



Cannop Ponds

SUMMARY A short walk through woodland visiting Cannop Ponds, a Forest Freemine and an unusual monument. Some easy uphill sections. Woodland paths may be muddy in wet weather.

START Cannop Ponds Forestry Commission car park between Speech House and Broadwell - leave the B4226 at the cycle trail.

WALK INFO

DISTANCE 2 or 1¼ MILES

No. OF GATES 2

No. OF STILES 0

- Drive carefully along the track to the car park. When you leave the tarmac, the track bears left. Continue around the track looking on the left for two large stones set in the ground near a wooden post with a red ring. This is the start of the walk [1].

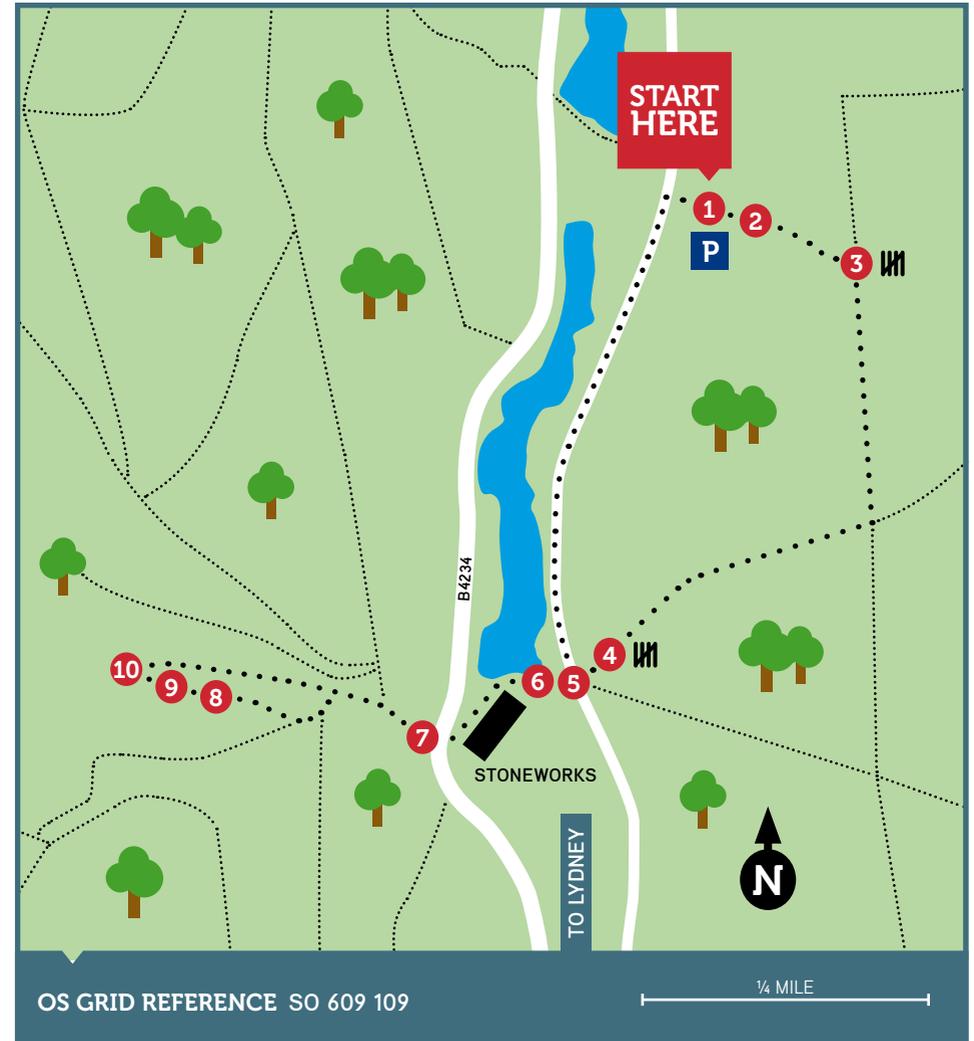
- Walk into the woodland crossing the two small bridges [2]. Continue up the path through this oak woodland until you reach a gate at a forest track [3]. Turn right along the track and continue through a clearing in the trees. After the clearing you will notice fir trees on both sides of the track. When you reach a cross-track, turn right and continue downhill to a gate [4]. Notice the moss covering everything both sides of the track. Opposite the gate across the cycle trail is a sign "Cannop Wharf".

- For a short cut back to the car park walk to the right along the cycle track. To continue the main walk, cross the cycle track, then take the path opposite [5] to the bridge at the outlet of the ponds [6], and cross it. On the pond you may see swans, geese and ducks including brightly coloured mandarin ducks.

- Walk ahead to the road. You will pass Cannop Stoneworks on the left and the pond on your right. The pond was built to power a huge waterwheel at Parkend.

- Cross the road and take the forest track uphill (signposted "Gloucestershire Way" [7]). The barrier can only be negotiated on foot. Continue uphill to a large boulder on the left. Leave the track here, walking to the left of the electricity pole. As you walk up this path you may notice stone blocks on the ground. These stone blocks are 'sleepers' for drams (horse-drawn trucks) that ran until 1946 on rails up and down the valley carrying stone and coal.

- Turn left onto the forest track just before the next electricity pole. Continue uphill around the bend until you see spoil heaps then the works on your left. This is Monument Mine [8], a working Freemine. Freemining traditions began as a



reward for wartime services of Forest of Dean miners to Plantagenet kings. Continue ahead to the monument on your left [9]. A plaque tells you the sad story of the miners you see set in stone. From the monument continue ahead until the track opens out. Ahead to the right is the entrance to Mine Train Quarry, a working stone quarry.

- To return, turn right between the large stones [10]. Walk downhill following the electricity lines. Notice more stone blocks on the ground. Ahead on the horizon is the New Fancy coal spoil

heap, a place well worth visiting for the view, wild life and to learn more about the Forest's mining past.

- When you reach the forest track, cross it and walk straight ahead, retracing your steps from before. Cross the road and return to the bridge at the pond outlet, then continue ahead to the cycle track at Cannop Wharf. At the trail junction, turn left and walk along the cycle track back to the car park.