



## WALKS FROM DARWIN FOREST

Please note this walk can be muddy and overgrown at certain times of the year. Non-residents: Parking and access to the public footpaths and the walk is available on Flash Lane. Route checked June 2024

# Young Explorer's Walk (2.8 miles)



This beautiful short walk takes you out of the Park and into the surrounding countryside, walking on woodland paths and quiet tracks. The terrain is flat and easy, with no big stiles or tricky gates, although please note that the ground may be muddy in places. There is plenty to see and hear along the way - keep your eyes wide open and your ears switched on!

## Directions

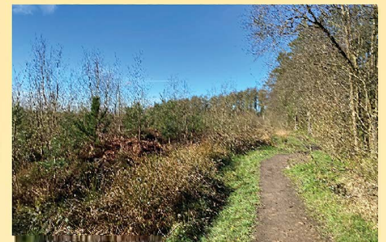
1. Starting your walk from Reception, cross over the driveway and join the Forest Trail that you'll find behind Evolution Health & Fitness. Head into the forest and follow the path through the tall trees. At a fork in the path after about 150 metres, take the left hand fork. Keep walking on the path as it bears right after about 300 metres.



2. Carry straight on when you reach a crossroads of paths at a clearing. Look out for wonderful fungi growing on the trees around here and keep your eyes open for cheeky squirrels.

3. After about 400 metres, you'll see an area on your right where the trees have been felled in the past. As you draw level with this, look out for a wooden fence with a low step in the wall on the left. Go over the step and carefully cross the road (Flash Lane). Turn left on the road and then almost immediately right on a broad track with a wide metal gate.

4. Follow the broad track into woodland. Carry straight on as the track narrows to a path, ignoring a path off to the left after about 200 metres. Look out on your left for hundreds of baby Christmas trees!



### Use your senses!

The forest is always alive with sounds, sights and smells. Stop walking for a while and count how many different animals you can see in the trees and on the ground. Then try closing your eyes and hearing all the birds. How many different bird songs can you pick out in 1 minute?



5. The path eventually goes through a gap in a stone wall and meets a narrow lane with walls on both sides (Back Lane). Turn left on Back Lane. Take a minute to admire the stone walls here - did you know that dry stone walls are all built by hand, with every single stone carefully chosen to fit the right space? They are often hundreds of years old!



6. Walk along Back Lane for about 250 metres. At the end of a patch of tall trees on the right, turn right and go through a gap in the stone wall to

follow a narrow path. There is a stone wall on your left. After a little while, peer over the top of the wall to see the most amazing views of the surrounding countryside!



### How far can you see?!

See if you can spot a group of wind turbines on the horizon. They're 11 miles away at Carsington Pasture. A little further along to the right you might also see a distinctive ring of low trees with some taller trees in the centre. This is Minninglow, a Stone Age burial tomb that dates back to 3000BC! It's about 8 miles away.



The view to Minninglow

7. Carry on following the path roughly straight on for about 600 metres, always keeping the stone wall on your left. Keep on this path until the mature trees on your right end and you reach an area of younger trees where there is a crossroads of paths. Turn right at the crossroads and follow the path with young trees on your left and Christmas trees on your right.

8. After about 100 metres the path reaches a stony track. Turn right on the stony track.

9. You will soon reach a wide gate that leads on to a lane. Turn left on the lane and then almost immediately right to walk into woodland with very tall trees. This wood is full of animals and birds - listen out for woodpeckers!



10. There are no formal paths through this wood but bear diagonally right upon entering and continue walking roughly diagonally right through the woods. You will eventually emerge from the wood at the wide metal gate you came across at point 3.

11. Go through the gate and carefully cross over Flash Lane. Turn left on the lane and then almost immediately right, walking over the low step in the fence and back into the woodland that you walked through earlier.

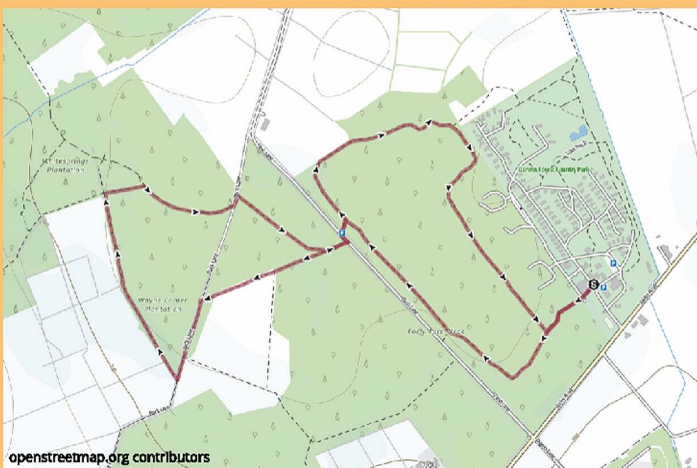
12. This time, turn left when you reach the path and into the clearing of baby Sitka Spruce trees. These trees grow very quickly - as much as 1.5 metres (4'11") in a year!

13. Keep following this path as it winds through the trees and returns to the forest that you entered at point 1. The floor is covered in spruce cones; you could collect one as a souvenir.



14. When you reach a fork in the path, take the left hand fork and return to the Park.

### Follow your route!



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### Tick off what you spot on the way!



Squirrel



Robin



Blackbird



Chaffinch



Silver Birch



Coal Tit