

Walks Around Osmotherley

Walk information

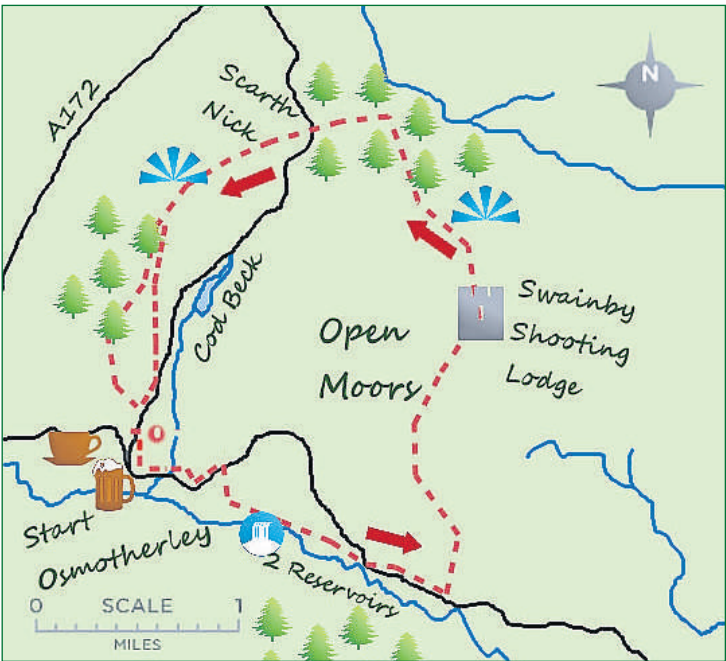
Distance: Roughly 10 miles.
Height to Climb: 420m (1380 feet)
Start: SE 456972. Osmotherley can be busy but the best parking is at the northern end of the village.
Difficulty: Difficult. It is the length of the walk which makes it difficult and the potential exposure on the moors but it follows good tracks at all time.
Refreshments: Three pubs in the central square of Osmotherley and an excellent café at the small outdoor shop.
Be Prepared: The route description and sketch map only provide a guide to the walk. You must take out and be able to read a map (O/S Explorer OL26) and in cloudy/misty conditions a compass. You must also wear the correct clothing and footwear for the outdoors. Whilst every effort is made to provide accurate information, walkers head out at their own risk.
Please observe the Countryside Code and park sensibly.

A PRETTY village, a walk over high exposed but lovely moorland and a final skirting of the North York Moors escarpment provides an excellent way to spend a long summer's day. Osmotherley is a pretty village set high above the Vale of York and easily accessed from the A19. The village itself is centred round a pretty square with 23 pubs, a café and an interesting walking shop but more importantly is the walking centre of the North York Moors. Not only does the Cleveland Way pass through it, the Coast to Coast nearby but also it is the start of the famous 42 mile Lyke Wake Walk which crosses the moors ending at Ravenscar. However this walk is shorter. Form the centre of Osmotherley head to the south end of the

village and where the road divides go left. Climb up the road for nearly ½ a mile before taking the lane to your right. (Did you know all Public Rights of Way from a metalled road must have a finger signpost?). The lane ends at the first of two reservoirs (only one exists as a reservoir, the other is little more than a wildlife pond) and the spring of Jenny Brewster. Whilst pondering the origins of Jenny Brewster climb steeply south east on the open moorland where a road takes a sharp easterly turn known as Square Corner. The walk from here is in Open Access Land so no necessity to follow the Public footpaths but it is grouse moors and if there is shooting (later in the year) there will be warning signs to keep away. It does not happen much. Follow the quiet and open road for three quarters of a mile to the east before taking a wide shooting track north on to the moors. This is wonderful walking with far reaching views and a real feeling of space. You are unlikely to see anyone else. After heading north for two miles you will arrive at a Shooting House, just after the lodge take the left fork in the track. The Shooting House is a single room made of solid stone, a godsend on a windy day and a perfect place for lunch or a sunny one. Two ancient stone posts (one ring marked Nelsons Stone) lie near the House and add to the timeless feel of this section of the walk. Carry on up the left track to the northern escarpment of the North York Moors with 'great' views across countryside to the industrial landscape of Teesside. The track drops in to some forestry so follow the track as it contours the escarpment. Initially heading north west it bends south west to the road at Scarth Nick, hidden as the name suggests at a V in the steep land. Cross the road and climb steadily west with the views changing from the industrial north east to



the tranquil Vale of York. three quarters of a mile from Scarth Nick the path meets woods to the west. The Cleveland Way crosses in to the woodland and drops a little before climbing back in to Osmotherley and is my preferred choice but there is also a lane which avoids the woods and return the one and a half miles directly in to Osmotherley. Jonathan Smith runs Where2walk, an outdoor business in the Yorkshire Dales. He has written his own book, the "Dales 30" which describes the highest mountains in the Dales. He also runs 1 Day Navigation Courses for Beginners and Intermediates. Learn a Skill, Climb a Hill Weekends. To find out more details on any of the above and details of many more walks in the area visit where2walk.co.uk



Birdwatch By Ian Kerr

MOST of us are still looking forward to a holiday but for one iconic species, the cuckoo, summer is over and many have already departed for Africa. We like to think of cuckoos as one of our favourite birds, something to look forward to hearing in late spring and early summer. In reality, it's an African species and spends two-thirds of its life there and merely visits us briefly to breed. Just how briefly is being demonstrated by a satellite-tagging programme running since 2011. It was launched because of concern that the number of

cuckoos reaching Britain each spring has fallen by half over the past three decades. Of course, its breeding behavior is well known, if not infamous. Much less is known about migration. Females famously sneak eggs singly into the nests of unsuspecting hosts, mainly meadow pipits and reed warblers. Their task ends there and they are free to depart to their true home in the Congo region of West Africa. The 14 cuckoos tagged in various parts of the country have already left Britain and this week most were meandering southwards through France, two were in Spain and one was well

east in Croatia. They've left behind the unfortunate hosts to hatched their young cuckoos which immediately set about pushing other chicks or eggs out of nests, ensuring that they gets all the food. The young cuckoos will use their own built-in "sat navs" to find their way to Africa during late summer and early autumn. The tagging programme, run by the British Trust for Ornithology, is not only showing how brief their stay is but is also providing fascinating insights into migration. It's always been assumed that they took the most

direct route through France and Spain and along the coasts of West Africa. Many do but others take a longer route south eastwards to Italy and the Adriatic, as shown by that individual in Croatia, before crossing the Mediterranean and the Sahara. Whichever route they take, they all end up in a comparatively small area of the Congo. Fascinatingly, the programme has revealed that birds using the shorter route through France and Spain suffer higher mortality than those going the long way around. That may be due to shortages of their main food, the caterpillars of large moths, because of severe

droughts and summer wildfires which have affected Spain in recent years. Just when we thought we knew all about one of our favourite birds with its strange breeding habits, new technology is continuing to reveal surprising new information.

