



BALLATER WALKING FESTIVAL



The Walks of 2022

The 2022 walks will be bookable of January 10th.

Ballater Walking Festival offers a programme designed for walkers of all capabilities from keen Corbett baggers to pleasant rambles. Each walker can choose to take part in whatever grade of walk they feel suits them best and can participate on as many as six days or as few as one. Most of the walks are situated within the Cairngorms National Park, though a few enter parts of West Aberdeenshire.

Each day, three categories of walk are available: Easy, Medium and Strong. Easy walks are up to six or seven miles long and normally have a minimum of gradient; Medium walks typically measure around ten to twelve miles and may include some substantial hills or the occasional Corbetts. Strenuous walks either include several hundred metres of ascent or are of considerable length.

These walks are led by local residents, or full-time rangers from Aberdeenshire Council or Balmoral Estate, many of whom have special knowledge of the wild life, vegetation or local history which they are happy to share with visitors.

Places on Walks can be booked through the [Visit Ballater](#) website from January 10th 2022.

SATURDAY 21 MAY



STRONG

WALK 1. Baddoch / Altanour / Inverey

From the A93 we enter the grassy Glen of the Baddoch and follow a track alongside the Burn. The track ends at a height of 630m from where we skirt the south of An Socach on heathery slopes, through a bealach, descending to Glen Ey, where we pick up a track at the ruined Altanour Lodge. From here we pick up a good estate road for a long descent past the now collapsed Colonel's Bed and many ruins, to finish at Inverey.

Depart by BUS from Ballater. 8am

Duration approx. 9 hours

Distance 21 km / 13 miles

Ascent. 378m / 1240 ft.

Start Baddoch Layby on the A93. Finish Inverey.

GR Start NO 138 832. Finish NO 089 892. Map Landranger 43.

MEDIUM

WALK 2. Invercauld to Auchallater via Glen Beg

We start at the Old Bridge of Dee and make our way up through the glorious Ballochbuie Forest and Glen Beg. After about 2.5 miles we leave the trees behind and continue through the upper reaches of the beautiful open glen. Following a steeper climb to the watershed, we cross into Glen Callater, passing Loch Phadruig and descending steadily to the Callater track. We follow this down to our finish at Auchallater. The track is rough in places and disappears from time to time!

Depart by BUS from Ballater. 9am.

Duration approx. 5 hours.

Distance. 13km / 8 miles.

Ascent. 396m / 1300ft

Start Keiloch. Finish Auchallater.

GR. Start. NO188911. Finish. NO156882.

Map. Landranger 43

EASY

WALK 3 Edibles and Medicinals : Natural & Culture Heritage Walk.

This walk will be led by the Aberdeenshire Council Marr Area Ranger who will promote responsible foraging under SOAC. We will examine examples of things people used in the past for food, medicine & also shelter & clothing. Ready prepared foraged food samples will be available for tasting after the walk in the car park + recipes to share.

Depart from Cambus O' May Forest car park 10am

Own Transport. Circular

Duration. Approx. 2.5 hours

Distance. Approx. 2 miles / 3 km

Ascent. Negligible.

Start & Finish NO403980

Maps Landranger 37/44, Explorer OL59

SUNDAY 22 MAY



STRONG

WALK 4 Carn Bhac (Munro)

Càrn Bhac is a rounded mountain deep in the wilds of the Mounth south of Inverey. This is one of the less visited Munros. This full day's hillwalking will give us excellent views of the Southern Cairngorms on a clear day. The ascent is from Glen Ey, and Glen Connie via the ridge to Carn Creagach. The planned return is over Geal Charn to the west of Carn Bhac and then heading north to Carn Liath (815m), descending to Inverey through the pinewood.

Depart from Inverey Carpark 9am
Own Transport. Circular. Carpark £3.00
Duration approx 8 hours.
Distance 18km / 11 miles.
Ascent 900m / 2950ft
Start & Finish GR N0 089892 . Map.
Landranger 43

MEDIUM

WALK 5 Birse – Carn Ferg - Glen Cat

We depart from the Balfour Forest carpark- (Birse Community Trust) and venture through the forest of Birse to the track leading up to Carnferg. We descend down the Fungle and the Gwaves and on past Birse Castle. Here we visit the remote Birse church and hut circle by the Water of Feugh. We continue on up through the Forest of Birse and down into to the beautiful farmland of Glen Cat, where we meet our transport back to Ballater.

