into harnesses, like trying to put on tight jeans. Ben uncoils the ropes and we tie in - "the brotherhood of the rope" we laugh - but under the banter we trust each other implicitly. I organise a rack of gear to take with me. There are carabiners and wedges of alloy on swaged



...the main granite mass, like some domed and petrified muffin sits on a plinth of softer grit like rock



time to go exploring

Get out and about with the National Trust on Dartmoor

Castle Drogo, Lydford Gorge, Finch Foundry,
Parke and Plym Valley.

Go walking, cycling, orienteering, running,
wildlife watching or just enjoy a lazy day or cup
of tea in fabulous surroundings.

Explore our places at www.DartmoorNT.org.uk



National Trust
Time well spent

Registered charity No. 205846



FOOT FILE

LENGTH: 80m
 GRADE: E1 5b 5b
 JOHN'S TOP TIP FOR GEAR:
 "Some middle sized Camalots
 are really handy"
 BEN'S SUMMARY: "A climb
 requiring experience, skill and
 good judgement"

SO NOW YOU WANT TO CLIMB?

Dartmoor is a fantastic place to take up climbing with many quality introductory climbs, beginner's routes and professional outdoor companies offering excellent tuition in real rock climbing. Indoor walls are a good place to start - try Dartrock www.dartrock.co.uk or The Barn www.barnclimbingwall.co.uk who cater for beginners. Then make the transition outdoors with either an experienced mentor or instructor or join a local club.

CLIMBING FOR BEGINNERS - INTRODUCTORY COURSES

www.ibexoutdoors.com
www.spirit-of-adventure.com
www.rockandsun.com

wires, modern devices with spring loaded cams; all neatly arranged and hanging from gear loops on the waist belt of my harness. The gear is all designed to be placed in cracks and pockets in the rock face - a back up should the leader decide to become airborne. This small fortune in equipment is an innovation of the discarded engineering nuts threaded on cheap nylon cord probably used and placed in the same pockets by Basset 50 years earlier.

The first pitch climbs a pillar with perfect holds, then takes off up a steep crack. My arms wilt as I reach a spot to rest. Then, balancing on small crystals, I carefully traverse rightwards to the hanging belay. I anchor myself securely with a web of slings and rope fastened to chicken head flakes and shiny gear crammed into granite pockets. "Climb when you're ready," I call.

Ben joins me and leapfrogs into the lead. I pay the rope out to him as he enters what Littlejohn describes in the guidebook as "a curious groove..."

"I wouldn't want to solo climb this without a rope," Ben shouts down. When it's my turn I find that the climbing is tenuous; it's about feet smearing on smooth granite along with open handed holds and balance moves relying on body tension and core strength. I pull out of the curious groove slightly bewildered

and race up the easy final slabs. Ben is hunkered down, belayed to the bald top of Low Man. We look out over the vale across a molten landscape towards Greater and Hound Tor. "It's always windy up here," he says. "You want more lagging mate," I reply. "I reckon The Carpenters Arms in Ilington is just the place for some aviation refueling." ■

ACCESS

Haytor and Lowman is on Common Land and Access Land owned by Dartmoor National Park Authority. Follow the country code and DNPAs Climbing Code - PDF available at www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk

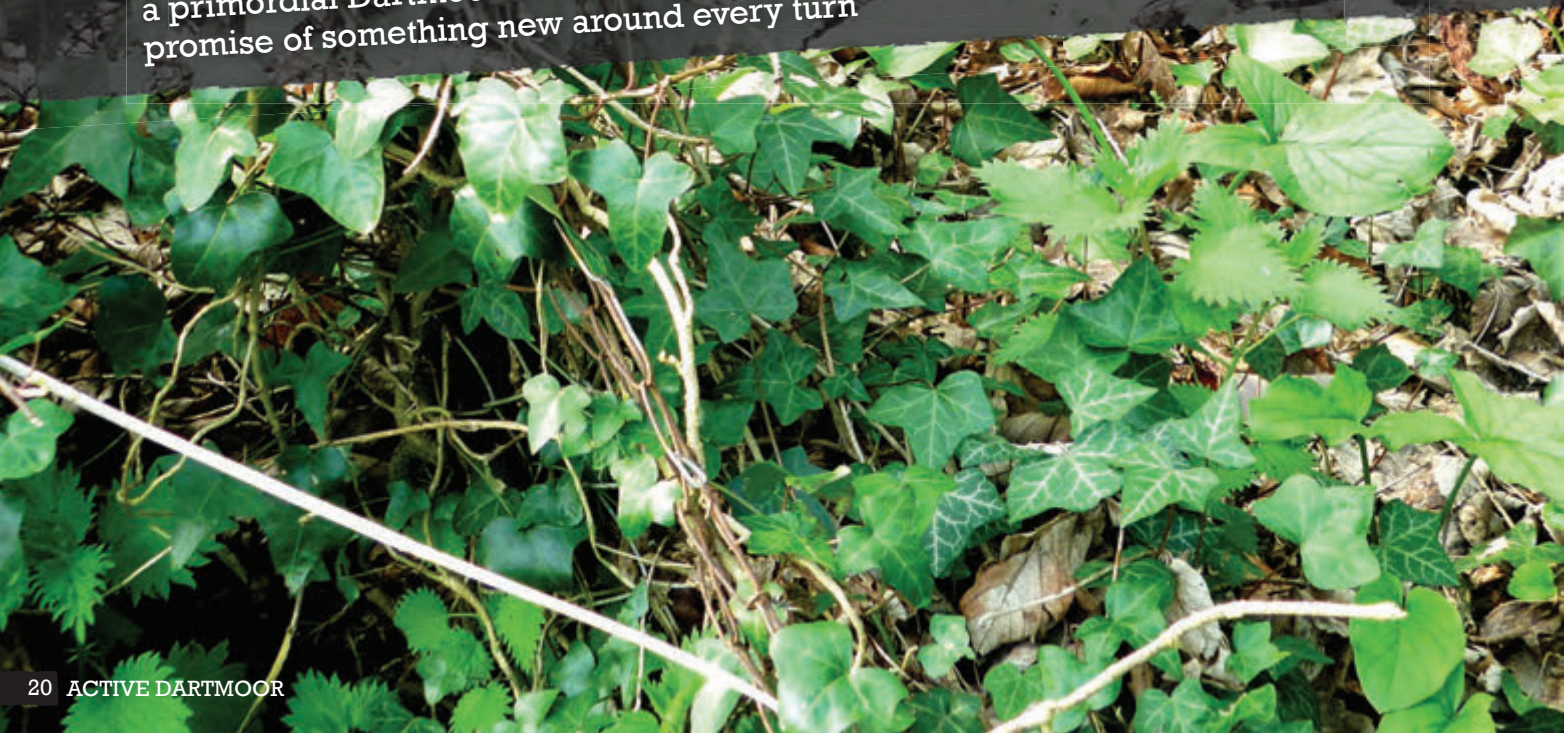
Ben Bradford wonders which cam will protect the curious groove on the 2nd pitch of Aviation





ON TRACK AND TRAIL

There are few things as intense as the experience of moving silently through a primordial Dartmoor forest – the majesty of nature all around you and the promise of something new around every turn





Tracking may have its roots in the million year-old need for man to track to survive. But today it is more than just part of the survival process. Tracking is an expression of man's curiosity and desire to discover new things and places. Tracking helps us engage with, immerse ourselves in and move through nature. It teaches us to understand animal behaviour, to see through the eyes of the animals we track. It stimulates our senses, encouraging them to work together to observe and more fully appreciate our place within the vast natural tapestry around us. I will never forget that first time of looking up, one afternoon, from the tracks at my feet and seeing the story of the animal kingdom unfurl around me – on a broken twig, in a creased blade of grass and under a turned leaf. Nature is full of clues even to the shyest of animals, and tracking can be our way of helping us feel even closer to them as we share those same paths.

For the individual and the family it is also a 'great game' – it fires the imagination of young and old. Sharing the experience and the detective work creates your own mini-adventure. I remember the last time I went tracking with my son...

Early morning found us kneeling at the edge of a fresh trail: deer slots retreating in a steady line behind us but not ahead. For some reason there had been a sudden change. The left print was much deeper than the right. Both were deeper at the 'toe'. The animal had stopped suddenly and looked left, pressing this cleave more firmly into the moist earth. Maybe there had been a noise? There was a raucous barking down the valley. Was this what the animal had heard? My son looked at me; we both glanced opposite and into the bracken. It had broken stems, the underside of the fronds turned skywards; pale and dry in the moist air. The deer must have shied away and bolted into cover. Success! There were the tracks again. Stray hairs on the rough bark of a Hemlock confirmed its new direction. The prints were deep, twigs and stones flung from their beds and spun wide of the track. Its gait betrayed a leaping. It was in full flight. We followed the charge along an avenue of trees, straight over a squirrel's feeding site: the telltale cores of spruce cones littered around a tree stump, and down towards the lake. This is where we will head. Suddenly, off to the left there was a commotion.



Predator alert calls rang out. Birds broke cover in a panic, then hid, motionless. We all held our breath. A sparrowhawk passed silently overhead. Long seconds later the world came alive again to the chatter of business as usual. Further down the slope we both sensed the sweet, almost cow-like, scent of a deer. Far below us was the unmistakable outline of a male fallow deer, antlers branch-like, moving into deep cover. We now had a sighting and would jump to that point. My boy was still hopeful of getting a snapshot to take to school next week.

TOP SPOTS

BELLEVER FOREST

Believer Forest. The huge internal clearings and network of paths in this forest plantation give plenty of opportunity to track from one side to another. Believer Tor makes for a superb vantage point.

THE DART VALLEY

The oak-rich woodlands of the Dart Valley, especially downstream from Dartmeet toward Holne feel like the land that time forgot. Maybe you'll be lucky enough to spot Otter. If you visit nearby Brimpts Farm then there are plenty of easy woodland walks to help you catch the tracking bug.

THE TEIGN VALLEY

The Teign Valley is home to black fallow deer. Around Haldon Forest, Canonteign Falls and north of Dunsford to Castle Drogo are some of the best ancient woodland vistas anywhere in the world.

RESERVOIRS

The mixed woodlands and reservoirs of Hennock, Trenchford and Tottiford lie on the high ridge between the Teign and Bovey valleys. They offer a rich variety of habitats, packed with wildlife, paired with some less challenging gradients and with good access.

BURRATOR RESERVOIR

To the west, the accessible and sizeable woodlands enveloping Burrator Reservoir offer a perfect setting – especially the edge that borders the moor.

TOP TIPS

TAKE YOUR TIME

Take time to move to nature's beat. Find a quiet 'sit-spot', spend some time sitting, listening and becoming a part of your surroundings. 10-20 minutes should help you see more, hear more, smell more...sense more.

MOVE SLOWLY

Try to suppress our modern-day urge to rush through every task. Slow down and you will notice much more detail. The quieter you are the closer you can get to the wildlife.

THINK LIKE AN ANIMAL

Tracking is a way of thinking. If you establish a link with the behaviour of the animal you are following then this can help anticipate where the next track will lie.

FEEL THE HABIT

Most mammals are creatures of habit. They have defined territories, routes and places that they like to feed, drink, sleep or even sit. Regular use of these places leaves their mark providing a good starting point to see and possibly discover the animal itself.

LOOK FOR THE STORY

Individual tracks are not always as important in determining what animal made them, as are trail patterns. A single track will not tell you much. Collecting together a clutch of evidence along with a sequence of events will tell you what species they belong to and also help write the story of what was happening to that specific animal at the moment when those tracks were made.

DARTMOOR – FOREST, MOOR AND STREAM

The best tracking on Dartmoor is not to be found across its vast moorland expanse but in, around and between its forests, lakes and streams. Animals are creatures of habit: look for dens, trails, runs and feeding sites as these will give you plenty of 'sign'.

