

Walk on the WILD SIDE

JO VAUGHAN TRAVELS NORTH THIS MONTH TO ENJOY A PARTICULARLY SCENIC WALK IN THE LOVELY LAKE DISTRICT



THE CLUB site at Coniston is huge. Set in 63-acres of National Trust woodland, you could enjoy a fabulous walk without ever leaving the site. However, a gate at the rear gives you access to Coniston Water, where there are steamboat cruises on offer, as well as dinghy sailing, windsurfing and canoeing opportunities.

Rather than head out of this exit, though, our walk takes us past the reception building and along a ridge that offers great views of the surrounding lake and countryside. However, we don't neglect the lakeside path, where, as you'd expect, the vistas over the water are even better.

Lake Coniston has a chequered history. It was where Donald Campbell broke the waterspeed record in 1955; it was also where he was killed attempting to regain the record in 1967. If you decide to walk into Coniston itself (diverting from our route), look out for the memorial to Campbell on the village green. There's also information about the man and his exploits in the Ruskin Museum.

General information

NEAREST CLUB SITE: Park Coppice Caravan Club Site, Coniston LA21 8LA. Tel 01539 441555

DISTANCE: 4.6 miles/7.4km

TERRAIN: Sometimes muddy, one ford
NUMBER OF STILES: 2 (1 dog-friendly, 1 not)

ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT: Ordnance Survey Outdoor Leisure 6, The English Lakes – South Western Area, wellies or walking boots

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Moderate

REFRESHMENTS: The Sun Pub, Cat Bank

TOILETS: None

Tourist information

Coniston TIC, Ruskin Avenue, Coniston, Cumbria LA21 8EH. Tel 01539 441533

DIRECTIONS

1 Leave the site by passing reception and almost immediately turn right (signposted 'Coniston footpath and bicycles'). Head through a double wooden gate and continue along the gravel path.

2 Pass through a kissing gate and then turn right along the road. At the first house (Park Gate House), cross the road and then immediately turn right following the 'Permitted Footpath to Coniston' sign.

3 Go through a wooden kissing gate, and then through another, before heading under the old railway bridge. Having passed some houses on your right, veer right after no. 17, before veering left to join a path (the houses are now to your left). Having enjoyed the views of the village off to your right, at the end of the path veer left again. Opposite Coniston station car park turn right to continue following the road.

4 At a crossroads turn right. (If you're hungry or in need of a quick drink look out for The Sun pub on your left as you walk down the hill). At the large crossroads turn right and very carefully continue along the road where it narrows (there's no pavement here). Rejoin the pavement and continue ahead.

5 As the footpath separates from the road, cross a stile on your left and head diagonally across a field by veering right (signposted 'Public Footpath – Coniston Hall'). Go through the wooden gate and turn right along a gravel footpath and continue around to the left where the fence on your left ends.

6 Continue along the gravel path, over a concrete bridge, and through a kissing gate. Then follow the path as it joins the lake. When you get to a small road, veer left, go through a wooden gate and continue past the sailing club and Coniston Hall. Continue along the road, past a white and red rising barrier, and follow the 'Footpath to Torver' sign.

7 Go through a kissing gate and continue along the road. At a tree with a 'No Fires' sign upon it, veer left, leaving the road, along a gravel track following a yellow arrow sign and a 'Stop – No Cars or Camping' sign. Continue through a wooden gate. Go through another wooden gate and over a wooden bridge.

8 Follow the lakeside, passing through three kissing gates before passing the sign to 'Torver Commons'. Continue following the yellow arrow by fording a small stream. Return to the main footpath, following the lakeside, past Torver Landing Jetty.

9 Almost immediately after the jetty, turn right following the 'Footpath to Torver' sign. Keep following the path, heading away from the lake. Go through

a wooden gate and continue up the rocky path, following the line of a stream to your right. Pass through two wooden gates, keeping ahead at each.

10 Just before the white house, go through a wooden kissing gate and immediately turn a sharp right and walk through another wooden gate. You'll then pass in front of the white house, along a track.

11 Go through two more wooden gates, making sure you close them firmly, and continue ahead. Continue passing through gates until you come to an open field. Continue straight across this and pass through a smaller kissing gate at the other side. Continue through the woodland on the trodden path.

12 After the next gate, turn right. Pass through the wooden gate at the bottom of the hill, past the sheep pens and through a variety of different gates until you get to the farm building. At the front door turn left and immediately pass through the right of the two wooden gates, following the yellow arrow.

13 Continue straight ahead across the fields, ignoring a tarmac road that crosses your path. Keep to the left of this field until you come to a stream – continue along the path, through a wooden gate, and keep ahead, now following the stream.

14 Pass through some woodland, cross the ladder stile, and pass over the wooden bridge. Continue ahead following the trodden footpath across the fields. As you see the campsite in front of you, veer left beneath some telegraph poles.

15 Go through a wooden gate and immediately turn right, following a white arrow. Pass through another smaller gate as you start to skirt the caravan site's perimeter. Continue down the site's access road until you return to the reception.



Local attractions

- **Ruskin Museum**, Yewdale Road, Coniston LA21 8DU. Tel 01539 441164 or see ruskinmuseum.com. Cost: £3.75 per adult
- **Coniston Launch**, Coniston LA21 8AJ. Tel 01539 436216 or see conistonlaunch.co.uk. Cost: £5 per adult. Seven jetties around the lake. Special interest cruises also available
- **Beatrix Potter Gallery**, Main Street, Hawkshead LA22 0NS. Tel 01539 436355 or see nationaltrust.org.uk. Cost: £3.60 per adult

