



BALLATER WALKING FESTIVAL



The Walks of 2023

This is the projected Ballater Walking Festival programme for June 2023.

This programme has been displayed to enable you to take time to read it and plan your week.

Transportation will be a mix of bus and own transport.

All walkers are requested to meet at the Hut on the Green at the allocated walk time (tba), where buses or car sharing will be organised.

Meeting times are normally 8.00 am for Strong Walks. 9.00 am for Moderate Walks 10.00 am for Easy Walks. However, some Strong Walks may demand an earlier start. Online booking will open on Friday 20th January. However existing Ballater Walking Festival Attendees are welcome to email us with their preferences in advance, and we will endeavour to ensure places on your desired walks. Payment can be made on our online platform or via Bank Transfer.

Saturday 3rd June

7pm – Welcome Reception

Sunday 4th June

Walk 1 – Sunday 4th June – Strong – Sgor Mor (Corbett) Circular

18km

5-7 hours

Own Transport/Car Share

£35pp

11 Max Spaces

MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 8am

Overlooked in favour of its illustrious higher neighbours, Sgor Mor's position at the centre of Mar Lodge Estate offers unrivalled views into Glen Derry and the Lairig Ghru. Our route is initially steep, rough and pathless through deep heather, but both the slope and the vegetation ease with height. We aim first for the eastern top, Sgor Dubh and then, via surprisingly good walking across the high moorland, make our way to the summit proper with its strange rocky outcrops. Descent is direct and steeply into Glen Dee, where the Chest o' Dee is the perfect place to soak our feet before the walk back to Linn o' Dee. Hosted/led by National Trust for Scotland (Mar Lodge Estate).

Walk 2 – Sunday 4th June – Medium – Peter's Hill, Lary & Abergairn Circular 17km

6 hours

Ascent: 450 m, 1480 ft

No Transport

£15 pp

20 Max Spaces

MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 9am

We leave Ballater and follow the cinder path to the Pass of Ballater. We quickly reach a good track leading in a northerly direction under Sgor Buidhe and on to Creag Riabhach. The climb is steady for 4 km or so before reaching the track from Balmenach. This is open country with extensive views. Our route skirts Peter's Hill, after which we head northwesterly. We descend a steep spur before crossing the Lary Burn. On reaching Lary we join a quiet road which we follow for about 2 km, before skirting Prony Hill and the remains of an old silver mine. Soon we reach Abergairn and the Pass of Ballater, leading us back, via the Hilton Timeshare Complex to the villa.

**Walk 3 – Sunday 4th June – Medium – Linn of Muick to Ballater Via Creag Dearg Linear 15k
9.5miles
5 hours
Ascent: 510m, 1670ft
One Way Bus
£18pp
14 Max Spaces
Repeated Thursday (Walk 16
MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 9am**

Start Linn of Muick End Ballater.

This is a high level route with excellent views over the hills around Ballater. The start point is near the Linn of Muick and immediately we start climbing, following a Landrover track up onto Creag Dearg, passing on the way an old ruined settlement. The tracks continue along the plateau past Cairn Hillock and Cairn Leuchan before dropping down the Pollagach Road to Balintober and hence back to Ballater

**Walk 4 – Sunday 4th June – Easy – Around Lumphanan
5 hours
Distance: 7km
Ascent: 90m, 295ft
Circular
Bus
£20pp
16 Max Spaces
MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 10am**

Starting from Station Square in Lumphanan, which has connections to Macbeth, we follow a circular route to the north of the village. We then continue on the old military road to the south of the village, walking through historic farmland and taking in further splendid views of the Cairngorms. After a loop around varied terrain we retrace our steps back to the village.

