

## THE WALK

This walk takes you on either side of a lovely stretch of the River Ribble just above Ribchester. It is a countryside of quiet charm; pastures and woods which in autumn add a splendid dash of colour to the riverside scene.

**Start:** Marles Wood Car park. From Junction 31 M6 take the A59 towards Clitheroe. Keep on this through Osbaldeston and then turn left at traffic lights onto the B6245 Ribchester Road. Just before Ribchester Bridge continue along a lane. After a mile and a half turn left into the car park off a wooded brow. Return to the lane, turn right and walk to Ribchester Bridge. The lane is narrow but quiet; even so it would be best to walk on the right facing on coming traffic. At the bridge cross the Ribble and turn right onto the farm lane leading down to Dewhurst House Farm. Now on the Ribble Way the route turns right as it enters the yard and after a stile emerges close to the river. For the next 2 1/2 m 4k follow the Ribble Way as it enters Haugh Wood and then crosses pastures to put you on a farm lane above Hey Hurst. Turn right and then left over a stile. Continuing across a field drop to a footbridge on the edge of Clough Bank Wood. Keep ahead with the field boundary on your right as you traverse three fields to reach the lane below Trough House. Turn left and pass between farm buildings on an improving lane. 300m from Trough House turn right onto a footpath. After crossing a strip of meadow the route skirts the edge of woods above the river. Still on the Ribble Way continue for 400m just before the path dips down towards the river. Turn left onto a footpath (waymarked) and begin to gently ascend towards Hurst Green. The path cross the clough the right and then a large pasture to emerge in Hurst Green to the right of the Shireburn Arms. As well as the Shireburn Arms Hotel, Hurst Green has two other pubs so you may wish to avail yourself of their facilities if refreshment is required. It is becoming more widely known that JRR Tolkien used this part of Lancashire as the model for his descriptions of the Shire in his fantasy books "The Hobbit" and "Lord of the Rings" and indeed there is a Tolkien Trail to be followed details of which may be obtained from the Shireburn. On reaching the road turn left and then beyond the hotel left again on a lane leading down to Lambing Clough. Beyond Lambing Clough you will pick up, for a short distance, your outward trail. Continue to Trough House and then immediately after passing through the yard turn left onto a footpath leading down to Dinckley suspension bridge. In his



# Pastures and trees



superb book "Walks in Ribble Country" (Cicerone Press 1999) Jack Keighley notes that the bridge had been erected in 1951 to replace a boat ferry operated by the farmer of Trough House, an individual whose deafness was commercially selective. As passengers had to shout across the river to attract

## FACTFILE

**Distance:** 6m 10k

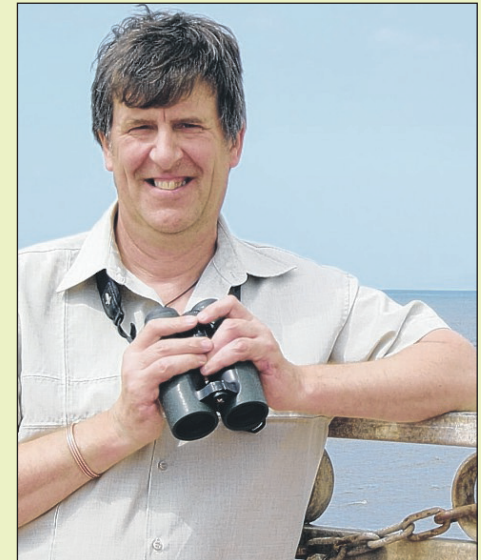
**Time:** 2.5 - 3.5 hours

**Summary:** Generally easy walking across farm land and through woods. The first 1.5 miles involves a road walk

**Map:** OS Explorer 287 West Pennine Moors

his attention it seemed he never heard them until there was a boat full. The suspension bridge straddles a delightful reach of the Ribble. Cross it and turn right to follow the river downstream. After about 1000m the route enters Marles Wood. When the path divides with one branch leading to a wooden footbridge bear left up along a concessionary path leading to the rear of the car park.

*Walk devised and described by John Griffiths and Bob Clare. Hit [www.lancashirewalks.com](http://www.lancashirewalks.com) for more walks exploring the diversity of the Lancashire countryside.*



## SEAWATCH

WITH DAVID MCGRATH, BLACKPOOL'S SUSTAINABILITY MANAGER

During the summer children's groups were seeking out wonderful sea-shells and other wildlife along the sea wall at South Beach - cockles, mussels, razor shells, and others. After storms we found huge numbers of starfish and a few of Britain's largest and perhaps most bizarre worm, the sea mouse with its 'optic fibre-like' spines. Not only that but the large shell the Iceland Cyprina can also be found after heavy weather - this seashell, or more correctly mollusc, is the planet's longest living animal, specimens from other parts of the world have been found to be over 400 years old! It is not known how old 'ours' are. But it is the sea wall itself where the most interest lies. The new wall is about 10 years old and hundreds of holes have been colonised by different creatures and seaweeds.



Over the last three years we have started to find species not seen before, such as the striking fish the Blenny, the pretty Beadlet Anemone and an as yet unidentified species of Kelp seaweed. There are even colonies of the nationally rare reef-builder, the Honeycomb Worm, Blackpool's version of a tropical corals. Now we have our own 'rocky shore' these species are able to colonise a whole length of coastline that previously wasn't suitable for them. Who knows what previously undiscovered wildlife is living in those 'holes'? Over the coming years the Liverpool Bay Marine Recording Partnership aims to find out. You can explore them yourself from the beach but we would very strongly advise that you only look in the bottom two layers of holes and don't climb up to the higher ones as the concrete can be dangerously slippery. Also make sure you know when the tide is due in. For details of how your group can help explore Blackpool's newest habitat contact David McGrath at the Solaris Centre, [www.solariscentre.org](http://www.solariscentre.org), or ring (01253) 478020. David is holding an exhibition of photographs of Blackpool's wildlife at the Solaris Centre this month. To find out what wildlife has been seen in Blackpool recently hit [www.b4me.com/naturewatch](http://www.b4me.com/naturewatch)