

THE WALK

Woods in autumn should be enjoyed within and without. This walk around Silverdale will allow you to do just that on a circuit from near the village taking in the sea shore and inland waters.

Start: National Trust car park at Eaves Wood, Park Road, Silverdale. Exit 35 M6. Join A6 northbound. Keep on A6 for a little over two miles. Turn left into Nineteen Acre Lane opposite sign for Cinderbarrow Car Park. At the junction turn right into Silverdale Road. Follow Storrs Lane past Leighton Moss RSPB reserve to reach a T junction. Turn right. Pass station on right. As the road leads round bend to right, turn left into Park Road. The car park is a short distance on the right.

Directions. Enter Eaves Wood on a track at the rear of the car park. After 200m at a junction of tracks turn left towards the Cove. The track skirts the edge of the wood and you follow it all the way to Silverdale but in 500m you may wish to make a detour up to "the Pepperpot" a memorial cairn built for Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee. This superlative viewpoint is well worth the effort. On descent be sure to pick up the signs for "the Cove". Once out of the woods the path threads its way through a residential area to reach Cove Road. Unsurprisingly this leads down to the Cove. Lancashire's coast line is not its most interesting natural feature but here the combination of limestone and bay creates a picturesque scene.

From the Cove take a footpath on the left that leads across pastures to reach Shore Road. Here turn left and keep ahead at the first junction on Stankelt Road heading towards Carnforth. After 500m at the next main road junction bear left into Bottoms Lane. Pass the first footpath on the right and take the second one that after passing a cottage enters

Burton's Well Wood. Here is yet another deeply satisfying piece of woodland that abound in this area. The route

crosses Lambert's Meadow and then, after another stretch of woodland, arrives at the Row. Turn right on this lane and walk down to the next junction some 10-12mins away. Turn left and then right into Storrs Lane. Almost immediately on the right you will pass the RSPB visitor centre for the nationally important Leighton Moss Wildlife Reserve. Continue along the lane for 350m and then turn right onto a broad track that leads across the wetlands of Leighton Moss. You may wish to spend a while in the large hide to the left of the track. At the far side pass through a gate and take the track leading past an



Seashore or inland?

impressively buttressed barn to reach Grisedale Farm. Keep on the farm road and when it reaches Home Farm turn left onto a footpath. This leads across fields to Yealand Storrs. After the first gate the hedge is on your right. Maintain the northward direction



and after 500m the boundary switches to your left. On reaching the village turn left. Walk down to the next junction and turn left into Storrs Lane then immediately right onto a footpath leading into Yealand Hall Allotment.

The next section of the route requires a degree of concentration so not to overshoot the required footpath for Hawes Water. Follow the well maintained track for 800m (12mins) through woodland and then along the edge of fields. At this point locate a squeeze stile next to a metal gate on the left. Pass through this and on a barely discernible path

FACTFILE

Distance: 11k

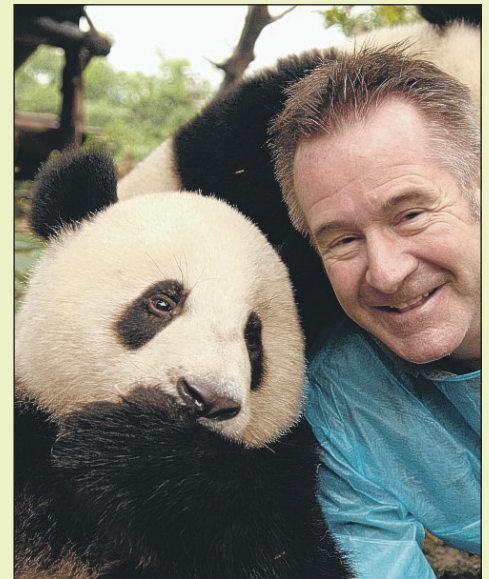
Time: 3 - 4 hours

Summary: Mainly easy walking, optional Pepperpot climb

Map: OL 7 Explorer: The English Lakes; South-eastern area

cross the meadow to reach a wall with a reassuring sign post. Keep ahead into Gait Barrows Nature Reserve. Across a meadow follow the path down to a kissing gate to enter the woods that edge around Hawes Water. Turn right. Keep on the footpath to its junction with a bridleway then turn left onto the bridleway. This leads down to Ford Lane. Turn left. After 350m cross a stone stile on the right. In a 100m on reaching a lane turn left, then right on a footpath that crosses the railway. Exercise caution crossing the line. Keep ahead on a path that crosses a service road leading into Waterslack Nursery and then into Eaves Wood. Keep on the track until it reaches the junction leading left to the car park.

Walk devised John Griffiths and Bob Clare. Hit www.lancashirewalks.com for more walks exploring the diversity of the Lancashire countryside.



NATUREWATCH with Liam Creedon

Scientists have gone to extreme lengths to encourage pandas, these shy and retiring creatures, to breed. This has involved giving male bears the anti-impotence drug Viagra and encouraging them to watch explicit videos of other pandas mating. But all to no avail, the species, which numbers in total just over 2,000, seemed to be slipping irrevocably towards oblivion, that was until Chinese efficiency stepped in to save the day. In the last few years a series of specialist breeding centres have sprung up at panda hotspots across China. These centres have started producing startling results, boosting the number of cubs being born and giving scientists vital clues into panda behaviour. Experts plan to release some of these bears back into the wild in a bid to give the species a firm footing once again. It was here it was discovered that pandas need no encouragement to breed - they just don't like doing it for very long. Nigel Marven (above), one of the UK's leading wildlife presenters and a self-confessed panda nut, has just returned from one centre - Chengdu, in Western China, where he was filming the bears. He explains: "It is a terrible myth that pandas don't like sex. They do, but the female only likes it for three days a year. We didn't know how to match-make for them properly in captivity which is why they didn't breed, but if you get the female in the right state with the male then they are very successful breeders. The centres focus on ensuring that all the mother's cubs survive, a situation virtually unknown in the wild."

In the distant past when pandas boasted a more varied diet, a mother could quite easily raise two cubs. Modern pandas still produce two cubs but their bamboo diet means they can't produce enough milk for two offspring. One of the siblings nearly always dies. Nigel, 49, says: "If we lose the panda we may as well forget about everything. If you can't save the panda you aren't going to save a grasshopper or a snake. To get an interest in conservation and to get children interested you need iconic animals and the panda is one."