

Route Description:

This walk passes through some delightful Devon countryside, passing close to the River Lew and some perfect otter habitat. The walk also passes through a deer farm with large herds of roe deer. Depending on the weather, this area can be very muddy. The walk continues through farms and farmland before returning to Hatherleigh.

Directions to start from Ruby Park:

Drive out of Ruby Park to the end of the access road by the post box. Zero your milometer.

Turn right into the road.

0.2 miles, Metherell Cross, turn left on to A3079 towards Holsworthy.

2.0 miles, Halwill Junction mini roundabout, turn right towards Black Torrington.

3.1 miles at Chapel, bear right to keep on same road through Chilla.

5.3 miles, Beara Cross, turn right on to A3072 towards Hatherleigh.

10.3 miles, Hatherleigh, at roundabout go straight across

10.4 miles, turn left signed Market car park, by the Co-op. Park in the Pay and Display car park. The walk starts here.

Walk directions:

1, SS 540 044, 0 miles: From the car park go to the far end of the car park by the recycling bins and go through the opening to pass by the Livestock Market building on your right. Go ahead through the market to reach the NFU Mutual building, bearing right to pass it on your left. Unless you want to visit the village, ignore the wide road up to the right, instead turn left signed Public Footpath (over to the right) to a stile in the far corner.

2, SS 539 046, 0.1 miles: Now take the path to the left, ignoring the one ahead/right. Cross the next stile

immediately and bear right to follow the track. Cross the next stile by a gate to then pass through the underpass under the main road. Cross the next stile by a gate, then soon cross a little footbridge to continue ahead to the next stile by a gate.

3, SS 535 049, 0.5 miles: Now follow along by the old trees on your right to reach the river. Cross the stile here to follow the path above the river. At the next gate above the river follow the path bearing to the right to soon reach the river bank.

4, SS 532 050, 0.8 miles: Soon you reach the old railway embankment. Pass through the kissing gate, straight across the embankment and through the other kissing gate, now bearing right through this field. Go across to the road bridge ahead to a stile beside it.

5, SS 531 052, 0.9 miles: Cross the river bridge and follow the road as it winds up hill. Ignore the gate on the left to Lewer Bottom. Soon the road levels out. Now ignore gates on your left keeping on the road as it gently rises again.

6, SS 520 056, 1.7 miles: On reaching a Public Footpath sign to the left, follow the track to Keyethern Farm by the cattle grid. Continue ahead over the next cattle grid and the next one, using the ladder stile of the deer fencing if you do not want to risk stepping over the cattle grid, ignoring the footpath off to the left.

7, SS 513 054, 2.3 miles: Cross the next cattle grid or use the gates on the right of it. At the tall gates ahead, pass through both of them, keeping on the muddy track ahead.

8, SS 508 054, 2.6 miles: At the end pass through the next high gate and go over to the metal high kissing gate



Hatherleigh shepherds sculpture

to now go straight away from it keeping the left-hand field boundary on your left down into the valley.

9, SS 508 051, 2.8 miles: Near the bottom of this field go through a high metal gate on the left, over a bridge and stile, turning right to follow a small stream on your right. Go down to a stile in the corner, cross the stream and up the steps to cross the next stile. Now follow the field boundary hedge on your right up this field to a stile in the top corner.

10, SS 506 047, 3.2 miles: Now turn left to follow this road through a right-hand bend, then a left-hand bend.

11, SS 511 042, 3.8 miles: Then when it turns to the right again, take the Public Footpath on the left down a track by Higher Pulworthy. At Lower Pulworthy take the steps on the right up to a stile to then bear left across the field to another pair of stiles. Go into the field ahead and bear left to follow its left boundary to a gate in the corner.

12, SS 515 043, 4.1 miles: Now bear right through

the woods to an abandoned stile and to a footbridge over a stream to a stile. Go straight ahead up this field to the top corner to pass through a gap by a stile, bearing left up a green lane.

13, SS 516 042, 4.2 miles: Very shortly take a stile on the right in a hedged bank, then



Periwinkles



Deer at Keyethern Farm

bear left to the next stile in the hedge. From here bear gently left to pass under the telegraph wires to a ladder stile in the far left corner.

14, SS 519 044, 4.4 miles: From here go ahead to the track turning right on to it to pass through a gate and downhill.

15, SS 521 044, 4.6 miles: On reaching the track across you with the road over to your right, turn left up this track.

16, SS 521 046, 4.7 miles: Soon turn right signed Public Footpath along a level track to the next gate on the left. Pass through and follow this field boundary on your right to a gate.

17, SS 523 047, 4.9 miles: Pass through this gate and go straight down this field to a stile ahead. From this stile ignore the gate on the right, bearing left and then follow the shrubby bank on your right. When it goes off more to the right, you now need to bear down right towards a solitary large tree where there is a gate hidden from view, which is beside a drinking trough.

18, SS 527 046, 5.1 miles: Go through this gate and turn right by the right-hand field boundary to the gate ahead. Pass through this gate to the next gate straight ahead. Go through this gate and over to the footbridge to reach the old railway crossing gate to cross the old railway track and pass the cottages to a bridle gate.

19, SS 529 044, 5.3 miles: Now bear left and left again up steps along to a stile. Cross this field to the next double stile. Now bear right across the field to the far gate.

20, SS 532 043, 5.5 miles: From this gate follow the left-hand edge of this field to a gate in the corner and on to a gate ahead on a track. Cross the stile by the cattle grid and go ahead along a concrete road.

21, SS 537 042, 5.7 miles: Cross the stile by the next cattle grid next to the river. Cross the next stile by a gate and on to reach the road.

22, SS 539 041, 5.8 miles: Turn left to the roundabout and carefully cross over the main road towards the Town Centre. Cross the river bridge following the road round to the left. Turn left by the Co-op to the Market car park.

*Walk written by: Bryan Cath of West Country Walks. For more walk leaflets go to www.westcountrywalks.co.uk
Photographs by: Bryan Cath
Information on Ruby Lodge at www.rubylodge.co.uk
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Walks at Ruby Lodge

Hatherleigh via Keyethern Farm

5.9 miles, circular



Fact file:

Highlights: Hatherleigh Market, disused railway track, deer farm, river valley scenery, otter habitat

Start Grid ref: SS 540 044

Distance: 5.9 miles, circular

Height gained/lost: 159 metres, moderate to easy with one drawn out climb. Could be very muddy in parts.

Highest Point: 124 metres

Lowest Point: 62 metres

Toilets: At start

Eating Places: Hatherleigh

Time required: 3hr 10 min, plus stops

Mileages shown are cumulative

The route directions will take you around this walk without using the OS grid references, if preferred.