Depart by BUS from Ballater Green Hut 9am.
Duration approx. 6 hrs.
Distance. 16km / 10 miles
Ascent. 516m / 1694ft
Start Mains of Balfour Trust car park.
Finish woodland below Glen Cat.
Start GR NO 555965. Finish NO 550939.
Landranger Map 44.

EASY

WALK 6 Around Craig Leek

The walk begins along a private road and into pinewoods. Castellated Invercauld House and a Henry Moore sculpture can be glimpsed through the trees. Then we'll turn right and follow a track uphill past the remains of a lime kiln until we reach a small heather thatched shelter known as the Fog House. The word fog is a local name for heather. There are excellent views from here before we climb a bit further and go round the north side of Craig Leek. Then it is downhill through an area where there is evidence of former houses and steadings. There is a ford to cross before we reach Fellagie and the carpark.

Depart from Keiloch Carpark. 10am.
Own Transport. Circular. Parking £3.00. Toilets
Duration approx. 4.5 hrs.
Distance. 10.5km / 6.5 miles
Ascent 215 m / 700 ft GR. Start and Finish NO233938. Maps Landranger 43 / 44

MONDAY 23 MAY



STRONG

WALK 7 Ben MacDui and Derry Cairngorm - 2 Munros

A long, challenging walk taking you to the highest point in the Cairngorms. The route starts in the ancient Caledonian forest surrounding the Linn of Dee before following a good land rover track to Derry Lodge. From here we will gain height onto the Munro of Derry Cairngorm and continue north to get (hopefully) a great view of Scotland's highest Loch; Loch Etchachan. It's then just a short, steep climb to the barren plateau of Ben Macdui. Descent will be by the Sron Riach ridge into Glen Luibeg. The walk is mainly on rough mountain paths with some short boulder field sections. This is a high level route and we may be exposed to poor weather for prolonged periods

Depart from Linn of Dee Carpark. 8am
Own Transport. Circular.

Carpark £3.00. Toilets.

Duration approx 9-11 hours

Distance. 29km / 18 miles.

Ascent. 1100m. 3600ft

GR. Start & Finish NO 063898. Map Landranger 43.

MEDIUM

WALK 8 Tomintoul – Inchroy – Corgarff

This walk starts about 1 km NE of the Queen's Cairn car park at Tomintoul and heads south and then SSE on a good tar road along the east bank of the River Avon to the restored lodge at Inchroy. From there we turn east along a track to Delnadamp near the confluence of the Allt Tuileach and the Allt Veanaich which join there to form the River Don. We then continue east along the River Don to the Corgarff Castle car park where the walk finishes. There is a lot of hard surface walking made up by great scenery and an opportunity to visit Corgarff Castle which is managed by Historic Scotland.

Depart by BUS from Ballater 9am.

Duration. Approx 7 hours

Distance. 21 km / 13 miles

Ascent. 100m / 328ft

GR Start NJ 171 184 Tomintoul. Finish

NJ 253 089 Corgarff Castle Car Park.

Map Landranger 36 & 37. Expl 404

EASY

WALK 9 Wilcebe Road & 7 Wells. Glen Tanar

This is a new, interesting walk discovering the seven wells along the 'Wilcebe Road'. These wells are all engraved with the musings of an eccentric philanthropist. We start off from the Dinnet Bridge to Netherton Farm and soon come upon the first three wells, engraved with thought provoking words of wisdom! We then head on past Belrorie House to the Visitor's Centre at Glen Tanar discovering the 4th well. Retracing our steps we head down the Firmouth Road to the Glen Tanar School. Here we pass the well that is dedicated to Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. We then head back along the South Deeside Road passing a sixth well near Fasnadarroch House. The last well is in the Manse garden by the bridge.

Depart from Dinnet Village Car Park. 10am.

Distance. 8km / 5 miles. Ascent. 91m / 300ft.

Own Transport. Carpark £3.00. Circular.

Duration. Approx 4 hours

GR. Start and Finish Explorer Map 405. Ref NJ 459988

TUESDAY 24 MAY



STRONG

WALK 10 The Five White Mounth Munros.

