

THE WALKER'S GUIDE : DONNINGTON, SNELSMORE & BAGNOR

The fourth walk in our walker's guide series takes us to Donnington. A wonderful walk for all the family, through areas of outstanding beauty, history and extraordinary wildlife. We encourage all who do this walk to take photos, comment and rate the route, tell us what you think! Walks can be rated by visiting www.newburytoday.co.uk/walkers guide. Where you can also comment and post photos, alternatively share your photos and comments via our twitter page and facebook.

Donnington walk: 6 miles

Directions

Walk south from the historic Donnington Castle, which was the hub of the two vicious Battles of Newbury during the Civil War, past Donnington Grove, now a hotel on a golf course, to the River Lambourn. As you cross and walk along the river, look out for trout, herons, coots and ducks, yellow flag iris, reed mace, willowherb and many other wetland species.

Heading towards the riverside village of Bagnor, home to the famous Watermill Theatre, you'll cross the picturesque Rack Marsh – a Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) Reserve – where you'll be spoilt for choice for flowers from marsh marigold and meadow sweet to red clover and ragged robin. If you bring a magnifying glass you might just spot the rare 2mm Desmoulin's snail, one of the nation's most endangered species.

At the northern most point of the walk lies Snelsmore Common, a lowland heath and a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The bogs and mires here are caused by the presence of a layer of impermeable London Clay. As well as purple bell heather and moor grass, the gorse provides nest sites for small birds. Roe deer, adders and newts are fellow residents. The route winds its way back towards the castle, past Castle Farm.

Resident ponies at Snelsmore Common



Walk provided by



Route can also be found on



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and on your smart phone

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Chalkhill Blue Butterfly
North Wessex Downs



Help look after wildlife by keeping your dog on a lead and picking up after them.