It is also important to 'read' the land around you; to understand what channels, diverts or provides cover for wildlife. Along the margins of woodland is a good place to look. Animals such as deer use this open land to browse but often stay near the to the protection of the woodland. Numerous intersecting entry or exit points along hedgerows or woodland margins will give you good places to look, as will trails running parallel with these sharp transitions in habitat.

Field and moorland boundaries such as walls will also encourage perimeter trails. Seek out obstacles. Walls,

boulder-fields, very steep ground, rivers, ponds and saturated land will all channel wildlife in some way as they seek to traverse, avoid or enter and exit these features. A gate will not only provide a funnel for wildlife but it will also create a useful 'track trap' recording everything that has passed through its muddy aperture.

Fernworthy Forest is a good choice for both rookie and experienced tracker: accessible by road with several good parking areas giving direct access to its interior. Try tracking around the reservoir, rich in bird-life, or the 'wet woodland' fringe at its northwesterly 'end'. Small pockets of deciduous woodland contrast sharply against the ranks of dense plantation forest which march up a high ridgeline to crown the moor. Its extensive forest margin is haven for all types of wildlife including Red and Roe deer.

TAKE CARE

Take care especially at breeding times or birthing times. Don't get too close to deer during the 'rut' as it can be dangerous! Red and Fallow deer rut from around mid-September to Mid-October. Roe deer rut in late July and August. In the spring, many animals will have their offspring and disturbing them may mean they abandon their young.

Try not to distress or disrupt the routine of other animals – often their survival is finely balanced – don't upset it.

Try not to damage the habitat you pass through. Leave as little trace as possible. You might also be spoiling the trail for others.

Be careful of tracking through undergrowth, over delicate or rare plants, falling into fast, deep water or over big drops!

Don't track over private, enclosed land, damage crops or disturb livestock.



USEFUL KIT

- Tracking stick to gauge stride length and estimate where next track may lie.
- Pocket tracking guide
- Camera and binoculars
- Mirror or torch to throw prints into sharp relief
- Ruler to measure track
- Magnifier
- Non-rustling, subdued clothing
- Pencil, notepad.

READING LIST

A Guide to British Mammal Tracks and Signs by the Field Studies Council. A brilliant piece of field kit for novice or experienced tracker.

Animal Tracks and Signs by Preben Bang and Preben Dahlstrom. Probably the most seminal piece of work on tracking and the basis on many other tracking guides.

Animals: Tracks, Trails and Signs by Brown, Lawrence and Pope. An authoritative, comprehensive but easy to read guide for Britain and Europe.

Tracking and the Art of Seeing by Paul Rezendes. A beautifully illustrated field guide to tracking but with a North American bias.

Animal Tracking Basics by Jon Young and Tiffany Morgan. For those wanting to take tracking from just ID-ing prints and become more methodical and organised in your whole approach.

Animal Tracks, ID and Techniques by Ian 'Max' Maxwell. A very pocketable guide from the founder of Shadowhawk Tracker School who runs some courses on the edge of Dartmoor.

The Science and Art of Tracking by Tom Brown Jr. A fairly technical book on how a track is laid and how it can be analysed.



Mark is a Wilderness Guide. He teaches a range of bushcraft, woodcraft, primitive living and wilderness skills. Mark is a member of the *Dartmoor Wilderness Guide Community* – a growing community of professional guides and instructors dedicated to professionalism, safety and knowledge for activities that take place in the wild outdoors.

To find out more please visit www.wildernessguide.co.uk

WRITING ON THE ROCK

Bridget Thomasin has lived in the same valley on Dartmoor for nearly thirty years, developing both her poetry and painting. The moors are the main influence on her work.

A Way of Travelling

*Following larksong
into the wind
tangled paths wild
with bracken and brambles.*

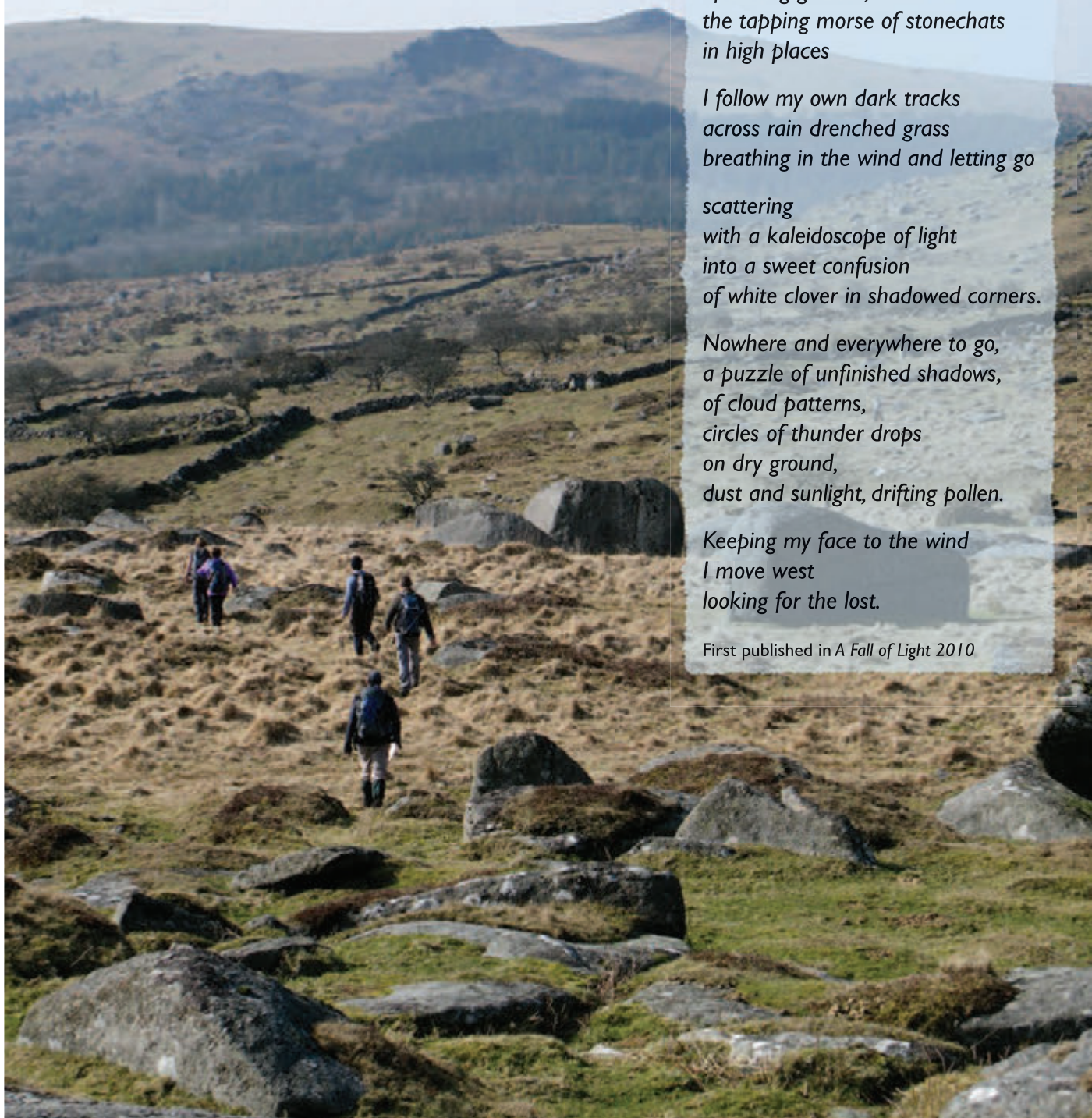
*Trusting the semaphore
of waving grasses,
the tapping morse of stonechats
in high places*

*I follow my own dark tracks
across rain drenched grass
breathing in the wind and letting go
scattering
with a kaleidoscope of light
into a sweet confusion
of white clover in shadowed corners.*

*Nowhere and everywhere to go,
a puzzle of unfinished shadows,
of cloud patterns,
circles of thunder drops
on dry ground,
dust and sunlight, drifting pollen.*

*Keeping my face to the wind
I move west
looking for the lost.*

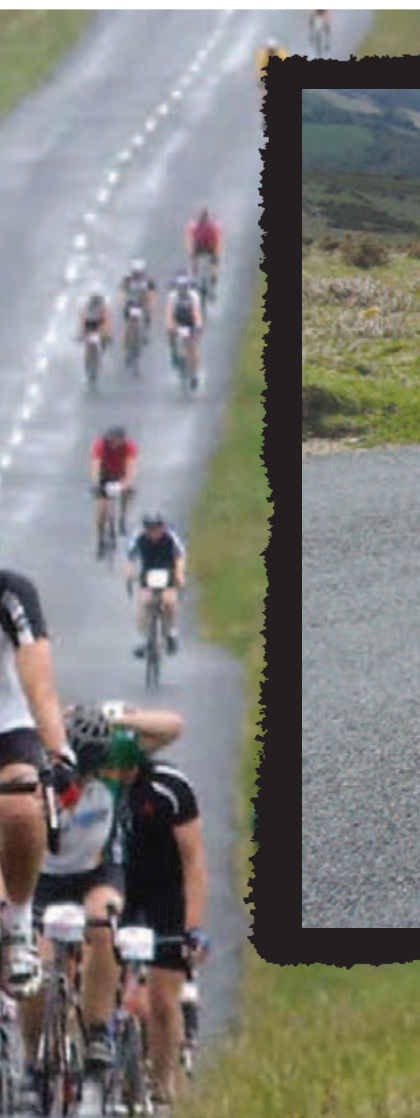
First published in *A Fall of Light* 2010





DARTMOOR CLASSIC

Most events start slowly, learn from their mistakes and gradually establish themselves. Not so the *Dartmoor Classic* cyclosportive. It burst onto Dartmoor as a complete, well-muscled, lycra-clad sporting event from its birth in 2007. It is now one of the key sporting events on the national cycling calendar.



The Dartmoor Classic is a non-commercial cyclosportive organised by the Mid-Devon Cycling Club (MDCC) and run in association with leading bike manufacturer Specialized. A cyclosportive is a long distance, organised, mass participation cycling event. It is not, as the organisers are keen to point out, a race.

MDCC member, Ron Kegan, completed a cyclosportive in Wales and realised how well such an event would work on the moor. Dartmoor is perfect cycling country – quiet roads, fantastic scenery and some rather challenging hills.

“There have been cyclosportives on mainland Europe for years, but they’ve only taken off in the UK in the past ten years,” said Ron.

A recent study by a market research company showed that this decade has seen a 40 percent rise in the number of adults jumping into the saddle. The increasing popularity of cycling on television and our cycling successes at Olympic Games has no doubt contributed to this impressive figure. You only have to look at the crowds that watched the

Dartmoor is perfect cycling country – quiet roads, fantastic scenery and challenging hills

2007 Tour de France set off from London, or those that flocked to see The Tour of Britain come over Dartmoor in 2010, to see how the sport has gained in popularity.

“I had the idea for the Dartmoor Classic back in 2005 and the club spent the next 18 months planning it.” With sponsorship hard to come by, Ron knew that if a Dartmoor cyclosportive was going to work, it had to be right – from the start.

MDCC formed a dedicated event committee and drafted a plan. “As club members read through the plan there was a bit of a pregnant pause as the level of commitment required sank in,” said Ron “And then there was great enthusiasm!”

Founded in 1930, MDCC has

organised numerous events over the years and even Ron’s goal of attracting 1200 participants to the first event didn’t put anyone off.

“That’s a very big field for a cyclosportive in this country but despite dire weather on the first event in 2007, it was still a huge success,” said Ron.