Monday 5th June

**Walk 5 – Monday 5th June – Strong – Glas Tulaichean (Munro)
Circular 15 km approx.
6 hours
Ascent: 700 m, 2300 ft
Own Transport/Car Share
£35pp
9 Max Spaces
MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 8am**

This is an opportunity to summit a remote West Glenshee Munro. Our approach is the more gentle southerly one from Dalmunzie House Hotel up Glenlochsie to the ruined lodge. Scotland's "first mountain railway" is still in evidence here. This route whilst gentle, is rich in social history. A track goes most of the way and brings you to the summit with fantastic open views. The summit of Glas Tulaichean, the green hillock, has a contrasting vista northwards towards the rough glaciated Glas Choire Beag and the remote Loch nan Eun . Our return route takes a different ridge line back to Dalmunzie House Hotel. Rough ground.

Walk 6 – Monday 5th June – Medium – Ballater to Glen Tanar

Linear 18km 11miles Approx.

6 hours

Ascent: 670 m, 2200 ft

One Way Bus

£18

20 Max Spaces

MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 9am

We start at Ballater and end at Inchmarnoch. This route takes us over a historic drove road and past a haunt of Lord Byron's.

We start from Church Green crossing the Dee and on to Balintober where we join the Pollagach road and follow it to the shoulder of Carn Leuchan. It's then out onto a heathery and possibly wet "path" over into Glen Tanar at the foot of Mount Keen. From here we follow another track back over the ridge above Etnach towards the Dee, passing Ballaterach where Byron used to spend holidays in his youth. The walk ends at Inchmarnoch.

Walk 7 – Monday 5th June – Easy – Bellabeg and Lost Farm

11km, 5.5 miles

Approx. 5 hours

Bus Both Ways

£20

20 Max Spaces

MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 10am

We start at Bellabeg near the war memorial and walk up past the church turning right to walk above the River Dee, before taking a track down to the Poldullie bridge – used in the filming of the Mary Queen of Scots film.

We then walk up to the A944 and turn right. Just before Strathdon Primary School we take the path up beside the school and then turn left to walk towards Roughpark Village. We head then in a NW direction on a good track to Fairy Hillock before descending to a track by the Nocht Burn which on taking a right turn, takes us back down Glen Nocht to Bellabeg.

This walk has lots of historical interest and good views.

7pm Talk/Quiz

Tuesday 6th June

Walk 8 – Tuesday 6th June – Strong – Ben Macdui (Munro) Circular

30km

Approx 9-11 hours

Own Transport/Car Share

£35pp

11 Max Spaces

MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 7am

Ben Macdui is Scotland's second highest peak and the highest in the Cairngorms. This suitably challenging walk heads up Glen Lui, past beautiful 'regenerating' pine woodland. At Derry Lodge we head for Robbers Copse, a former haunt of cattle thieves, before aiming steeply up Sron Riach, Ben Macdui's long and rough southeastern ridge. This approach offers fantastic views of Macdui's massive cliffs, from which it's a rocky kilometre to the sub-arctic summit. Return route to be decided on the day depending on group ability. We could include a second munro but this would make a longer and more strenuous day. Good estate tracks for first 8km. Thereafter, rough mountain paths with uneven, rocky sections. Hosted/led by National Trust for Scotland (Mar Lodge Estate)

Walk 9 – Tuesday 6th June – Medium – Cairn Liath Circular

15km

6 hours

Ascent: 500m. 1600ft

Bus both ways

£22pp

20 Max Spaces

MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 9am

Start and end at Inverey

From the car park at Inverey we cross the Water of Eye then follow it upstream to its junction with the Allt Cristie, which we then follow westward on the mile ascent to the end of the track. A short excursion from here should take us to the grave of Sgt Davies and then it's on to the summit of Cairn Liath where the view of the entire Cairngorm range is breath-taking. The return is down the ridge to Carn na Moine and on to Inverey – a stunning walk on a clear day.

Walk 10 – Tuesday 6th June – Easy – Tarland Way Special

Interest – Archaeology & Music

Linear 12km

Approx 4 hours

Bus both ways

£20pp

20 Max Spaces

MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 10am

Starting at Tarland Square, we follow the brown route clockwise past Tomnaverie then cut across to yellow route in Drummy Wood. We follow this clockwise & back into village centre, incorporating 3 music trail points near Tomnaverie and several in the Square. We continue clockwise on the green route along the Coull road passing the bird hide, then across the Tarland Burn back to Tomnaverie.

