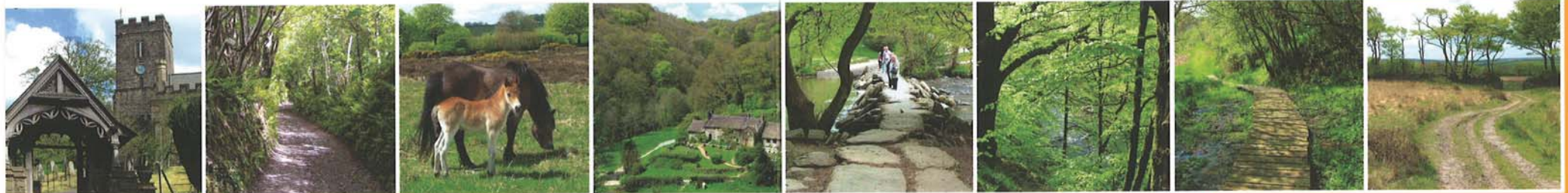


# Tarr Steps from Dulverton



The ancient bridge of Tarr Steps is a well-known visitor attraction but the beautiful wooded valley of the River Barle is also worth exploring for its wildlife. Combined with the heathland of Winsford Hill and its wild ponies, this makes a varied walk.



## Tarr Steps **SS 868322**

Tarr Steps is a 17 span clapper bridge (a bridge made of unmortared stone slabs), the longest of its kind in Britain. It was first mentioned in Tudor times but may be much older. The river has silted up over the last century and often now comes over the stones in times of flood. The bridge has had to be repaired several times as stones of up to two tonnes have been washed up to 50 metres downstream.

## Tarr Steps Woodlands **SS 866323**

The woodlands around Tarr Steps were made a National Nature Reserve in 2004. They are internationally significant for the mosses, liverworts and lichens found here including a type of moss found in burrows, which appears to glow in the dark. The woods have a spectacular display of bluebell carpets in springtime. Dormice live amongst the mature hazel, blackberry and honeysuckle and otters feed on fish, eels and amphibians along the unpolluted, unmodified river. A popular circular footpath route, known as the Jubilee Trail, runs upstream of the bridge.

## Nature Trail **SS 856319**

The nature trail at Parsonage Farm is a private one supported by grants and assistance from National Park Authority volunteers. It is a County Wildlife Site and has a variety of plants

and birds, plus red deer. Exmoor ponies are used to help keep down the scrub. The farm has one of the country's largest herds of Gloucester cattle – a rare breed.

## Winsford Hill **SS 892320**

Winsford Hill and its southern extension, South Hill, are leased and managed by the National Trust. It is home to the Anchor herd of Exmoor ponies. The pure-bred ponies have an anchor brand mark – the symbol of the Acland family who once preserved the breed in the former Royal Forest of Exmoor. The ponies are free living and are thought to be a race of wild horse rather than a breed.

## EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK

Exmoor became Britain's eighth National Park in 1954 and these walks were designed to celebrate its Golden Anniversary.

The National Park covers 267 square miles of Somerset and Devon. It is a landscape of great variety: from rugged, towering cliffs to gently rounded hills, wooded valleys, colourful heaths, wild grass moors and farming hamlets and it is home to nearly 11,000 people.

For further information contact Exmoor National Park Dulverton Visitor Centre: Tel 01398 323841  
E-mail: [NPCDulverton@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](mailto:NPCDulverton@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk](http://www.exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk)