Entries for the Dartmoor Classic have always sold-out months ahead of the publicised entry closing date and this year is no exception. In 2011, the field will be 2,500.

So what makes the Dartmoor Classic so popular? “Cyclist enjoyment has always been paramount to us. We are not a commercial event, nor a charity fund-raiser. Any surplus cash we generate is a bonus.

“Our 12-strong committee has lots of experience and chief organiser, Ken Robertson, is a great logistics man. And on the day, we will have 40 or 50 knowledgeable club members providing marshalling,” said Ron.

The event also boasts good signage, essential on Dartmoor’s twisty lanes and open moorland plus a friendly and efficient Depart Village in Kingsteignton and food station in Princetown.

Gill Cartwright has signed



Julia Wherrell is a freelance writer, keen climber, walker and reluctant runner. She has lived on Dartmoor for 16 years and hopes to see out her days there.’

CYCLING EVENTS ON DARTMOOR

DEVON DIRT

www.devondirt.co.uk

A 72km non-competitive ride with off-road sections linked by mainly quiet and hilly lanes. Take your time to enjoy some of South Devon's finest scenery, and prettiest villages.

DARTMOOR DEVIL

www.dartmoordevil.co.uk

A 100km bash over Dartmoor, the Dartmoor Devil starts in Bovey Tracey eventually ending in a final climb up Widecombe Hill. It's a tough event, held annually at the end of October.

CYCLING HIRE OR BIKE SPECIALISTS

DEVON CYCLE HIRE

Sourton Down, Okehampton,

Devon EX20 4HR

Tel: 01837 861141

info@devoncyclehire.co.uk

www.devoncyclehire.co.uk

MOOR CYCLES

No 6 The Arcade,

Okehampton, EX20 1EX

Tel: 01837 659677

moorcycles@aol.com

www.moorcycles.com

Repairs, sales and cycle hire

DARTMOOR CYCLES

Atlas House, Tavistock PL19

9DP. Tel: 01822 618178

www.dartmoorcycles.co.uk

BIKUS

St John's Lane, Bovey Tracey

TQ13 9FF. Tel: 01626 833555

www.bikus.co.uk

DETAILS

The Dartmoor Classic 2011

Cycloportive offers a

choice of two routes

106 miles or 104 km

Both routes start and finish at

the event HQ (Depart Village),

located at the Abbots Park

Sports and Social Club in

Kingsteignton

The entry fee for either the

106 mile or 104 km course is

£27. This fee includes a levy for

British Cycling insurance cover.

MDCC also supports worthy

charities from the proceeds

of the Dartmoor Classic. The

main beneficiaries for the 2011

event will be the FORCE Cancer

Charity, Dartmoor Rescue

Group, and Rowcroft Hospice.



Competitors on the Devon dirt race through the ford on the North Bovey Byway Open to All Traffic

up for her third Dartmoor Classic this year. A 48-year old copywriter from Totnes, she doesn't see herself as a 'typical lycra-wearing entrant'.

"My husband completed the Dartmoor Classic and suggested I had a go. I cycle a couple of days a week around the Totnes area but I was horrified at the thought of tackling the 104km course.

"But I realised it would be a useful goal to keep fit for throughout the year, just as people work towards the London Marathon – but it's a lot kinder to your knees!" said Gill.

She was worried that her 'average' bike, with just 21 gears, wouldn't be suitable for the course, but it has been fine "You just don't need a special bike," she said. "I also don't do any specific training, just maintain a steady regime."

Gill is full of praise for the event. "You can't fault the organisation. The staggered start is great – about 100 cyclists leaving at five-minute intervals – and you find yourself bowling along in your own space in the most gorgeous countryside."

Gill said the feeling of achievement on completing the

event was fantastic. "There's a wonderful atmosphere and everyone cheers you over the finishing line."

With thousands of cyclists thundering around Dartmoor, you would be forgiven for thinking that relations with the Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA) and local residents might be strained. Not a bit of it.

Richard Drysdale, Sustainable Development Officer with DNPA and a keen cyclist, sees the Dartmoor Classic as a great way to promote the moor and to deliver a much-needed boost

to the local economy, estimated by MDCC to amount to around £250,000.

MDCC source as much as they can locally – not just food, but equipment and entertainment too. At last year's event a local wholesaler got the order for over £1,000 of bananas while a local ice cream producer sold over £600 worth of products. The event also creates promotional opportunities to local businesses. Among those lucky enough to be given free pitches last year were a team of four masseurs – a popular decision all round!

Richard said: "A crucial part of the event's success has always been MDCC's willingness to make changes to accommodate local residents and visitors. The route around Princetown has been changed to minimise disruption while first class marshalling ensures other road users aren't unduly put out."

One major issue that could have been a real stumbling block – was the date. "For the first two years, the Dartmoor Classic was held on the same weekend in May as The Ten Tors challenge. This worked fine but as time





**A recent study
by a market research
company showed that
this decade has seen a 40%
rise in the number of adults
jumping into the saddle**

CYCLE ROUTES

THE DARTMOOR WAY

www.dartmoorway.co.uk
90 mile circular route. The Dartmoor Way cycle route sweeps around the periphery of the Dartmoor National Park for over 90 miles linking many towns and attractions along its length, with an option to ride across the centre of the Park via Princetown.

The route has something for everyone - offering a wide variety of cycling experiences on different sections over its length that will suit most abilities.

THE GRANITE WAY

www.devon.gov.uk/cycling
The Granite Way is an 11 mile cycle and walkway running between Okehampton and Lydford along the north western edge of Dartmoor. It is mostly traffic free, largely following the course of the former Southern Region railway line. A journey along the Granite Way offers good views of the granite landscape of Dartmoor, as well as a number of specific sites of geological interest.

DRAKE'S TRAIL

www.drakestrail.co.uk
Drake's Trail is a network of walking and cycling trails. The network has something for all age groups and fitness levels, starting with the new off-road cycling section between Tavistock and Plymouth. The section linking Yelverton and Plymouth is already open. The remaining section linking Horrbridge and Tavistock is due to be completed by 2012.

BURRATOR RESERVOIR CIRCUIT

www.devon-online.com/towns/dartmoor/dartmoor-cycling-burrator-reservoir.htm
3½ mile circular route. This is a very pleasant, easy cycle ride. Burrator is a picturesque body of water surrounded on all sides by plantations and copses, with stunning vistas across the reservoir towards the open moorland of Sheeps Tor, Peak Hill and Sharpitor.

CYCLE CLUBS

If you want to take part in cycling events locally, join a cycling club

MID DEVON CYCLING CLUB www.mdcc.org.uk

Mid Devon Cycling Club was formed in 1930 and has a wealth of experience and history. The club holds regular Sunday club rides, social events and trips to sportives. It is a British Cycling registered Go Ride Club and its Club Mark accreditation acknowledges the standards met to ensure all activities are fair and equitable. The youth section concentrates on developing cycle skills and having fun. There are four British Cycling coaches to advise on how to develop your performance.

CYCLISTS' TOURING CLUB - DEVON www.ctc.org.uk

CTC is a national cycling organisation, and in Devon there are about 1100 local members with sections in Exeter, Torbay, South Dartmoor, South Hams, Plymouth and North Devon. Many join CTC just for insurance and other national benefits, while local level there's a continuous calendar of rides and events, plus involvement in user groups, charity rides, social events and gatherings, plus British and continental touring breaks.

CONTACTS

Devon County Council
T: 0845 1551015
www.devon.gov.uk/cycling
Email: environment@devon.gov.uk

Dartmoor National Park
T: 01822 890414
www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk

Sustrans
T: 0117 9268893
www.sustrans.org.uk



Carbo-loading for endurance events is essential - but dont get too carried away or you might just slip up



went on, Devon County Council, DNPA, the MOD and the Police felt that if there were a major emergency, having both events on at the same time was probably not sensible. The organisers were asked to move the event – which they did totally amicably – and it has gone from strength to strength on its new date in June,” explained Richard.

Dartmoor as a sporting venue is definitely on the ‘up’. “We receive a lot of enquiries from people wanting to organise events on the moor, from horse riding through running to cycling. It’s a great way to get people on to the moor.”

He added: “Cycling is certainly very popular right now, our ‘Dartmoor for Cyclists’ map is the fastest selling item in the DNPA’s on-line shop!” ■

CYCLE MAPS

DARTMOOR FOR CYCLISTS

This tough, detailed waterproof map shows tried and tested cycle routes whether cycling off-road or touring. All paths and tracks where cyclists have a legal or permitted right to ride are shown. Off-road routes have also been graded and colour coded by cyclists so that you can easily identify the paths that will suit ability. The map also shows public transport hubs. www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/visiting/vi-enjoyingdartmoor/vi-cycling

DARTMOOR MOUNTAIN BIKE ROUTES

Al Churcher (Author), William Fricker (Editor) £6.99
Ten of the best off-road routes in and around Dartmoor. Checked and approved by the National Park authorities these routes include Public Rights of Way, bridle-paths and quiet lanes. The routes are graded with approximate time and mileage. The routes are graded: easy, moderate and more strenuous although none are what could be called hard core mountain bike routes. Approximate times and mileage are included. The routes include the Sourton Circuit - Okehampton & Meldon Reservoir, on the High Moors South of Okehampton, Drewsteignton-Moretonhampstead-Castle Drogo, South & East of Moretonhampstead, from North Bovey SE to Hound Tor Woods

& South from North Bovey to Hound Tor, Headland Warren-Challacombe-Hookney Downs, South from Postbridge to the Forest Inn, Princetown & Burrator Reservoir and East of Burrator Reservoir to Nuns Cross, Mary Tavy-Gibbet Hill-Tavistock, and East of the Tavy to White Barrow.

CYCLE RIDES: DEVON, CORNWALL AND THE SOUTH WEST AA CYCLE RIDES

Paperback £7.99
This title takes you along quiet country lanes and designated cycle routes and, wherever possible, avoids traffic-congested roads in Devon, Cornwall and the South West. Inside you will find easy-to-use maps, full-colour photographs, easy-to-follow cycle ride directions, as well as background reading for each route, what to visit nearby and a detailed entry on a pub on or near the route. This easy-to-carry guide is family friendly and simple to use.

CYCLING IN THE SOUTH WEST OF ENGLAND

John Grimshaw £9.99
www.sustransshop.org.uk
Explore the South West of England on the National Cycle Network - a system of routes along traffic-free paths, quiet lanes and traffic-calmed roads. Contains 28 routes featuring full OS mapping, things to see and do, train stations, refreshments, bike hire and more.

CARVING A TRAIL



Sue Viccars explores the countryside around The Carpenters Arms in Ilsington



Sue Viccars is a freelance outdoor writer and editor, specialising in southwest England – especially Dartmoor and Exmoor

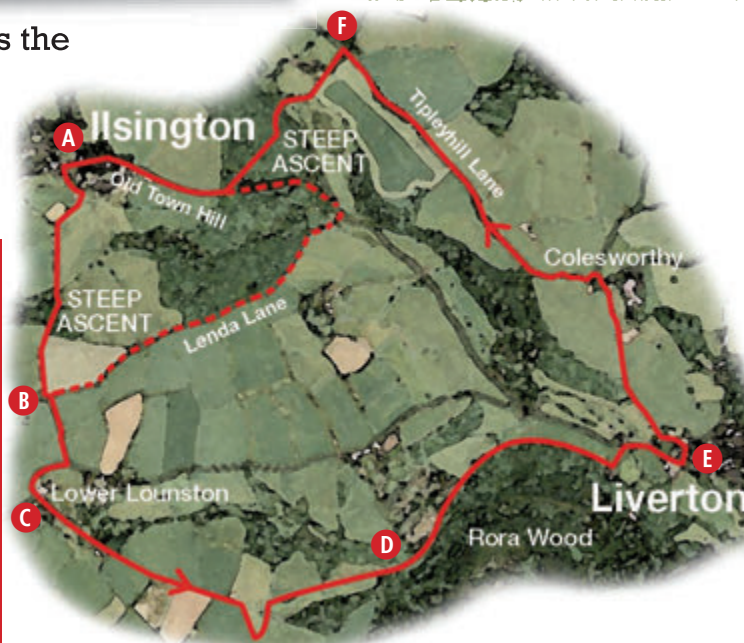
Dartmoor walks don't have to involve donning a huge rucksack and striding out onto the granite plateau, reliant on your navigation skills. Particularly on the eastern and southern sides – where rivers have cut deeply into softer slates and shales – undulating pasture, wooded valleys and a network of green lanes offer easy-to-follow routes suitable for a reasonably active group.