From the Spittal of Glenmuick we climb the following munros. Broad Cairn, 998m, Cairn Bannoch, 1012m, Carn an-t Saigart Mor, 1047m, Carn a'Choire Bhoidheach, 1118m & Lochnagar, 1155m. A full day's hillwalking taking in the five Munros on the extensive White Mounth plateau, culminating with the ascent of Lochnagar. In good weather this is a hugely enjoyable round of 5 Munro's with a great sense of space and expansive views. In poorer conditions it requires careful navigation. Most of the walking is on good footpaths and landrover tracks, with some steeper, rocky sections particularly on the boulderfield ascent to Broad Cairn and descent of Jacob's Ladder from Lochnagar. If time escapes us or conditions dictate, we can shorten the distance by saving one or more of the Munro summits for another day with various options to curtail the route and return via the Dubh Loch.

Depart from Spittal of Glenmuick Carpark. 8am

Own Transport. Circular. Carpark £5.00.

Duration. Approx. 9 - 11 hours

Distance. 29km / 18 miles,

Ascent. 1230m / 4400 ft

GR. Start & Finish NO 309851. LR Map 44

MEDIUM

WALK 11 Geallaig Hill to the Gairn

This stunning walk takes us from the River Dee, over Geallaig Hill to the River Gairn. Starting from Crathie Car Park we cross the road and climb up past Crathie Kirk, picking up a track leading up to Ardoch and continuing uphill to the mast on the top of Creag Chlamhain (465m). From here are fabulous views over the Dee Valley, across to Albert's Cairn, Abergeldie Castle and Balmoral Castle. We continue uphill over moorland for approx 2km to ascend the Maim (601m). We continue on to Geallag Hill (743m) the highest point on the walk. Then we make a long descent over Creag na Creiche and Carn Dearg to a parking area on A939 near Torbeg. From here, drivers will be shuttled back (12 minutes) to Crathie Car Park.

Depart from Crathie Carpark 9am.

Own Transport. Carpark £5.00. Toilets

Linear bus shuttle

Duration. Approx 6 hrs

Distance. 14m / 11 miles

Ascent. 460m / 1600ft

Start & Finish NO 264950 LR Map 37 / 44

EASY

WALK 12 Archaeology, Heritage & Music Walk, Tarland

We will travel back in time around Tarland on a circular walk from the village square, taking a trip back over 4,000 years ago to prehistoric settlements in Drummy Wood and Tomnaverie stone circle, built by Bronze Age farmers. Across the Tarland Burn we ascend gradually to Oldtown's walled garden, then make a small diversion to Culsh earth house, an Iron Age underground storage chamber. We descend to Muirton Wood, passing Alastrean House, once home to Lord & Lady Aberdeen, then the MacRobert family with RAF connections, to return to Tarland Square.

En route we will take in part of the 'Singing Land' Music Trail featuring stories & tunes played by local fiddler Paul Anderson:

<https://www.tarland.org.uk/music-trail/>
Gentle - moderate ascent, mostly on firm grass/earth paths with some tarmac & gravel sections.

Depart from Tarland Village Square.
10am

Own Transport. Circular.

Duration. Approx. 5 hrs.

Distance. 6 miles / 10 km

Ascent. 360 ft / 110 mtrs

Start & Finish NJ 481043 Maps
Landranger 37, Explorer OL59

WEDNESDAY 25 MAY



STRONG

WALK 13 Beinn Bhreac (Munro)

Beinn Bhreac is an easily accessed Cairngorm Munro. Starting from the Linn of Dee, the route takes you through the beautiful Caledonian forest of Glen Derry before ascending through the moorland to the summit. A variation on the descent will allow more woodland to be taken in. This route contains a mix of well made tracks in the glens and some rough, boggy tracks on the hill.

Depart Linn of Dee Car Park 8am.
Own Transport. Circular. Carpark
£3.00. Toilets.
Duration. Approx. 5-7 hours
Distance. 19km / 12 miles
Ascent. 550m / 1800 ft
GR Start & Finish NO 063898. Map.
Landranger 43

MEDIUM

WALK 14 Easter Balmoral to Glen Gelder

From Easter Balmoral we set off steeply past some of the estate houses, up the Dubh-Chlais and out into the open country of Glen Gelder with its magnificent views of Lochnagar as well as some of the central Cairngorms. The opportunities for wildlife spotting are many and varied. Eventually we reach the Garmaddie Woods where a new path takes us up to the recently opened viewpoint of the Princess Royal's Cairn, followed by a descent across the Gelder Water and back to the starting point.