Here are Tarland walking/music trail routes to help you visualise!

Walking – Visit Tarland

Music Trail – Visit Tarland

Wednesday 7th June Strong

Walk 11 – Wednesday 7th June – Strong – Jock’s Road Linear

21.5km

Approx. 8 hours Ascent:

700m, 2300ft Bus both

ways

£45pp

25 Max Spaces

MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 7am

We start Glendoll and end at Auchallater-a long bus transfer before we begin!

This was one of the well known drove roads of old and the scene of a famous legal case in the 1880s. We start at the Glendoll Lodge car park and head up Glendoll on a good track. We soon start climbing up to the high plateau and the scene of more than one winter tragedy. Time and weather permitting, we may take the short detour to Tom Buidhe and Tolmount, both Munros, but otherwise we continue on high ground until the drop into Glen Callater. Thereafter, it’s an easy walk to the bus at Auchallater.

Walk 12 – Wednesday 7th June – Medium – The Coyles of Muick

Linear 12km

6 hours

Ascent: 480 m, 1600 ft

One way Bus

20 Max Spaces

MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 9am.

Starting at Loch Ullachie we head up to the moorland, skirting Creag Liath and along the tree line over Meall Dubh to the Coyles and the cairn.

We then turn onto Loinmuie and head down through the Alltcailleach Forest and across the Birkhall Road. Here we take the path to Dorsincilly farm

to visit Knock Castle. We return to Ballater passing Dallyfour Farm, (the home of many Highland Coos), crossing the Bridge of Muick and on to the footpath back to Ballater.

Walk 13 – Wednesday 7th June – Easy – Ballogie to Birse.

Linear 5.6 miles.

Approx 3 hours

Ascent 1241 ft Bus

both ways

£20pp

14 Max Spaces

MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 10am

Heading SW from the tarred road, we pass by the Riding Centre ‘Highlands Unbridled’, where native highland ponies are used for long distance hacks. We continue on through Glencat and skirt Lamahip Hill, returning via the Forest of Birse. This walk showcases the beauty and history of the area.

Can be wet underfoot.

Walk 14 – Wednesday 7th June – Easy – Special interest – Belwade Farm 3 miles.

Approx. 3 hrs

Own Transport/Car Share

£15pp

20 Max Spaces

MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 10am

Walk and presentation.

Belwade's mission is to work with horses and horse owners to help rehome and improve welfare standards of old and ailing horses. The Farm enjoys a scenic location.

7pm Dinner

Thursday 8th June

Walk 15 – Thursday 8th June – Strong – Beinn A'Bhuird

Circular 30km

9-11 hours

Own Transport/Car Share

£30pp

11 Max Spaces

MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 7am

Start & end Quoich Carpark

Here we visit the enormous flat summit plateaux of Beinn a' Bhuid, the Hill of the Table, and peer into its reclusive corries. It's 7km just to reach its base, but the walk through Glen Quoich's beautiful woodland is reward in itself. Thereafter it's a steady and occasionally steep climb up An Diollaid to the South Top. Descent is via the steep but shapely ridge of Carn Fiaclach, and out via Glen Quoich's eastern track. Along the way we'll visit the Punchbowl, where the 1715 Jacobite uprising began. Good estate tracks in the glen, rough and frequently loose stony paths on the hill itself. There are two unbridged river crossings. Hosted/led by National Trust for Scotland (Mar Lodge Estate).

**Walk 16 – Thursday 8th June – Medium – Linn of Muick to Ballater Via Creag Dearg
(Repeat of Walk 3)**

Linear 15k 9.5miles 5

hours Ascent:510m,

1670ft One way bus

£18pp

20 Max Spaces

MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 9am

Start Linn of Muick End Ballater.