FOOT FILE

LENGTH: 7.2km (4.5miles)
TIME: 2 hrs
START/FINISH: The Carpenters Arms, Ilsington SX 786761
TERRAIN: Green lanes through undulating fields and woodland; several ascents and descents, some steep
MAP: OS Explorer OL28 or 110 Torquay & Dawlish
PUBLIC TRANSPORT: None
PARKING: Laneside near pub



Ilsington village. The settlement dates from Saxon times, and St Michael's Church from the 14th and 15th centuries



A With the pub behind you turn right, passing steps to St Michael's Church. Turn left down Simms Hill. The lane reduces to a descending track; a correspondingly steep, rough climb reaches a track junction.

B To shorten the route to c11/2 miles/2.4km turn left; at the road turn left, then first left up Old Town Hill. Keep ahead, along a level stretch, to a lane. Turn right, downhill.

C Where the lane bears right keep ahead past Great Lounston and Lower Lounston. Tarmac gives way to a green lane which ascends gently: look left towards the stark outline of Haytor Rocks. Then descend towards Rora Wood. Cross a gate via steps; continue downhill with a hedge right (the RoV on the OS map is incorrect). At the field bottom bear right to a stile; cross the stream onto a track.

D Turn left to follow the stream along the bottom of Rora Wood. Pass through a gate; just before a path junction turn left in front of Woodgate Cottages to meet the road in Liverton. Turn right.

E After 250yds turn left up a lane, soon bearing left up another which reduces to a track and climbs (panoramic views right) to a junction at Colesworthy. Bear left, then left again, uphill. At a fork keep ahead (right) along Tiplehill Lane, with views over Ilsington Wood – the village is out of sight – and towards the moor.

F Meet a lane at Woodhouse Cross (note an engraved stone right); turn left downhill over the Liverton Brook to meet a road. Cross over; ascend steeply through woodland. A stile leads onto Old Town Hill; turn right. ■

WHERE TO EAT

Every walk needs a good pub or café to round it off: The Carpenters Arms fits the bill perfectly. Taken on by keen outdoors practitioners Claudia Brooks and Matt Ellis last year, the pub welcomes walkers, cyclists, cavers, climbers, dogs of all shapes and sizes... and well-behaved children! It's a down-to-earth and friendly village inn, with flagstone floors, beams, and archive photos on the walls. Dating back to 1790, the building opened as a public house, selling beer and cider, in the early 19th century.

THE CARPENTERS ARMS

Ilsington TQ13 9RC
Tel: 01364 661629
www.carpentersilsington.co.uk

Open: Mon–Thurs 12am–3pm, 6–11pm; Fri 12am–3pm, 6–12pm, Sat 12am–12pm, Sun 12am–10pm
Food: Daily 12.30am–2.30pm, 6.30–9pm
Sunday lunches £5/£8.50; mains £7.50–12.95; half portions available; local produce (Dartmoor Farmers meat, Poole Farm sausages, Luscombe organic drinks, Otter Ale).





Ben is a climbing instructor who works at the Dartmoor Centres and has recently been accepted onto the British Mountain Guides scheme. He has climbed all over the UK and the European Alps and made significant ascents in Alaska and the Himalayas.



SUMMER SHOWERS

With this article, Ben Bradford starts a short series on weather for walkers

Good old Dartmoor. Wet, windy, cold and murky when everywhere else is sunny, right? Well yes, sometimes but we do have some great weather here as well and those days when the high moor is bathed in sunshine when the rest of the surrounding area is under cloud are simply magical. When I first started walking on the moor it was like so many other young people before and since on that fantastic event, Ten Tors. Back then I didn't pay much attention to the weather or the forecast. If it was raining then I put my coat on and if it wasn't I was happy!

Nowadays I'm a bit different. By checking the forecast and keeping an eye on the sky you can pick the right venue for the weather and make the most out of a potentially iffy day. It's also really satisfying predicting the weather by checking the synoptic charts and looking at a few clouds in the sky.

Driving up to the high Moor from the surrounding countryside you can often find yourself in completely different weather from when you left

home, and Dartmoor's height is largely responsible for this. The height causes the temperature to drop, something called the lapse rate, by about 1 degree per 200m. This can mean for instance that Princetown is on average 4 degrees colder than Plymouth which is just 23km away.

The height also causes another major factor in Dartmoor's weather, Clouds. Dartmoor (as well as Exmoor and Bodmin) sticks above everything in the South-West and when moist air is forced to rise over the moor it cools and condenses and forms clouds, and then rain. Princetown receives twice as much rain as Plymouth and is often cloud bound whilst the coast is clear.

Because of this propensity for rain, low cloud and mist, walkers on the moor need to be properly equipped and be proficient with a map and compass. The open nature of the moors can be extremely challenging to find your way around when the weather isn't behaving itself.

Even during the summer walkers can be caught unaware

Clockwise from bottom: Building cumulus typical of a summer day; where cumulus have merged to give stratus rain clouds; strato-cumulus could signify something iffy is in the air.





Clockwise from left: Cumulo-nimbus can build up to give short sharp showers sometimes with thunder and lightning; Red sky at night...; Ross spots an approaching rain curtain typical of summer cumulus; Anna and Rummy quest out into the remote north moor confident these fair-weather cumulus are fairly benign

due to the swiftness of poor weather developing quickly on the high moor. Good forecasts can be gleaned at the Visitor centres found at Haytor, Princetown and Postbridge. A lot of the rain comes from spontaneous showers and thunderstorms rather than the more regular autumnal and winter weather systems that sweep across the Atlantic. Keeping an eye on the summer sky and cloud formation can give you good warning when something untoward is on the way – just enough time to get that waterproof on before it pours down.

These shower clouds start their lives as benign little fair weather clouds known as Cumulus. These are caused by the sun heating the land, therefore causing the air to rise and form clouds. These little Cumulus clouds often do nothing more and disappear overnight but during the summer when it's warm they can continue to grow into impressive towering monsters developing into the dreaded Cumulo-nimbus. If they grow quickly in the morning expect showers by midday. These clouds are often associated with rain curtains and rainbows.

These large clouds produce some really heavy showers and are normally thick, dense and can have a flattened top like an anvil. During the summer months

these Cumulo-nimbus clouds can turn into thunderstorms, with one cloud giving about thirty minutes of thunder in it's one hour life span with storms only lasting longer when there are many such clouds together. Hail is always a usual early event that provides warning in the summer months for a bang or two of thunder.

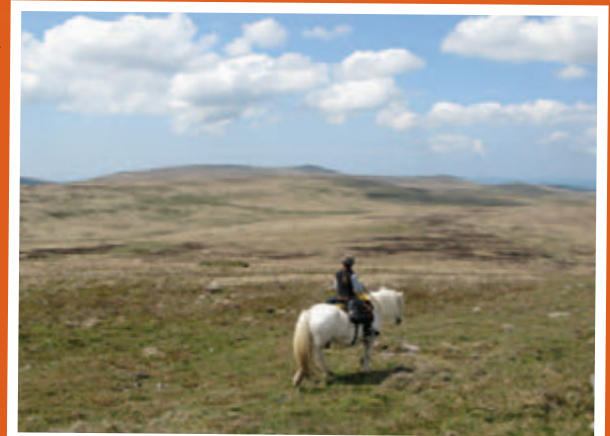
So if your heading to the Moor have a look at a decent forecast (the met office is my preferred option) and keep watching the sky, as well as your map. A coat with a hood is mandatory even for a short walk out on the moor plus some spare layers and even a hat and gloves. Whilst wet wether can literally put a dampener on a day out, changeable summer weather can bring dramatic scenes for great photographs of dark skies with towering clouds over sunlit and sparkling moors. ■

READING

Mountain Weather: A Practical Guide for Hillwalkers and Climbers in the British Isles
David Pedgley

The classic copy that should be on every outdoor enthusiasts bookshelf

Hill Walking
by Steve Long
The definitive manual for walkers



MORE INFO

WEATHER

www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/uk/sw/sw_forecast_weather
Dependable forecast with specific mention of Dartmoor's weather

www.dartcom.co.uk/dartcam
Random pictures looking into the north moor with a good view of the sky.

NAVIGATION

THE BASIC ESSENTIALS

“the transformation of maps and diagrams into a terrain of dreams” from the poem Wilderness by Bridget Thomasin



John Baker has been instructing climbing and mountaineering since 1986. He lives on Dartmoor.

Navigation is the essential outdoor skill. It is best learned with plenty of practice – in essence it’s about not getting lost. Most calamities that befall the unfortunate moorland traveller usually originate from a navigational error; for the unprepared, this is a significant risk when exploring the high moors of Dartmoor.

Technically, “navigation” is about orientating yourself correctly – determining where you want to end up – and following a logical route in the right direction to your chosen destination in good order and in good time, for that well earned pint of Jail Ale. To some, navigation appears to be a dark art that is all fingers and thumbs and best left to others. More often it proves to be a rewarding and engrossing challenge with plenty of opportunity for tap-room tales of skill and cunning in thwarting the mist and boggy terrain of a day’s walk.

Matt Helliker, British Mountain Guide and past instructor at The Dartmoor Centres, says, “From my experience, if you can navigate across Dartmoor in bad weather – you can navigate almost anywhere”. So, to serve an apprenticeship in navigation and become a journeyman of the outdoors - you will need to be familiar with the following items of equipment and techniques.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

MAP

Maps illustrate the landscape using symbols to represent features seen on the ground. They determine where you have a right of access, either along Public Rights of Way, permissive paths or on high moorland classified as Common or Open Access land. Maps pinpoint hazards such as bogs and mires and allow you to plan your route to avoid the associated risks of a good soaking or worse.

Maps for outdoor activities have a numbered grid allowing you to give a unique reference to your location should you wish someone to come to your aid or to arrange a pick up at a remote road-head like Fernworthy Forest. Brendan Stone, the Head of Centre at Pixies Holt, says “If you lead groups, the ability to give an accurate grid reference of your location is absolutely essential.”

The most popular and appropriate map for Dartmoor is the orange Ordnance Survey OL28 Explorer Map. This is at 1:25 000 in scale where 4cm on the map represents 1km on the ground (Journeyman tip: always work in metric) so there is lots of useful detail. A good alternative is the Harveys 1:40 000 Dartmoor Superwalker.

Maps give you a fixed reference point – north – at the top of the map. This will assist you in navigating in the right direction.

“I always carry a map but I never use a map case,” says Ross Walker, a qualified South West Moorland leader from Princetown. “I always dig deep into my pockets and shell out for a laminated waterproof map. Paper maps are for the office – not the outdoors.”

COMPASS

A compass helps you to determine the direction of your route by taking a bearing that measures the angle between your direction and north. Steve Horwell, professional outdoor instructor and member of the Dartmoor Rescue Group, states, “A good compass will have the additional features of a long base plate, a magnifying glass and a set of scales called romers; these help measure distance on the map. The Silva type 54 is typical of this type of compass”.

