

Walks Hawes, Yorburgh and Burtersett

Walk information

Distance: 8 km (5 miles)
Time: 3 hours
Maps: OS Explorer OL30 - always take a map on your walk
Parking: Car parks throughout Hawes
Refreshments: Pubs, shops and tea rooms at Hawes; village hall at Burtersett (honesty box).
Toilets: Hawes

How to get there: Hawes lies along the A684 in Upper Wensleydale
Terrain: Field and moorland paths, stony tracks and rough ground in places. Steep climb in places up onto the flanks of Yorburgh and back down to Burtersett.
Caution: This is a fairly strenuous walk up onto the flanks of Yorburgh, with rough moorland in places, a number of stream crossings, several stiles and some steep sections. Exposed to the elements. Map and compass essential.

Points of interest

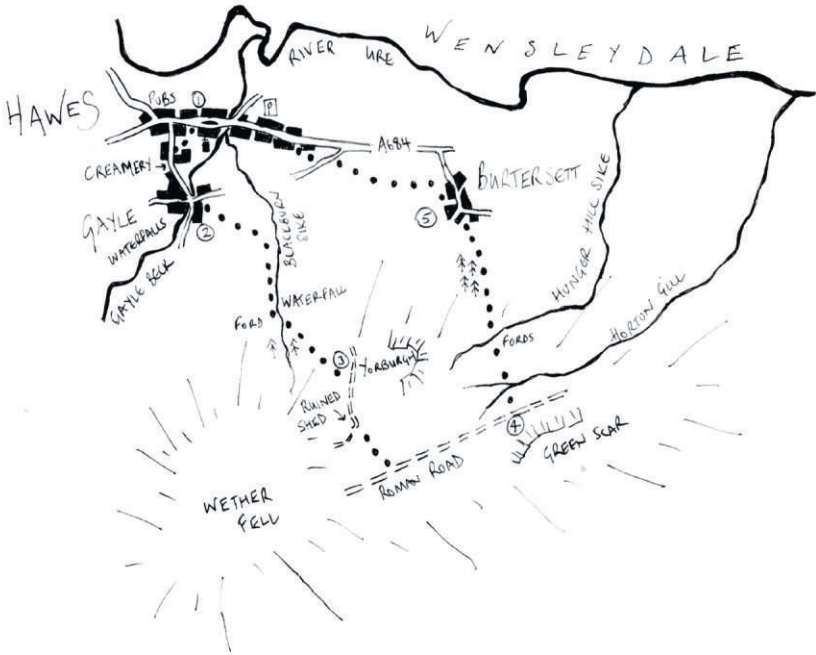
THE huge moorland ridge of Wether Fell and Yorburgh looms high over the upper reaches of Wensleydale, separating Wensleydale from neighbouring Raydale. The views from the flanks of Yorburgh, with its distinctive flat-topped profile, down the length of Wensleydale are superb, and a particular highlight is joining the arrow-straight Roman Road that crosses these hills. The hills and moorland around Yorburgh and Wether Fell are hidden from the outside world, a landscape of boggy moorland and old grassy tracks. After a short section walking down along the Roman Road that once connected the Roman fort at Bainbridge with Ribchester, another path leads back across moorland to reach the brow of a steep bank above Burtersett and a 'wow' moment as a wonderful view

across Wensleydale unfolds with the rounded hills of Lovely Seat and Great Shunner Fell rise up across the broad valley.

The walk

1 From the centre of Hawes, walk up through the Market Place, passing the Fountain Hotel on your right then, immediately before the public toilets on your left, take the enclosed footpath to the left that leads up steps to emerge onto the main car park. Walk across the car park (or follow the path around its perimeter on the left-hand side) to reach a small gate that leads out onto a field on the opposite side of the car park. Follow the clear path straight on to reach a gate in the top right-hand corner of the field that leads onto Gayle Lane (road) just to the right of Wensleydale Creamery. Turn left along the road and follow the pavement into Gayle. Follow the main road to the left towards 'Kettlewell' over the bridge above Gayle Beck, after which turn left along the road towards 'Bainbridge', then after the old farmhouse on the right (datestone 1695) take the path immediately to the right (signpost 'Burtersett, Marsett').

2 Walk up to quickly reach a small wooden gate ahead, after which head up bearing to the left across the field through a wall gate in the top left corner of the field. Head through this gate then head to the left along the path over a wall stile, and then continue on along the path ahead gradually heading up across the gently rising field to reach a wall gap towards the top far corner (just to the left of a gate). After this gap, head straight up the field (signpost 'Marsett') passing to the left of the stone barn towards the top left corner of this field (ignore ladder stile to the left) and through a squeeze stile in the top left-hand field corner. After this stile, head straight on to a wall stile ahead then follow the path as it slants steeply up to the right (wooded



bank) to another wall stile, after which head straight up the hillside to a stile over the wall ahead of you just to the right of the waterfall/rocky outcrop. After this stile, head straight up with the stream on your left (ignore track and ford to the left) passing more small waterfalls then, where the hillside levels out slightly, cross over the stream to the left then continue up across the hillside to reach a gate in the stone wall at the top of the field (about 100 metres to the left of the small clump of trees). After this gate, follow the path heading to the left steeply up the hillside to join an old wall which you follow up for a while then, where the hillside begins to level out, cross over this wall and head up the next field to reach the top left-hand corner of the field and a wall stile. Cross over this wall then a clear path leads to the left across the grassy moorland to reach a gate in the wall on your left (just below a low promontory of land) - head through the wall gap to the right of this gate.