Depart by BUS from Ballater Green Hut
9am.
Duration. Approx 5 hours
Distance. 18km / 11.5 miles
Ascent. 451m / 1479ft
GR. Start & Finish NO 265 942.Map.
Landranger 44. Easter Balmoral.

EASY

WALK 15 The Dee and Braeroddach Circular

From the Aboyne Gliding Field carpark we follow a short section of the Deeside Way then cross the main road to follow the farm track to Braeroddach. We continue on to Balnacraig, passing Braeroddach Loch and its large bird population. We then continue to Knockenzie. Good tracks lead down to St James. Crossing back over the main road we pick up the Deeside Way and then turn off down a riverside path to Waterside. Finally, we cross the gliding field and back to our starting point via the Deeside Way. This is a mixed route of farmland, birchwoods and riverside with a bit of prehistory thrown in!

Depart from Gliding Carpark. Own
Transport. 10am.
Duration. Approx. 4 hrs
Distance 10 km / 6 miles
Ascent 80 mtrs / 260 ft. GR Start &
Finish N0493987. Map Landranger 37,
44.

THURSDAY 26 MAY



STRONG

WALK 16 Lairig Ghru

The Lairig Ghru is one of the best-known mountain-passes in Scotland. Reaching a high point of 2750 feet / 835 metres beneath the steep slopes of Ben Macdui and Braeriach, it is one of the wildest areas in the country. The route commences at the Coylumbridge and continues via Rothiemurchus Forest to the Pools of Dee, on to Glen Luibeg and Derry Lodge, and finishes at the Linn of Dee.

The terrain consists of clear paths for most of the distance, however, in the upper reaches the path is indistinct, rough, and rocky.

The Lairig is a long walk through very remote and exposed terrain where help is a long way off.

This walk is a serious undertaking and should not be undertaken lightly.

The group will be transported to the start point at Coylumbridge and collected from Linn of Dee for final transport back to Ballater at the end of the day. This is an iconic Cairngorm experience!

Depart by BUS from Ballater Green Hut. 7am.

Duration. Approx 12 - 14 hours

Distance. 30.5km / 19 miles

Ascent. 810m / 2700ft

Start NH914106 Coylumbridge. Finish NO 063898 Linn of Dee Maps Landranger 36. 43

MEDIUM

WALK 17 Linn of Quoich Circular via Clais Fearnaig

This is a very pleasant circular route starting and finishing at the Quoich Car Park. We walk in a NW direction up the beautiful Glen Quoich, passing the Punch Bowl, with its magnificent old Caledonian pines as well as a heartening flush of new trees. Just beyond the forest we branch off, in a westerly direction through the narrow pass of Clais Fearnaig (pronounced Clash Yarnick) which cuts through the ridge between Glen Quoich and Glen Lui. Approaching Glen Lui and the Derry Lodge track we pass by some former townships from where there are magnificent views of the high Cairngorms. Following the track down alongside the Lui Water we branch off through the woodland of Doire Bhraghaid to join the tar road near Mar Lodge (now NTS) and along that through more old pine woods back to the Quoich Car Park.

Depart from Quoich Carpark. 9am.

Own Transport. Circular. Carpark £3.00.

Duration. Approx 6 hours

Distance. 16 km / 10miles.

Ascent. 200m / 660 ft.

GR. Start & Finish Quoich Carpark NO 117 910. Map Landranger 43. Explorer 404.

EASY

WALK 18 Kincardine O'Neil Circular

From the car park in the historical village of Kincardine O'Neill, the route heads down to the river to the fishing hut and follows the track high above the Dee. Across the road and skirting Heugh Head we'll go through a pine wood to reach the Deeside Way. Then we'll proceed on to the Dess Waterfall, continuing on through green lanes and ancient farmland with a view towards to Lumphanan. We return along an Old Military Road back to the village.

Depart from Kincardine O'Neil

Carpark to the east of the Bowling Green. 10am

Own Transport. Circular. Duration.