WATCH

You need to be able to calculate how long it will take you to walk a certain distance and then use a watch to time your progress.



DRILLS AND SKILLS

Route planning

Planning your day out, pouring over maps and guide books is half the fun – so don’t miss out! Think about the time you’ve got, public access and rights of way, the weather forecast, your fitness and ability and any obvious hazards on your route which can be identified using the map such as rivers and steep clutter strewn slopes. If you are walking on the north moor check for live firing on the ranges.

A planned route allows you to leave details of your day out with a trusted friend who can provide support if you are overdue.



Orientating the map

This fundamental skill is about getting the map the right way round – do it every time you take the map out. A correctly orientated map is set to north – only then will the symbols on the map match the features on the ground as you look around. Keep the map and its orientation fixed to north so that really you are moving around a map that remains orientated. There are two ways of doing this:

1. Match map symbols with ground features, so that features which appear either side are the right way round on the map i.e. a river to your left on the ground is matched by a river marked to the left of your position on the map.

Use several features so that the top of the map ends up facing north.

2. When it is misty or dark and features are difficult to spot, use your compass by placing it on a horizontally held map. Turn the map until the top of the map (its north side) faces the same direction that the red end of the compass needle is pointing to – this is Magnetic North. (In 2011 there is only 1 degree difference between Magnetic North and “Grid North” on the map.)

Thumbing the map

Carefully fold your map for the area you need and hold it in place with an elastic band. Grasp the map in its orientated position with your thumb next

to your plotted location. This helps you quickly find your whereabouts every time you look at the map.

Following the route

Route finding is an acquired skill but try and keep things logical and tackle the route in bite size chunks or “legs”. Some simple navigational techniques include:

Handrails are features you can follow easily such as a forest edge, wall or stream.

Tick-offs are distinctive features along your route that you can identify on the map. As you pass them on the ground you tick them off. This is a reassuring technique in bad weather.

Overshoot features - like a tick-off, you should identify a feature beyond the destination of a leg that will warn you on the ground if you have overshoot and you need to backtrack.

Reading contours

Contours symbolise the lie of the land. They are lines of equal height. The vertical height between each contour is 10m for OS maps.

A quick rule of thumb is the closer the contours the steeper the ground. Every fifth contour is thicker and known as an index contour allowing quick calculations of height gain to be made. Interpreting contour shapes is key to good route choice.





Thumbing a correctly orientated map, Picking up points on the OMM near Fernworthy Forest

MEASURING DISTANCE

On the map

For a quick measurement of a “leg” remember that every grid square is 1km by 1km with the diagonal between each corner covering 1.5km. To measure distances more accurately use your romer on the compass.

On the ground

There are two methods - timing for bigger “legs” and pacing for very short “legs”. I tend to walk at 4km an hour (the equivalent of four grid squares as the crow flies) when carrying a day pack. This means 1km will take me 15 minutes and 100m 1.5 minutes. With a bigger pack I’ll walk at a slower pace and with very young people it might be as slow as 2km an hour. Some walkers carry a little card with timings for different speeds.

Naismith’s rule is a way of allowing extra time for height gain. Its roughly adding a minute per contour line - but Peter Cliff in his Mountain Navigation book rightly states this usually overestimates the time required. At my pace, I know that climbing 15 contour lines is the equivalent of walking another kilometer - this helps me judge my route choice - is there a level alternative that isn’t as direct but requires less effort?

Pacing is fun to practice and compare with your friends. Pacing is the number of double steps you take to cover 100m repeated until you have covered the required distance. I tend to use pacing for measuring shorter distances of no more than 500m. On the flat I cover 100m with 62 double paces at a normal stride. For height gain or rough ground you need to add more and only practice will tell you how many.

Putting it into practice

Even seasoned walkers would do well to practice. I was recently assessing aspirant moorland leaders in the vicinity of Cut Hill for them to gain their winter leadership accreditation. This is wild country and difficult to navigate, but they were strong candidates: maps correctly folded, orientated and set to north, their position thumbed and they had a keen sense of observation. They were always plotting features on the map from the ground around.

A gentler place for experienced moorland walkers to practice is in an area they are familiar with - for me this is in the upper catchment area of Burrator - it is still open moorland but it has several easy to follow linear features such as tracks, streams, leats and forest edges. It’s also Open Access land with Bridleways, as well as being close to Princetown with its cafes and pubs for the all important apres-moor rewards and refreshments! ■

MORE INFO

An excellent way to develop your navigational skills is to join a Hashing or Orienteering club. Both sports have a strong presence in Devon and on Dartmoor. Visit www.devonorienteering.co.uk for more information.

COURSES

It always pays to learn from someone who can teach navigation. There is the National Navigation Award Scheme which lists approved trainers who follow a thorough syllabus of progressive training and assessment www.nnas.org.uk The following providers offer navigation courses on Dartmoor: www.dartmoorguides.co.uk www.ibexoutdoor.co.uk www.compassworks.co.uk www.dartmoornavigation.co.uk

USEFUL BOOKS

Navigation for Walkers by Julian Tippet
Hillwalking by Steve Long
Mountain Navigation by Peter Cliff (my favourite)
Mountain Navigation for Runners by Martin Bagness





**Night navigation exercise tests
Jo and Karen on their
moorland leader training**



WHAT MAKES

DARTMOOR

SO SPECIAL?



I've often pondered what's so special about Dartmoor when missing my home during years spent travel writing around the globe. Individually speaking I've seen more diverse wildlife and landscapes in Africa and experienced more challenging hikes in the Himalayas. Yet collectively nowhere has seeped into my soul like Dartmoor.

It's hard to pinpoint Dartmoor's unique appeal. Maybe it's the granite tor moorlands, history that blurs into mythology, dyed-in-the-wool characters farming in time-honoured fashion, or simply the magnificently moody weather. But what I am sure about is that hiking is the best way to savour this unique collage.

Contrary to belief, Dartmoor isn't solely the preserve of experienced trekkers au fait with compasses and prepared to brave bogs that shake like jellies. Certainly, hiking on the wilder high moors does require serious preparation yet the national park boasts a wealth of footpaths and well-marked trails easy to follow and catering for all abilities.

Mark Stratton



ABOVE: evening rise at Kennick Reservoir;
LEFT Journeyman, Rummy and Buffy know the importance of hydration on their trek out to Fur Tor;
RIGHT Cullompton College Ten tors team prepare to hunker down for the night

Dartmoor Partnership...the story so far

We have been promoting Dartmoor and supporting local businesses for more than 30 years as the Dartmoor Tourist Association. In March 2008, we joined forces with Dartmoor Hill Farmers, West Devon Borough Council, Dartmoor National Park Authority and The Duchy of Cornwall to form the Dartmoor Partnership. The Partnership is now established as the official voice for Dartmoor; a representative for local people, local business and the championing of Dartmoor as a tourist destination. It is a special place to live, work and holiday, a destination that offers something for everyone; through the promotion of tourism and trade, we want to ensure that it stays that way. To find your perfect get away, visit www.dartmoor.co.uk and enjoy your own space.



dartmoor

COMPETITION

We are so excited at the launch of our new magazine that our generosity knows no bounds. We are giving away 10 places in our brilliant Dartmoor Survival Session event!

HAVE A GO!

Win yourself an afternoon out with up to 10 people in a beautiful Dartmoor woodland, learning essential Bushcraft and Survival Skills. An ideal present or birthday party, especially for children between 8 -14 yrs old. That's 10 lucky winners!



Your time in the woods will be led by two local qualified and experienced wilderness guides learning about shelters and outdoor cooking on a real camp fire.

Sorry, we cannot accept posted entries, only e-mail please. Winners will be published in the next issue of Active Dartmoor. Closing date June 30 2011.

All we need from you is answers to these questions:

1 Dartmoor is famous for its iconic wildlife. What is the most well known animal on the moor?

- A** The Dartmoor Heron
- B** The Dartmoor Trout
- C** The Dartmoor Pony

2 Dartmoor is also famous for its iconic event, where teams of youngsters walk the moor and have to climb a number of set hills.

What is the event known as?

- A** The Dartmoor 1 Tor
- B** The Dartmoor 10 Tors
- C** The Dartmoor 100 Tors

3 Dartmoor is set in a county in the south west of England. But do you know which one?

- A** Cornwall
- B** Somerset
- C** Devon

To enter please email active Dartmoor with your name & address and telephone number.

simon@activedartmoor.com

Winners will have to arrange their own accommodation for the weekend. Winners can be given a list of suitable accommodation providers.



KOUNTRY KIT

Tucked away in the busy West Devon town of Tavistock is an Aladdin's cave of outdoor gear

The outdoor equipment shop Kountry Kit was established in 1986 by the present owner's father, David McDowall, who had left the Royal Marines after 22 years Service. It is located on West Street in Tavistock. The fast flowing river that runs through the centre is the Tavy, which drops off Dartmoor - a backdrop of tremendous natural beauty for this beautiful and charming market town.

Before opening the shop David conducted some market research in Tavistock with a pen and paper to hand. When he asked what the town was missing - he was a bit surprised at the top two answers - a baby shop and women's dress shop! It's no surprise then that this

strapping Commando chose a slightly different direction using his extensive knowledge of outdoor equipment and experience to open what quickly became a well established outdoor store.

Tony Wasley, senior Devon Youth worker who coordinates the training of several Ten Tors teams from Mid-Devon says: "You couldn't ask for more - the guys at Kountry Kit bend over backwards to help find the most obscure outdoor items."

Active Dartmoor recently caught up with David's son James McDowall to find out why Kountry Kit has been a long term success for providing locals and visitors alike with an extensive range of outdoor clothing and equipment.

James tells the story of when they first opened the shop: "We started 25 years ago in the depths of winter - we had just over 30sq meters of floor space at 23 West Street which we stocked up with fleece jackets, thermal tops and long-johns. It was a good start to the business.

From the very beginning getting footwear right has been our priority. As a Royal Marine my father knew that correctly fitting footwear was essential for a good day out on the hills.

We have everything for Ramblers, Dog Walkers and weekends on the moors. Over the years we have expanded to provide equipment suitable for all seasons, both here in the UK and abroad."

James is keen to point out the

foundation that underpins his business:

"We don't really have a mission statement but our aim is to make sure we provide a friendly, personal and professional service."

All the staff strive to achieve the best gear solutions for the individual customer with due regard for their chosen activity. Your kit should enhance your Dartmoor experience and enjoyment of the outdoors whatever the weather. From the beginning we have aimed to equip people from head to toe to go up onto the moors for a safe and enjoyable day or weekend.

Kountry Kit is very proud of its footwear range which covers over 120 models and is



THE BIG 7

We asked the staff at Kountry Kit what items they would not do without in their rucksacks



OLI
Camelbak water bag - it fits in your sack taking up limited space and because the hose for drinking is always on your shoulder, you never get dehydrated.



ALEX
A compass - no matter how well you know the moors, the weather can change in an instant and make you feel very disorientated.



STEPHAN
A whistle for safety because if you are on your own and end up in trouble, it is louder than someone shouting, and I can't go out without a cup of tea so a flask!



CHRIS
A water filter pen for long days/weekends out as you can drink safely and its lighter than a pump filter, also a first aid kit as I'm accident prone.

Any emerging popular lines our readers should know about?

Icebreaker merino wool base layers because the fit is great. The feel is so soft and comfortable and being a natural 100% New Zealand Merino Wool, no bacteria sticks to the fibres so they are odorless - so much better for long days out than synthetic. They come in different thicknesses according to the weight of wool used in the garment and range from silk weight summer tops to fleece weight for winter.