This is a high level route with excellent views over the hills around Ballater. The start point is near the Linn of Muick and immediately we start climbing, following a Land rover track up onto Creag Dearg, passing on the way an old ruined settlement. The tracks continue along the plateau past Cairn Hillock and Cairn Leuchan before dropping down the Pollagach Road to Balintober and hence back to Ballater.

Walk 17 – Thursday 8th June – Medium – Peter’s Hill, Lary & Abergairn (Repeat of Walk 2)

Circular 17km

6 hours

Ascent: 450 m, 1480 ft

No Transport

£15 pp

20 Max Spaces

MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 9am

We leave Ballater and follow the cinder path to the Pass of Ballater. We quickly reach a good track leading in a northerly direction under Sgor Buidhe and on to Creag Riabhach. The climb is steady for 4 km or so before reaching the track from Balmenach. This is open country with extensive views. Our route skirts Peter’s Hill, after which we head northwesterly. We descend a steep spur before crossing the Lary Burn. On reaching Lary we join a quiet road which we follow for about 2 km, before skirting Prony Hill and the remains of an old silver mine. Soon we reach Abergairn and the Pass of Ballater, leading us back, via the Hilton Timeshare Complex to the villa

Walk 18 – Thursday 8th June – Easy – Loch Kinnord

Special interest Foraging & Heritage

Circular 3km

3 hours

Bus both ways

£20pp

28 Max Spaces

MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 10am

Edibles and Medicinals Nature Walk Start & End at Burn O’Vat carpark.

We visit the Burn O’Vat trail steeped in archaeological and botanic interest. We return to the Muir of Dinnet Car Park to sample foraged foods.

There are some steep steps to reach the viewpoint.

Friday 9th June

Walk 19 – Friday 9th June – Medium – Glen Quoich to Keiloch

Linear 20k

Ascent: 300m, 1000ft

Approx 5 hours

Bus both ways

£28pp

20 Max Spaces

MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 10am

Start Linn of Muick, End Ballater

This walk starts at the Victoria Bridge and passes through Mar Lodge Estate to the Linn of Quoich where we take the track up the east side of the glen. After a few miles the track peters out and a short stage of “heather hopping” takes us to the path leading down through Glen Sluggan (the Fairy Glen), past the ruins of SlugganLodge (Secret Bothy) and on to Invercauld House. A final section on paved road takes us to our transport at the Keiloch. Keep an eye open for Capercaillie and Ring Ouzel.

Walk 20 – Friday 9th June – Medium – Mar Lodge Special

interest: Regeneration Walk

Circular 13km Approx

4 hours

Own Transport/Car Share

£25pp

20 Max Spaces

MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 10am

A beautiful circuit taking-in the best examples of landscape-scale woodland restoration at Mar Lodge Estate. Starting at the lodge itself, we first walk through the resurgent pine and birch woodlands of Doire Bhraghaid, past one of the biggest scots pines in Scotland. After a short walk up Glen Lui we cut through the spectacular glacial meltwater channel of Clais Fhearnaig, and then walk out via Glen Quoich. Hosted/led by National Trust for Scotland rangers, this is a great chance to spend the day with estate staff and learn about the history and conservation work at Mar Lodge Estate. Good estate tracks. Mostly low level but a few steeper sections. Clais Fhearnaig can be exposed/windy.

Walk 21 – Friday 9th June – Easy – Potarch to Balnacraig

Circular 9.5km 5 miles

Approx 5 hrs.

Own Transport/Car Share

£15pp

20 Max Spaces

MEET AT THE HUT ON THE GREEN AT 10am

We set off from Potarch and after following the Deeside Way for a short distance we turn right and climb gently on a good track before setting off up a narrow track to a trig point on top of Craigmor hill. We then descend to a wide track turning right and heading to the road. We turn left here and after a short distance on this road we turn right and head uphill on a good track to Balnacraig before gently walking down to a tarred road which takes us back to the B933. Turning left we head back to the Potarch car park. This is an undulating walk with a great view point at Balnacraig.

7pm Ceilidh