3 After the wall gap, head to the right to quickly join a grassy track, which you follow to the right (passing between Yorburgh on your

left and Wether Fell on your right) down to a gateway in the stone wall across your path near to a small ruined shed. Head through the gate and follow the track to the left for a few paces then take the grassy path that branches off to the left (leaving the sunken grassy track to bend sharply up to the right) then curves round to the right to quickly reach a fork in the grassy path where you follow the narrow path straight on down into a shallow 'hollow' (boggy) before climbing up to reach a small gate in a wall. After the gate, carry straight on along the clear path heading over the 'shoulder' of Wether Fell (grassy moorland) on to reach the walled track of Cam High Road (Roman Road). Turn left along Cam High Road and follow this stony track gently dropping down for 1 km (just over 10-minutes walking) then, where the track levels out slightly, take the footpath to the left through a squeeze-stile beside a gate (signpost 'Burtersett').

4 Follow the clear path straight on across the moor, down through a squeeze-stile just to the left of a gate and over streams (either side of this wall) then continue straight

on over the moor along a clear narrow path for 400 metres, over another stream then on through a squeeze-stile in a wall across your path. After this wall-stile, continue straight on along the clear narrow path then, when Upper Wensleydale comes into view, follow the path down over a tumbledown wall then bear left steeply down across the hillside to reach a stile in the bottom left corner of the field at the bottom end of the plantation. Follow the path straight on down through a series of wall-gates to reach the road at Burtersett.

5 Turn left along the road and follow this bending down to the right (passing the small village green on your right) into the 'heart' of the village then take the footpath to the left in between the houses (immediately after the Wesleyan Methodist Church on your left - signpost on railings 'Hawes, Gayle'). Head on along the flagged yard to quickly reach a gate, after which head across the field along the flagged path through a wall-gate ahead, after which follow the clear path down to the right through a wall-gate. After this wall-gate, turn down to the right to join a very clear flagged path which you follow to the left across several fields for 750 metres to reach a lane. Cross over the lane and head along the path opposite to the left and follow this flagged path down to quickly reach the main road on the outskirts of Hawes. Turn left and follow the main road back into the town centre.

Mark Reid
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Birdwatch By Ian Kerr

MORE summer visitors have arrived as well as the first signs of migrants passing through the region on their way to breeding grounds in Scandinavia and other parts of northern Europe.

Durham's first osprey, pictured, of spring was at Derwent Reservoir last weekend and another was seen over the A19 at Thirsk on Tuesday. Other early returning adults are already back around breeding sites in Scotland and Cumbria. None have yet put in an appearance at their only local nesting localities at Kielder but it will probably only be a matter of days before they start

turning up to reclaim regular nest sites.

Some of our rarest breeding ducks, garganey, have also arrived from wintering areas in Africa. Two were at Shibdon Pond at Blaydon and two others were northwards at Arcot Pond near Cramlington. At best, a handful of pairs usually breed in the region so these individuals may just be pausing before moving on.

Other birds migrating through the region this week have included white wagtails, the continental cousins of our own familiar pied wagtails. Early individuals have been found at several localities

including Blackhall Rocks, Rainton Meadows and Seaton Pond. In distinctive white and silver grey breeding plumage, these birds will become more plentiful during April and May, pausing at waterside localities providing abundant insect food to fuel their onward migration.

One of our commonest upland species, meadow pipits, has also been on the move in large numbers. Most of our population winters in the Low Countries and return passage at this stage is often a feature along the coast. On Sunday morning I was in one of my favourite sea-watching spots. A strong westerly wind

was blowing and small groups of meadow pipits were coming in from the south east. They were moving low over the wave-tops in an attempt to avoid the worst of the wind and most were dropping into cover in the dunes and fields, no doubt grateful for a chance to rest. During the course of an hour I counted around 50, all in small groups, but that paled into insignificance with an arrival of more than 500 passing to the north west in under four hours at Saltburn.

Last week I reported on the first arrival of chiffchaffs and wheatears. Many more chiffchaffs have since moved into breeding

areas with males immediately starting to sing. Wheatears seem to have been much slower with only a few more individuals reported.

New rarities include a cattle egret which quickly moved on from Thornton-le-Dale and a firecrest singing at Thirsk Racecourse.