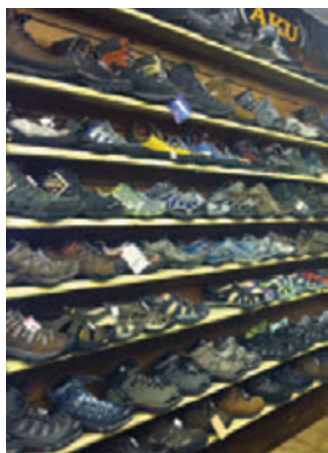
TOR FOCUS

therefore one of the largest in the south of England. All of the staff are very knowledgeable and fully trained by all our suppliers. We have regular clinics with training on new footwear and new developments in outdoor technology.

The team prides itself in being able to fit the majority of people who come through our doors. Comfort is everything to us, so we also pay great attention to the silent heroes of comfortable footwear - socks. The right socks with the right fitting boots makes a world of difference.

"We are privileged to live in a very sought after area with the superb Dartmoor National Park- it only seems right to get out there to enjoy and appreciate this environment. All our staff are active on Dartmoor." Stephan Espin is the Store manager. He has been working at Kountry Kit since the year 2000 - he is always available for a chat with good advice about the latest gear, or to share a yarn or two with a customer about their latest trip out on the moor. He works hard to provide a relaxed atmosphere.

"Customer service will always be key. The shop has a warm and friendly atmosphere and whether you are calling in for anything from a pair of shoe laces to getting fully kitted up for a trip away, we will do our best and get it right for you" says Stephan. ■



FACT FILE

KOUNTRY KIT
CONTACT: 01822 613089
LOCATION: 22-23 West Street
Tavistock, Devon PL19 8AN
www.kountrykit.com



Kes Tor is on Chagford common above the Batworthy and Boldventure homesteads. It overlooks the wild landscape of the North Moor and the ancient settlements of Shoveldown. It stands castle like and is visible from many approaches around the eastern edges of Dartmoor.

Once marked on the first edition OS map as *Castor*, it is often pronounced locally as *Kezter*.

It is a distinctive tor; not only for its magnificent views, but also for its huge summit rock basin, created by the weathering of weakened feldspar crystals. Before geological processes were fully understood, folklore described Rock basins as the work of Druids who required a repository as close to the heavens as possible for "holding sacred water and for catching the blood of human sacrifices". In less distant times Kes Tor provided a grandstand view for local point to point races.

Today it is a popular jaunt, often combined with Scorriton circle and Teign-e-ver clapper bridge, along with the local stone rows and standing stones. It is therefore a good afternoon's exploration on a clear day. In thick weather a map and compass should be carried, as this is still open country. ■



TOR FACT FILE

HEIGHT ABOVE SEA LEVEL: 421m

PARKING: Limited space on the Batworthy road

BEST TIME TO VISIT: Early Summer's evening to watch the superb sunsets

WALKING: A short sharp shock of 10 minutes uphill from the parking spot.

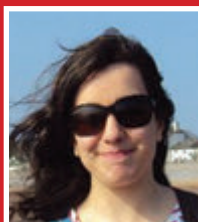
THINGS TO SEE: Rock basin, Stone rows, view over the North Moor

NOTE: The sides of Kes Tor are steep and high so care is required



SOPHIE

My Oakley sun glasses as I suffer headaches from high levels of sunlight. They're the best sunglasses I've had being suitable for the moors and mountains.



ANTONIA

UV Buff - to keep the sun off my neck and head in the summer and use around my neck in the winter to stop heat escaping from my jacket. It's good as a make shift pot-grip too.



JAMES

I would take my wind shirt - the perfect layer as I get hot walking it gives me maximum breathability with high weather resistance yet with minimal weight.



BOOK REVIEWS

The very best walking and climbing books about Dartmoor

British Mountain Map – Dartmoor



Published by Harvey Maps in conjunction with the BMC, and designed especially for climbers and hill walkers, this new map covers the whole of Dartmoor on a single sheet at the 1:40 000 scale. It uses contour colour shading for easy identification of hills and valleys, and is printed on

polyethylene to make it lightweight, tear-resistant and waterproof. The reverse side of the map contains mountain incident and first aid advice, navigation tips, useful visitor information, and geological information provided by the British Geological Survey.

"This inspiring new map will help walkers and climbers explore Dartmoor's wild granite landscapes, and like the granite, the map is virtually indestructible!"

Sir Ranulph Fiennes

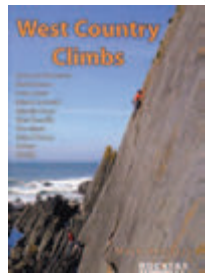
You can pick up a copy of Dartmoor from the BMC online shop or call the BMC on 0161 445 6111 to order your copy. Would all climbers please note that the inclusion of a crag on the new Dartmoor British Mountain Map in no way indicates public access to it. The access situation should always be checked before visiting. Further information on specific crags can be found in the British Mountaineering Council's Regional Access Database:

www.thebmc.co.uk/bmcrag

BMC member price - £10.95

Non-member price - £12.95

West Country Climbs



This new guide book for rock climbers is a major Rockfax guide to one of the UK's most celebrated, sunny and diverse climbing regions. The book is fashioned in Rockfax's award-winning layout and design, and

copiously illustrated with action photographs of the climbs and cliffs that reflect the quality and variety of climbing experiences to be had on offer in the UK's most popular holiday destination – the West Country.

This is a selected route and buttress guidebook which covers the best 900 routes across the south west and includes the following Dartmoor locations for climbing: Haytor, Houndtor, Sheeps tor and The Dewerstone. The nearby Torbryan and Chudleigh limestone venues are also included.

Price: £24.95

Let's Go Letterboxing

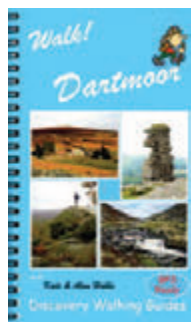


This little book is 'A Beginner's Guide' and is for everyone, visitor or local resident, who perhaps know little about the Moor, but are intrigued by its wild, dramatic scenery and would like to try for themselves the unique treasure

hunt pursued by thousands in its wide open spaces. Its aim is to make your introduction to letterboxing more successful, safe and enjoyable. But be warned! Collecting anything is addictive and letterboxing is no exception to the rule!

Price: £3.25

Walk! Dartmoor



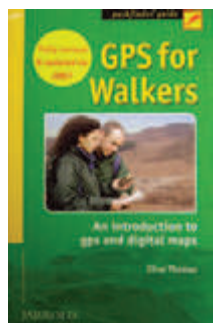
Explore Dartmoor's dramatic high moors, gentle riversides, idyllic country lanes and unspoilt villages, discovering spectacular views, ancient archaeology and traces of bygone industries. Walking routes include:

- walking route summary

- ratings for effort, time, distance, ascents/descents, refreshments and vertigo risk
- fully detailed walk description, including frequent timings to aid navigation and check your progress
- GPS waypoints at every key point on every route
- full colour 1:40 000 scale Ordnance Survey licenced mapping for each route
- short walk and stroll alternatives

Price: £12.99

GPS for Walkers



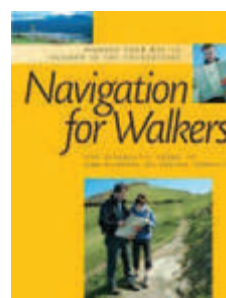
Now you can enjoy the advantages of using GPS, an amazingly useful and entertaining navigational aid, and you do not even need to be computer literate.

This book uses non-technical language to introduce you

to choosing and using a GPS receiver to enhance your leisure walking and make it safer. This is an easy to use, step by step guide. Includes over 40 diagrams, maps and photographs over 96 pages.

Price: £11.99

Navigation for Walkers



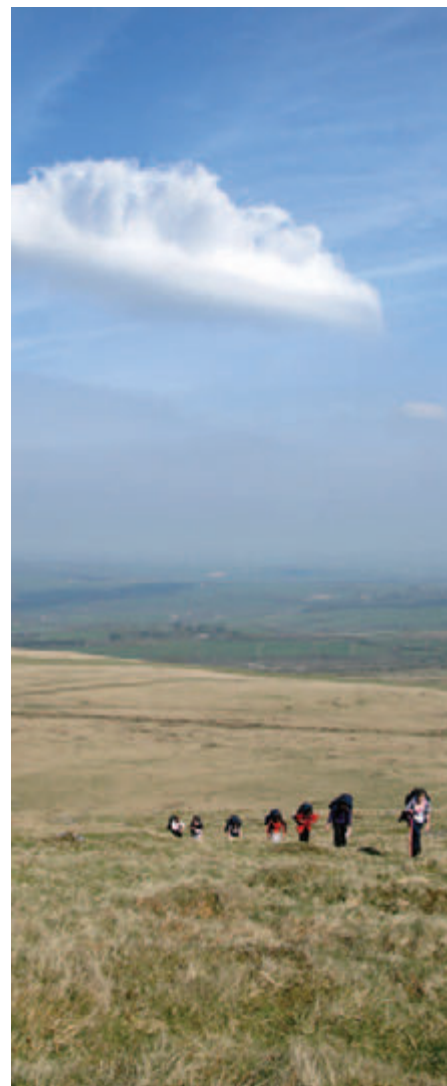
If you are apprehensive about taking the first steps exploring the countryside around you, then this book will certainly start you on the right path to acquiring the skills to navigate and complete any

walk in Britain.

Based on the OS new explorer maps, this book takes the reader step by step through the essential techniques of map reading, navigation skills, reading the compass and route planning to complete your sense of direction.

Julian Tippet has fifty years experience of route finding by map in the hills and moors of Britain and teaches navigation skills. 121 pages of maps, illustration and photos.

Price: £10.99



WALKING THE DOG



**Keep your dog on a lead between
1 March and 31 July**

Always keep your dog on a lead near stock

Let your dog loose if approached by cattle

Confused yet? Who wouldn't be? For many of us taking a dog adds so much to our walk and can even be the motivation that gets us out of the door when the weather is less than appealing or we're just feeling plain tired. In fact according to The Kennel Club dogs bring very real health benefits to many people's lives. However, taking a dog out into the countryside can sometimes be fraught with conflicting rules and advice. So what exactly should you do on Dartmoor?

By law, you must control your dog so that it does not scare, worry or disturb farm animals or wildlife such as ground nesting birds. Dogs must be kept on a short lead on all access land covered by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) between 1 March – 31 July but only need to be under close control on Public Rights of Way such as footpaths and bridleways. On common land (the majority of open land in the National Park) Dartmoor National Park Authority also requests that all dogs are kept on a lead during the lambing and bird nesting season. This land is crossed by

rights of way but it makes sense to keep your dog on a lead even on these routes as he can easily wander off the line. At certain times, dogs may not be allowed on some areas of access land at all, so keep a look out for official signs.

These rules are all designed to protect stock and ground nesting birds from disturbance by dogs. Whilst it's easy to think that your own dog would never take a chick off a nest or chase an in-lamb ewe, even a well behaved loose dog can by its very presence cause birds to fly up and leave their eggs to chill and sheep to scatter. Although birds become used to people following the line of a popular footpath or bridleway a dog off the lead is likely to range more widely and frighten birds further from the path. Close to roads a loose dog might also cause lambs to run in front of oncoming traffic if the ewe is on the other side.

However, stock, in particular young cows and bullocks, can become very interested in dogs and approach or chase you to get a better look. If you are following a footpath or bridleway

through a field of cows it pays to think ahead, even if they appear docile, and avoid putting yourself in a situation where you could become trapped in a corner or unable to reach a gate. If a group of cows or bullocks do start to follow you always let your dog off the lead and do not attempt to protect it. You need to put your safety first. Your dog will look after itself.

