



Walk on the

WILD SIDE

A WALK IN THE NEW FOREST FINDS
JO VAUGHAN ENJOYING SOME SIGHTS
WHILE AVOIDING A BOG OR TWO



THE NEW Forest has to be one of the country's top recreational areas – a fact supported by the length of time you have to book in advance if you wish to get into the Club site at Black Knowl near Brockenhurst. Situated at the heart of the Forest, the site is just a short walk from the village centre, where a quaint commercial high street boasts a superb local butcher, French-style bakery and a couple of general grocery stores. On the other side of the main road to Lyndhurst is an excellent French restaurant, Blaireau's. Many a tipsy New Year's Eve has been spent here in the company of good food and champagne! Being so central, Black Knowl is within

striking distance of all the Forest's main attractions, including Beaulieu, Lyndhurst and the amusement park Paultons, near Romsey. The latter will keep the kids entertained for a while! But the beauty of this area is that you can hire a bike from Brockenhurst and spend days mooching around the well-maintained cycle tracks or simply walking across the heathland.

Navigating in the area using an OS map is harder than in most regions, as not all of the streams are bridged and things can get a bit boggy at times. Stick to the main cycle paths and major routes though, as this walk does, and you needn't worry about requiring wellies!

General information

NEAREST CLUB SITE: Black Knowl Caravan Club Site, Aldridge Hill, Brockenhurst, Hampshire SO42 7QD. Tel 01590 623600

DISTANCE: 3.5 miles

TERRAIN: Occasionally boggy, but mostly good, gravel cycle paths

NUMBER OF STILES: 0

ESSENTIAL EQUIPMENT: Ordnance Survey Explorer OL22, New Forest

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Easy

REFRESHMENTS: None

TOILETS: None



DIRECTIONS

1 Leave the site via its main entrance and walk down the access road. Where the road soon sharply bends to the left, turn right, past a wooden gate (sp Lyndhurst 4 miles for cyclists). Continue along the gravel track.

2 Keep on until you cross Bolderford Bridge, but soon after, veer right through the double wooden gates and continue along the wide, gravel cycle path. Very soon, turn left at a wooden 'cycle path number 27' sign, towards Lyndhurst.

3 Go through another double gate and continue straight ahead, still following the signposts. Eventually pass through another double gate and continue along the path until, very soon at a path junction, keep left, ignoring the right turn towards Lyndhurst. Almost immediately pass through another double gate and pass to the right of the 'wildlife conservation area' sign.

Continue following the white arrows on a green background.

4 Pass through another double wooden gate and continue straight ahead. In the field on your right watch out for the roe deer grazing. At the end of the field cross a concrete bridge and immediately veer left. Continue along the narrow footpath.

5 Follow the line of the stream on your left, and pass over the small wooden bridge before keeping straight ahead. At the T-junction with a major path beside the double gate, turn right and return over Bolderford Bridge, following a sign to Brockenhurst.

6 Soon veer right before the open heath ahead, and walk along the gravel track until you return to the wooden gate at its end. Turn left back on to Black Knowl's access road to return to the site.



Local attractions

■ National Motor Museum, John Montagu Building, Beaulieu, Brockenhurst, Hampshire SO42 7ZN. Tel 01590 612345 or see beaulieu.co.uk. Cost: Adult/youth/child/ senior/family – £15/£8.75/£7.75/£14/£41. Price includes entrance to the National Motor Museum, Palace House and Gardens, Abbey and the Monastic Life Exhibition.

■ Buckler's Hard, Beaulieu, Brockenhurst SO42 7XB. Tel 01590 616203 or see bucklershard.co.uk. Cost: Adult/youth/child/ senior/family – £5.50/£4/£4/£5/£17. A picturesque 18th-century village on the banks of the Beaulieu River, where some of Nelson's ships were built.

■ Setley Ridge Vineyard, Lyminster Road, Brockenhurst, Hampshire SO42 7UF. Tel 01590 622246 or see setleyridgevineyard.co.uk. A fully working vineyard producing white and red wines. Free wine tastings, shop and garden centre.

Black Knowl: 3.5 miles/5.6km