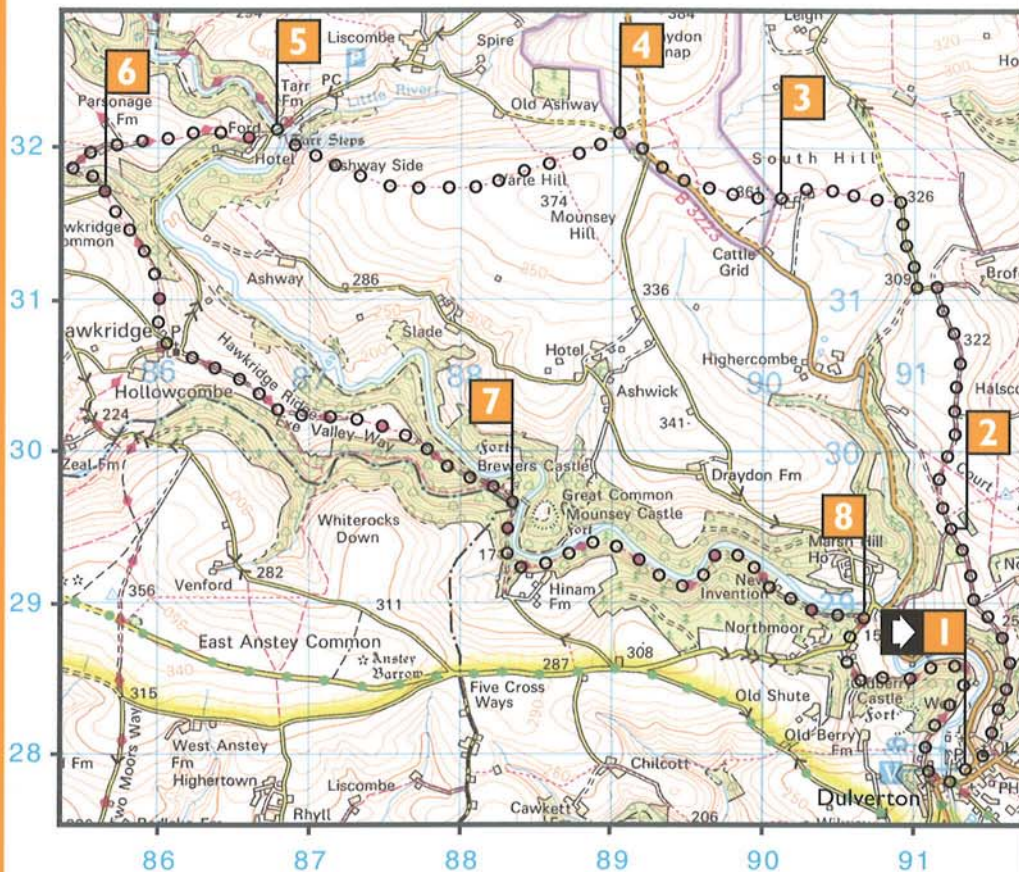
## MAP

Scale 1: 50000 SHEET Nos SS

The map section below is taken from the Ordnance Survey Explorer Map OL9. The area is also covered by the Ordnance Survey Landranger Map 181.

1 Kilometre  
1 Mile

## EXMOOR NATIONAL PARK



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- 12 miles (20 kilometres). 6 hours. Start point: National Park Centre in Dulverton.
- Moderate. Only two significant climbs and relatively easy to navigate. There are buses to Dulverton from Tiverton, Taunton, Minehead and Tarr Steps (summer only).
- Pubs and cafés at Dulverton, Tarr Steps and Parsonage Farm. **WC** There are public toilets at Dulverton and Tarr Steps car park. On lead at all times.

## WALK DIRECTIONS

- 1** Walk up to Bank Square at the top of Fore Street. Bear right around the church, up the steps to its side and left into the lane. Continue uphill along the main track.
- 2** A mile from Dulverton, pass the track to Marsh Bridge on your left and go through the gateway ahead. Stay on the waymarked route across a field, forking right amongst the gorse. Go through the gate and along the lane to a junction with a tarmaced road. Turn left along the road. After half a mile turn left into a field via a hunting gate with a blue waymark. Keep to the left of the field, past Highercombe Farm to a gate onto moorland.
- 3** Take the track straight ahead towards Tarr Steps. On meeting the road, turn right, cross the cattle grid and keep straight ahead on the moorland of **Winsford Hill** alongside the hedgebank for 50 yards, then drop diagonally to another road and cattle grid.
- 4** Cross the cattle grid and bear left along the track. After 50 yards bear right along the track towards Tarr Steps. This leads through a gateway and drops towards **woodlands**. Go through the gate at the bottom, fork right and cross the small bridge to **Tarr Steps**.
- 5** Cross Tarr Steps bridge, bear left then take the drive leading upwards to the right in the direction of Hawkridge. This soon becomes a track. Follow the blue waymarks upwards, through two gates, over the hill and down to Parsonage Farm. Go through a gate and past farm buildings. Here you can turn left into the yard by the house, then immediately right down some steps and follow the white waymarks along the **nature trail**. Dogs are not allowed on the trail as their scent deters wildlife, including deer.
- Alternatively you can continue down the farm drive. The nature trail exits onto the drive just before the stream at the bottom. Follow the drive up through the woods to where it meets a tarmaced road.
- 6** Cross the road, and go through the gate into a field. Keep ahead, following signs and yellow waymarks over the fields to Hawkridge. At the houses turn left down the road. From the beech tree in the centre of the village turn left down the road. Keep right at the church, following the track towards Dulverton. The lane opens to fields and continues down through woods to Castle Bridge.
- 7** Cross the stone bridge. Keep the river on your left, shortly taking the track towards Marsh Bridge, two miles further.
- 8** At Marsh Bridge do not cross the bridge but turn right, up the road. After 250 yards turn left at Kennel Farm. Take the track past the farm and into woods. Keep to the lower track after crossing a small stream. This undulates through the woods then drops past cottages to the bridge at Dulverton. Cross the bridge to return to the town centre.