Although stocking levels on the commons are lower than they have been at times in the past it's best to be prepared to come across stock anywhere on grazing land within the National Park. If you are looking for somewhere without stock to exercise your dog, consider using the hard tracks in forestry plantations with public access. You may not see any sheep or lambs in these areas but your dog will still need to be kept under close control as you are likely to come across deer and other wildlife.

Finally, everyone knows how unpleasant dog mess is and it can cause infections, so always clean up after your dog and get rid of the mess responsibly. Also, make sure your dog is wormed

regularly to protect it, other animals and people.

It's hard to beat walking with a well-behaved dog and by taking a little care your dog can be the perfect walking companion and provide a second pair of eyes and ears, quietly alerting you to things that you might never have noticed had you been walking alone. ■



KEY DATES

**1 March – 31 July
Moorland lambing and
bird nesting season**

All dogs should be kept on short leads on common and access land within the National Park.

**1 December – 31 July
Lambing season on
enclosed land**

All dogs should be kept on short leads on enclosed farmland where sheep are grazing.

For further information see the Kennel Club website.



GEOCACHING

When James Perrott, a Dartmoor guide from Chagford, left his calling card in a bottle beside Cranmere Pool in 1854, little did he know that his action would lead to the worldwide hobby of letterboxing. By inviting subsequent visitors to also leave their cards he captured people's imagination, and there are now thousands of letterboxes across not just Dartmoor but the world, all consisting of a visitor book, a stamp to record the visit in your logbook, and with detailed clues to lead you to the location.



But James Perrott didn't have access to the fleet of satellites, launched in 1974, that today provide the global positioning system (GPS). Nor did he have a handheld GPS device that puts easy navigation into the hands of even the worst map-reader. And it was well before the 1st May 2000, the date when the US Government finally removed selective ability from their fleet of GPS satellites, offering civilians full access to accurate GPS data (before that date only the military had full access to the signals).

With these benefits of modern technology James Perrott might have realised – as Dave Ulmer did in May 2000 – that GPS could offer a fun way to track down “treasure” hidden at a location. He called it the “Great American GPS Stash Hunt”, but that rapidly evolved in to what is now known as geocaching – arguably

a modern day development of the letterboxing that started on Dartmoor back in 1854!

Through the official geocaching website (www.geocaching.com) and many imitators the pastime has become hugely popular: geocaching.com is currently listing 1,322,246 geocaches across the world, and across Dartmoor alone there is estimated to be over 1000 waiting to be discovered!

In some respects, geocaching is very like an old-fashioned treasure hunt, but instead uses technology to help hunt out the hidden containers (geocaches) that hold the “treasure”. This is normally a plastic Tupperware container with a toy or object that has no value to anyone over the age of ten! The website allows you to search out and download the location of geocaches nearby. Once a geocache has been visited the find can be logged online and

experiences shared with others in the geocaching community.

The pastime offers a great way to explore new places that might not be obvious spots to visit, and offers a fun way to get children out adventuring – what better than a high-tech treasure hunt collecting and swapping “stuff” in the great outdoors as an incentive instead of the, “we’re going for a walk” approach?

David Martin, who runs the Cherrybrook B & B in the middle of Dartmoor, has been geocaching since 2010, when he was inspired by four guests who visited specifically to hunt out geocaches in the area: “I had always been a walker, with map and compass, and had a GPS, but was curious about geocaching”. Together with his wife Judy they have now visited and logged over 450 geocaches. Despite living on Dartmoor, as David says, “...geocaching takes you to interesting places you would not otherwise find,



In some respects, geocaching is like an old-fashioned treasure hunt, but instead uses technology to help hunt out the hidden containers (geocaches) that hold the “treasure”

THE GEOCACHERS CODE:

Safe • Legal • Ethical

When placing or seeking geocaches, I will:

- Not endanger myself or others.
- Observe all laws and rules of the area.
- Respect property rights and seek permission where appropriate.
- Avoid causing disruptions or public alarm.
- Minimize my and others' impact on the environment.
- Be considerate of others.
- Protect the integrity of the gamepiece.

(Source: Geocaching Association of Great Britain www.gagb.co.uk)



GETTING STARTED

You need very little to get going – internet access and a GPS device. Internet access enables you to register, search for and record your geocache finds at www.geocaching.com. A basic account is free, but if you find yourself becoming a regular geocacher, you will probably want to upgrade to Premium Membership, with a host of extra features.

A GPS device gives you the ability to download and navigate to co-ordinates of geocaches. There are many dedicated devices on the market available from any good outdoor shop. Some are even designed for geocaching with locations pre-loaded. Things to look for are battery life, ruggedness, the ability to link to a computer and quality of mapping; in an ideal world, particularly if you want to hunt out the more remote geocaches on Dartmoor, you should have access to OS mapping, or the ability to buy and upload digital OS mapping. Alternatively, use a cheaper GPS device, but make sure you have a paper OS map in your hand to check your route finding against!

The rise of smartphones with built in GPS and internet access has made geocaching even more convenient; simply download the apps to link directly to your account on geocaching.com. If you are venturing out onto Dartmoor, do think about how waterproof your device might be and what sort of battery life you might expect. Once you have a GPS device, head to geocaching.com, search and download the details of a geocache near you, and off you go! Once you have found the geocache, sign the logbook and return the geocache to its original position, and update your log online to share with others.

On a serious note, if you are venturing into remote and pathless parts of Dartmoor (or elsewhere), it is always wise to have a map and compass, and basic navigation skills, together with food and spare clothing.

places that appeal, and usually off the beaten track.” A favourite geocache has been Beardown Man, and the very remote spots such as Fur Tor and Cut Hill, but a recent hunt took him to Yealm Waterfall, which may have taken the honours – for now! You can check out David’s recent activity, and geocaches that he maintains himself, at geocaching.com under the name “Dartmoor Dave”.

Aside from fresh air, exercise and exploration, geocaching can be extremely sociable – aside from online conversation there are many local groups, and even special “Eventcaches” which happen at a named time and place, enabling other geocachers to meet socially.

Paul Cantor, from Newton

Abbott, made a good friend when he offered to take out a newcomer to the sport, and they now regularly meet up to geocache. Paul and his family (geocache ID: “Cantor Clan”) have clocked up over 1500 finds since starting in 2005, and own a total of 77 caches that they maintain, with around 30 on Dartmoor.

With two daughters, Paul says that geocaching has been a great way of doing an activity together that has been exciting for the children. One of the best aspects has been the “trackables” – items of treasure that are tracked from geocache to geocache as items are swapped. As Paul says, “By checking on the website they can see where their

trackables have got to – with several now travelling around the USA, Sweden and Germany”.

Paul’s tip for getting started with geocaching is to find a geocache nearby that is rated easy (all geocaches are rated out of 5 for terrain and difficulty), and to leave the more challenging ones until you have some experience. And Paul’s favourite geocache location on Dartmoor? “Difficult choice, but probably Burrator or Calver Bridge”.

With over a thousand geocaches waiting to be found on Dartmoor alone, what better way to start exploring the hidden corners of the moor than by finding your first geocache – happy hunting! ■



When looking for geocaches or letterboxes, please ensure that you:

- Only search on land where there is public access. This does not include the new access land that became available under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act, 2000. The new access rights do not specifically cover letterboxing
- Search for the letterboxes in a way that does not damage or disturb the land. Boxes are carefully hidden but you shouldn’t need to dig, lift rocks or remove stones from walls to find them
- Avoid disturbing wildlife and stock – particularly during the lambing and ground nesting bird season (1 March to 31 July) and do not search for letterboxes at the following sensitive sites during that time: Cut Hill/Fur Tor area (GR 59 82, GR 58 83), Tavy Cleave (GR 55 83), Headland Warren (GR 68 81, GR 69 81) and the quarries at Swell Tor (GR 56 73). If you become aware of birds hovering close by please move away.
- Replace the box carefully and leave it as you would hope to find it.
- If you find a box in need of attention, if it is saturated for instance, you record the details on geocaching.com, or contact the owner and/or the Letterbox 100 Club who will report the fact in their monthly update.
- Check live firing times if you are intending to visit the military ranges.

(Modified from the Dartmoor National Park code for letterboxing on Dartmoor <http://www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/visiting/vi-enjoyingdartmoor/vi-letterboxing>)

MORE INFO

www.geocaching.com – the original and most popular geocaching resource

www.gagb.co.uk – Geocaching Association of Great Britain

www.handicaching.com – a useful site that allows users to check and log the accessibility of geocaches for wheelchair users and others with poor mobility

www.dartmoor-ranges.co.uk – always check for live-firing if you are heading out into the military range on the north of Dartmoor

www.letterboxingon-dartmoor.co.uk – a link to resources for the traditional Dartmoor challenge of letterboxing

www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk/visiting/vi-enjoyingdartmoor/vi-letterboxing - information pages from Dartmoor National Park about letterboxing which is just as applicable to geocaching



WHAT'S ON

A guide to what's happening on Dartmoor over the next few months

For a wilderness area Dartmoor has a lot going on from sporting endurance events, family woodland fun days, outdoor skills workshops to wildlife safaris and nocturnal rambles - check out this summer's events. Details of events on the moor can also be found at www.dartmoor.co.uk/site/events

There is also a broad range of specialist walks, family days out and children's events on offer led by the Dartmoor National Park Guides. To find out more pick up a copy of Explore Dartmoor, the National Park Authority's events and activities programme, from a National Park Information Centre, or visit www.dartmoor-npa.gov.uk and click on Visiting/Explore Dartmoor.

MAY

1 Gilead Fun Run Further information: Email: lois.samuel@gilead.org.uk tel: 01837 851240

The Tale of Two Dartmoor Rivers (Ivybridge) The Erme. Booking essential 01822 890414

An exhibition of fine art photography by Russell Stone. National Trust Sexton's Cottage, Widecombe-in-the-Moor, until 4pm. Contact 01364 621321, until Monday 30 May 2011

2 'Good For You' Stroll (Burrator Quarry) A gentle informative walk. More information from Dartmoor National Park 01626 832093

7 Dowsing workshop Okehampton. Further information 01392 426692

7 Beginner's Guide to Map and Compass (Princetown). For details and to book 01822 890414

7-8 National Trust Family Woodland Sculpture Day Lydford Gorge. Further information: 01822 820320/820441

8 Cranmere Pool or Bust (Okehampton Moor) A challenging walk to probably the most famous letterbox on Dartmoor. Further information from Dartmoor National Park 01626 832093

12 Granite Quarries & Bronze Age archaeology walk. Further information: 01752 341377

13 Pilates Body Walk (Princetown) Further information on 01822 618660 or 07976 289260

14-15 Ten Tors

21 60th Anniversary Walk The many faces of Dartmoor (Postbridge). Further information from Dartmoor National Park 01626 832093

22 Dartmoor Cycle Charity cycle ride for Cancer Research UK. Further information email DartmoorCycle2011@gmail.com or call Sylvia on 07775-657159 or email Sylvia.arlett@cancer.org.uk

22 Wild Woods 'n Willow Family Bushcraft Day. Further Information www.wildwoodswillow.org.uk or telephone Charlie 01647 432769

26 National Trust Nightjar walk Plym Bridge. Further information: 01752 341377

28 National Trust Woodland Fun Day Lydford Gorge. Further information: 01822 820320/820441

28 100 Years of Food Trail opens - Castle Drogo. Further information 01647 433306

28 6 Days of Art begins. Open studio event in Teignbridge. Further information www.teignartists.co.uk

