

Exford to Wheddon Cross

Ride & Walk



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Fact File:

Highlights: River Exe upper reaches, ancient hedged boundary banks, Exmoor farmsteads, old byways

Start Grid ref: SS853 384

Distance: 7.1 miles, linear

Height gained/lost: 293 metres ascent, 263 metres descent. This walk starts easy, becoming moderate to easy.

High Point: 298 metres

Low Point: 213 metres

Toilets: at Wheddon Cross and Exford

Eating places: Pubs and tearooms at Wheddon Cross and Exford. Shops also offers various snacks.

Time required, excluding stops: 3 hours. If walked at a sensible pace this walk can be done in time to catch the 400 bus on its return journey through Wheddon Cross. Or you can shorten the walk to catch the bus as it passes through Luckwell Bridge.

Public transport: 198 bus service. Please check the current timetable on Traveline 0871 200 22 33 www.travelinesw.com before travelling.

Route description: The walk takes in the upper reaches of the Exe River valley, following the river for about 4 miles as it gently loses height through deep valleys. The walk then follows roads and byways over hills to Luckwell Bridge before following bridleways and footpaths across to Wheddon Cross.

Route directions: The grid references are given should you like to follow the route on an Ordnance Survey map. They are not needed to follow the route which is described very accurately in the text.

Catch the 400 bus anywhere along its route or at Wheddon Cross free car park which is the end of this linear walk. Ask to get off at Exford.

1, SS853 384, 0 miles

From the bus stop in Exford, cross over the triangle green in front of The Crown Hotel and take the road on the right to the village car park, passing the school on your left. Pass through the car park and then through the ENP Field Services courtyard. Go through the kissing gate by a gate ahead and then along the level grass field with the river on your right. Pass through the next kissing gate to soon reach the next one.

2, SS857 380, 0.4 miles

Now turn left through a kissing gate by a gate to follow the path as it climbs steadily, signed to Higher Combe and Lyncombe. Soon ignore the path on the left to the church, continuing ahead.

3, SS860 379, 0.6 miles

Near the top by an old barn go over the stile by a gate ahead, ignoring the one over to your left. Now go ahead across this field signed to Lyncombe and as it goes into the valley bear left to reach a stile by a bridle gate.

4, SS862 378, 0.7 miles

Follow the path down, above the river over to the right, to get closer to the river. Follow the path ahead as it goes closer and away from the river. Cross two stiles,



footbridge and stile and ignore the path on the right through a gate and through the river. Follow the yellow-waymarked posts across the floodplain to avoid a drainage gully to reach a stile by a gate in the far corner.

5, SS868 375, 1.2 miles

Turn right along the track signed to Winsford passing Lyncombe Farm and then continue ahead ignoring a track through a gate on the right. Continue between

some Devon banks and through a gate along a track and into an open field, keeping level across it to pass through a gate and on along a level path to the next gate.

6, SS864 371, 1.5 miles

Follow the path through the valley and next gate. Keep on the obvious path for a while and then ignore the path on the right to Room Hill, continuing ahead through a gate and along an old Devon banked track, through the next gate to pass by West Nethercote.

7, SS874 362, 2.6 miles

Now continue ahead signed to Larcombe Foot. Ignore the track on the left to then pass by East Nethercote, continuing ahead down the track to cross the River Exe, ignoring the path on the right.

8, SS876 361, 2.8 miles

Keep on this track with the river now on your left for a while to then go through a gate by a cattle grid. Keep along the track until reaching the end to cross a bridge over the river to a road.

9, SS895 362, 4.2 miles

At the road, ignore the path on the left, instead go ahead along the road gently uphill, being aware of vehicles. I would recommend walking on the right, facing any traffic.

10, SS897 370, 4.7 miles

After a while take the first small road that bears off right. Keep on it as it rises.

11, SS902 375, 5.2 miles

At the brow ignore the path on the right and continue along the lane to pass Oldrey Farm. Shortly you reach a T-junction.

12, SS902 379, 5.5 miles

Opposite is an old byway and two gates on either side. Go through the right-hand gate signed Footpath to Luckwell Bridge and bear slightly left, keeping level to the gate by a stile. From here go ahead to follow the hedged bank on your left.

13, SS904 383, 5.8 miles

Pass through the kissing gate by the line of fir trees and go downhill bearing right to the corner of the cottage at the bottom and a kissing gate with steps to a small

road. Turn right downhill along this road to pass some cottages.

14, SS906 386, 6.0 miles, (if needing to catch the bus, check your timing here for the last mile).

Just before the old river bridge turn right signed Bridleway to Wheddon Cross and follow this track to a property. Bear right up to a gate by a small quarry.

15, SS909 386, 6.2 miles

Shortly ignore a path bearing off right, instead bearing slightly left through an old bank, then keeping fairly level with strange earth mounds on the right and the stream over to your left. It then becomes an old banked byway above the stream.

16, SS913 387, 6.5 miles

Soon pass through a gate into a field to follow its left boundary to reach a footbridge over the stream. From the bridge bear right to a gate facing you ahead.

17, SS915 386, 6.6 miles

Now follow this path with the field you just came from now on your left. It then passes through a cutting with a bridle gate partway along.

18, SS921 387, 6.9 miles

Near the top pass through the next bridle gate and the farm sheds to a gate. Go ahead into the park to a gate by the swings ahead. Pass through the gate to the car park where you started at Wheddon Cross.