Approx 4 hrs Distance. 10.5k / 6.5

miles. Ascent. 80m / 260ft

Map Landranger 37. Ref NO590997

FRIDAY 27 MAY



STRONG

WALK 19 Spittal Glen Muick to Ballater via Girnock

We leave from the Spittal of Glen Muick carpark and head towards Loch Muick. Here we head along the head of the Loch to the boathouse featured in the film 'John Brown'. We then continue back, following the Muick to the woodland at Alt-na-giubhsaich and Inchnabobart. Here we ascend NE to skirt Meall Gorm and on to Bovagli, an abandoned croft on the Balmoral Estate. We then continue back down through the beautiful Glen Girnock, to Littlemill where we pick up our transport back to Ballater.

Depart by BUS from the Green Hut at 8am.

Duration. Approx 5 Hrs

Distance. 12 miles / 19km

Ascent. 227m / 745ft.

GR Start NO 309851. Map Landranger 44. Spittal of Glen Muick. Finish NO 325958 – Littlemill.

MEDIUM

WALK 20 Auchtavan to Invercauld

A pleasant walk through birch woods and open moors with spectacular views of Lochnagar. We walk from the layby at Inver following the Feardar Burn past Thistle Dae, Balno, Balmore, Ratlich Mill and the ancient settlement of Loin to arrive at the equally ancient one of Auchtavan. This settlement is a rare survival of a traditional Highland fermtoun, where an old cruck framed house has been restored with its original 'Hingin Lum' fireplace. Also on this site is The Queen Mother's picnic cottage which remains fully equipped in its original state. From here we continue on up Glen Feardar and cross over to the track taking us down through the forest to Invercauld House and to our transport at Keiloch.

Depart by BUS from Ballater Green Hut at 9am. Duration. Approx 5 hours

Distance. 16km / 10 miles. Ascent.

150m / 500ft

GR. Start NO223938 Aberarder. Finish NO 186911 - Keiloch Maps Landranger 44, 43

EASY

WALK 21 Morrone Birkwood Circular

From the centre of Braemar, we follow the Clunie Water downstream to its confluence with the River Dee. The attractive riverside path continues upstream along the Dee, emerging on the Linn of Dee road. This we cross to enter Morrone Birkwood National Nature Reserve, with post -Ice Age vegetation similar to parts of Norway. We take the circular route anticlockwise around the reserve as far as the Cairngorms viewpoint indicator. From here we continue on a path around the base of Morrone Hill, descending to Glen Clunie and returning to the village by a quiet road alongside the river.

Depart from Braemar Carpark 10am Own Transport. Circular.

Duration. 4 hours

Distance 9km 5.5 miles

Ascent 130m 426ft

Map LR 43. GR Start & Finish NO152916

We are delighted to say that the Ballater Walking Festival will take place in May. The programme will go live on January 10th.

Obviously, due to Covid, there are still restrictions, but we have a great new programme. We have Professional Guides and volunteer leaders and helpers eager to show you around! This year, restrictions permitting, we hope to provide transport for the linear walks. For the circular walks we ask you to use your own transport.

Walkers need to prebook each walk separately using our new online booking system. There will be no registration fee. Please do not send your bookings or any cheques by post. Each walk has a limited amount of places, so please only book walks that you really want to do.

Please bring enough lateral flow tests to allow you to test prior to each walk; face masks, hand sanitiser, disposable gloves and a small first aid kit for self-treatment of minor injuries. Also bring a pen to complete the waterproof 'in case of emergency' (ICE) card, which you will be asked to complete at the start of your first walk. The ICE card should be put in the top of your rucksack, and you can also speak to the leader or a helper should you wish to give further information.

Do not forget that our climate in May can be very changeable, from freezing to roasting and anything in between! Please dress accordingly and pack your rucksack with extra gear as required. Do not forget to bring water, hot drinks, snacks/lunch, gloves, woolly bunnets, spare socks, sun hats, sunglasses, sun-cream, walking poles and £5 in coins for car parking. The leader has the authority to shorten, change or abandon any walk in the case of bad weather or dangerous terrain such as high rivers or waterlogged bogland.

We are planning evening events, but these will be arranged once the current wave of covid has passed so that we can make realistic plans.

We look forward to welcoming you to the 2022 Ballater Walking Festival.

The Committee

Carole Nicoll, Catherine Watt, Jenny Macmillan and Jean Peacock