28 GPS - Get Lost on Dartmoor No More! Princetown. Further information 01822 890414

30 Children's Dartmoor Discovery Trail (Hound Tor). Further information from Dartmoor National Park 01626 832093

31 National Trust Nightjar walk Plym Bridge. Further information 01752 341377

31 Birds of the open Moor (Venford Reservoir). Further information from Dartmoor National Park 01626 832093

JUNE

1 National Trust Woodland Day Explorer Day - Parke, Bovey Tracey. Further information 01626 834748

4 Dartmoor Discovery Ultra Marathon. Further information www.teignbridgetrotters.co.uk or tel 01803 528648

4 National Trust Children's Woodland Explorer Day Plymbridge Woods. Further information 01752 341377

5 Dowsing Workshop Further information email: charlespalmer@exe-coll.ac.uk or tel 01392 426692

9-10 Ancient trees field trip Ancient Tree Forum and Woodland Trust. Further information: <http://frontpage.woodland-trust.org.uk/ancient-tree-forum/affevents/events/events.htm> or email EventsATF@aol.com

16 National Trust Industries of Plymbridge walk Further information 01752 341377

19 British Heart Foundation Walk. Princetown-Nosworthy

25 Dowsing Workshop Further information email: charlespalmer@exe-coll.ac.uk or tel 01392 426692

26 Dartmoor Classic Sportive Further information www.dartmoorclassic.co.uk or email: enquiries@dartmoorclassic.co.uk

JULY

16 Dowsing Workshop Further information email: charlespalmer@exe-coll.ac.uk or tel 01392 426692

16 Haytor Heller Further information www.teignbridgetrotters.co.uk/haytor_heller/

27 Children's Stream Dipping Parke, Bovey Tracey. Further information 01626 834748

27 Wild Child Wednesdays Castle Drogo (continuing until 31st August) Further information 01647 433306

28 Children's Woodland Art Plym Bridge. Further information 01752 341377

AUGUST

4 National Trust & Upper Plym Young Bird Watchers walk. Further information 01752 341377

6 Great West Fell Race. Further information www.gwfr.co.uk

11 National Trust & Upper Plym Young Bird Watchers walk. Further information 01752 341377

8-13 Family Camp with Wildwise. Further information 01803 868269

13-14 Harrowbarrow anniversary event. Further information www.rafharrowbeer-dartmoor.org.uk or tel Michael

Hayes 01822 853679

16 National Trust Firework walk Plym Bridge. Further information 01752 341377

18 National Trust Night walk Plym Bridge. Further information 01752 341377

18 National Trust Plymbridge & Upper Plym Young Bird Watchers walk. Further information 01752 341377

21 National Trust Explorer Fun Day Lydford Gorge. Further information 01822 820320/820441

24 National Trust Explorer Day Parke, Bovey Tracey. Further information 01626 834748

25 National Trust Plymbridge & Upper Plym Young Bird Watchers walk. Further information 01752 341377

SEPTEMBER

4 Chara Challenge Cross country race. Further information: www.charafoundation.org/events/the-chara-challenge-2011/home/ or Tel: 01884 822 989; Email contact@charafoundation.org

17-18 Endurancelife Coast 2 Coast Multi-sport endurance challenge. Further information www.endurancelife.com

17 Dartmoor Yomp. Princetown - Bickleigh barracks. Further Information www.rmctf.org.uk/event/508/Dartmoor-Yomp-2010

18 Six Moor Miles - running event. Further information www.plymouthharriers.org

24 Tour of Dartmoor Cyclosportive. Further information www.pendragon-sports.com 01963 220137

OCTOBER

6 Fungus Foray Plymbridge Woods. Further information 01752 341377

9 Marie Curie Dartmoor Challenge Charity walk. Further information www.mariecurie.org.uk/en-gb/events/uk-mountain-challenges/dartmoor-uk-mountain-challenge-2011---86121/

9 St Lukes Tour de Moor Charity cycle event. Further information www.stlukes-hospice.org.uk/events/Tour-de-Moor-2011.aspx

30 Dartmoor Devil Cycle event. Further information www.dartmoordevil.co.uk

If you have an event that you would like to publicise in Active Dartmoor please email Active Dartmoor simon@activedartmoor.com
Thinking of organising an event on Dartmoor? Please contact the Dartmoor National Park Access and Recreation team on 01626 832093

DIRECTORY

Our useful list of activity providers based on and around Dartmoor

ADVENTURE OKEHAMPTON

Adventure Sports, Cycling and Mountain Biking, Canoeing, Orienteering, Adventure Sport Centre. Okehampton
01837 53916

AIRTOPIA BALLOONS

Adventure Sports, Ballooning, Flying, Aircraft/Ballooning Ugborough
01364 73969

BABENY FAR RIDING STABLES

Horse Riding. Pondsgate
01364 631296

BEER FARM

Horse Riding. Okehampton
01837 840265

BELLEVER AUDIO WALK

Walking. Bellever.

BLACKADON BARN COTTAGES

Walking. Ivybridge
01752 897034

BOVEY TRACEY GOLF CENTRE

Golf. Bovey Tracey
01626 836464

CHAGFORD SWIMMING POOL

Leisure/Swimming Pool
Chagford
01647 432929

CHOLWELL FARM & RIDING STABLES

Horse Riding. Tavistock
01822 810526

CRS ADVENTURES/DART RIVER ADVENTURES

Adventure Sports, Boating and Canoeing, Climbing and Mountaineering, Extreme Watersports, Outdoor Activity/Pursuit Centre. Ashburton
01364 653444
01364 652511

DART ROCK CLIMBING CENTRE

Adventure Sports, Climbing and Mountaineering, Adventure Sports Centre. Buckfastleigh
01364 644499

DART PLEASURE CRAFT

Boat Trip/Sightseeing
Dartmouth
01803 834488

DARTMOOR DRIVING

Horse Riding
Ashburton 01364 631438

DARTMOOR LLAMA WALKS

Walks with llamas. Ponsworthy
01364 631481

DARTMOOR NATURE TOURS

Walking, Safari Tours
Bovey Tracey
07858 421148

DARTMOOR PONY HERITAGE TRUST

Animal collection, heritage/visitor centre, event venue, nature trail
01626 355314
07890 372 709

DEVON CYCLE HIRE

Cycling and Mountain Biking
Sourton 01837 861141

DRAKE'S TRAIL

Walking, Walking Route
Tavistock to Plymouth

EASTLAKE RIDING STABLES

Horse Riding. Okehampton
01837 52513

FINLAKE RIDING STABLES

Horse Riding. Chudleigh
01626 852096

FITZWORTHY EQUESTRIAN CENTRE

Horse Riding, Riding/Trekking Centre, Car/Vehicle. Ivybridge
01752 837000

GODOLPHIN HERITAGE TOURS

Walking. Chagford
01647 433291

HAYTOR AUDIO WALK

Walking. Haytor

IBEX OUTDOOR

Adventure Sports, Boating and Canoeing, Climbing and Mountaineering, Walking, Canoeing, Adventure Sport Centre, Outdoor Activity/Pursuit Centre. Ivybridge
07971497531
01752 837082

LITTLE BIDLAKE BARN

Horse Riding. Bridestowe
01837 861233

MCCAULAY'S HEALTH CLUB

Golf. Ivybridge
01752 892512

POSTBRIDGE AUDIO WALK

Walking. Postbridge

POSTBRIDGE AUDIO WALK

Walking. Princetown

RIVER DART ADVENTURES

Adventure Sports, Fishing, Boating and Canoeing, Swimming Pool, Walking
Ashburton
01364 652511

ROADFORD LAKE

Okehampton 01566 784859

SHILSTONE ROCKS RIDING CENTRE

Horse Riding
Widcombe-in-the-Moor
01364 621281

SKAIGH STABLES

Horse Riding/Trekking Centre
Okehampton

SOUTH WEST LAKES TRUST

Fishing, Boating and Canoeing, Walking, Multi-Activity Centres, Wind Surfing, Outdoor Activity/Pursuit Centre
Okehampton
01566 778503

SPIRIT OF ADVENTURE

Adventure Sports, Cycling and Mountain Biking, Climbing and Mountaineering, Walking, Multi-Activity Centres, Canoeing, Orienteering, Activity Centre
Yelverton
01822 880277

THE DARTMOOR CENTRE

Group Accommodation and outdoor activities
Princetown
01822 890761

TREASURE TRAILS

Cycling and Mountain Biking, Walking. Devon
07960 630900

TREE SURFERS

Adventure Sports. Tavistock
01822 833409

TWO CASTLES TRAIL

Walking, Walking Route
Okehampton
01837 53020

WEEK FARM

Fishing/Fishery. Okehampton
01837 861221

WELLARD & SCOTT LTD

Tavistock
01566 780393

WEST DEVON WAY

Walking/Walking Route
Okehampton
01837 53020

WINGSTONE FARM

Horse Riding. Manaton
01647 221215

WRANGATON GOLF CLUB

Golf. Wrangaton
01364 73229

PROVIDER PROFILE

WILD WOODS 'N WILLOW - CONNECTING YOUNG PEOPLE WITH NATURE



Wild Woods 'n Willow is a Dartmoor based not-for-profit organisation offering bushcraft and nature awareness activity days, camps and birthday adventures for young people.

A day out with Charlie, Dan and Linda is bound to inspire wonder and respect for nature whilst they pass on their practical skills and knowledge essential for feeling truly at home in the wilder places. The Dartmoor landscape is at the heart of their activities where they have access to some beautiful wild sites around the moor for their activities.

Skills you'll learn with Wild Woods 'n Willow include tracking, fire making, safe knife use, craft work, shelter building, wild food foraging, stalking, the art of invisibility, understanding the language of the birds and much much more.

"We look forward to sharing with you round our campfire..."
www.wildwoodswillow.org.uk





this is dartmoor
this is real dartmoor
in all its glory and splendour
here waiting for you to experience it

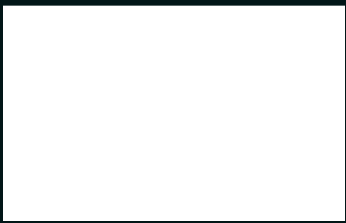
from hiking and biking and the great outdoors, get on to the moor and just do. see ponies and nature at every turn, unique little villages and age old ruins, castles, culture and tradition and heaps of real community spirit.

and at the end of the day, settle down at a dartmoor pub, eat fresh local food and sleep deeply in your bed. whatever your idea of the perfect getaway, you can find it here on dartmoor. from cosy B&Bs, boutique hotels, and breathtaking campsites, to picture postcard cottages, guest houses and bunkhouses, dartmoor has more than you might imagine.

this spectacular landscape is yours to explore. bring the kids, bring friends and family, bring lovers or just enjoy your own space. what are you waiting for?

**For everything you need to know about Dartmoor, to plan your trip,
and to enter our activity competition, log onto the website**

www.dartmoor.co.uk/site/activity-competition



TRAILVENTURE



CLOTHING, FOOTWEAR & EQUIPMENT FOR THE OUTDOOR LIFE

Two floors of outdoor clothing, footwear and equipment for the whole family!
Increasing range of childrenswear – get them outside!

 sprayway

 berghaus

 AIGLE

 **PARAMO**
DIRECTIONAL
CLOTHING SYSTEMS



Paramo Directional Clothing Systems; Ideal Dartmoor weather clothing – waterproof, warm, quiet and comfortable – From left to right: Mens Alta II Jacket – cobalt . Ladies Alta II Jacket (Cerise) . Men and Ladies Velez Adventure Light Smocks (Reef / Dolphin Blue) . Cascada Jacket (Forest Green) . Velez Adventure Trousers (Black)

TRAILVENTURE, 7 NORTH STREET, ASHBURTON TQ13 7QJ

TEL: 01364 652522

Open Monday - Saturday 09.00 - 5.30pm / Sunday 11.00 - 4.00pm

EMAIL: mail@trailventure.co.uk WEBSITE: www.trailventure.co.uk