

BAKETHIN RESERVOIR WALK

Bakethin Reservoir is an area specially set aside for wildlife and is designated as a local wildlife site. This site forms part of the Kielder Reservoir and Forest Park and is an excellent place for a walk.

The land surrounding Bakethin supports many species of plants and animals and this walk covers the forest and shore to the east of the reservoir.

From the car park (A), turn left at the road and then right to cross Butteryhaugh bridge and follow the road south for 250m. Turn left and follow the way marked path into the forest until you reach a fire break (large grassy strip in the trees used to prevent fires spreading). Here, Norway spruce is dominant tree species and is the main food source for red squirrels, so keep an eye out for this charismatic creature. Foxgloves can also be seen at the sides of the forest roads throughout this area.

Bear left on the path and climb up to a forestry road. Turn right and follow the road as it bears to the right. On the left the trees have been felled, and in the clearing is 'Deadman cairn', as prehistoric burial monument which sits on a carpet of different mosses. Round cairns like this were common in the Bronze Age around 3,500 - 4,000 years ago, where metal tools were first used in Britain.

Continue along the road, until it joins a track leading from a disused quarry. Bear right and follow the tarmac road until it joins the North Hail road. At this junction two rare flowers, the heath spotted orchid and the lilac coloured fragrant orchid grow. Turn right and walk along the track heading towards Butteryhaugh with excellent views of the reservoir to your left.

The silver birch and willows here take advantage of the improved drainage and mineral content provided by the material from the railway. There are also various woodland plants including devil's-bit scabious, common primrose, and lesser celandine (in early summer) as well as short-tailed voles, adders and many bird species. There is also an excellent view of the South shore of Bakethin reservoir from here.

Just over half way along the track there is an option to take a left turn and head down to cross the Kielder viaduct. Take this route and at the end of the viaduct take a right turn to descend via the path towards the car park and start of the walk.

Parking: Bakethin nature reserve

Refreshments/facilities: Kielder Castle Café, Boat Inn and Bar, Restaurant at Leaplish

Distance: 4km – allow 1.5 to 2 hours.

