



The Nipstone Wanderer

A 4km walk taking in the old mine site, a gentle woodland stroll and the Stiperstones Ridge with breathtaking views.



All-ability path

Accessibility Information

Allow 1-1½ hours.

Accessible parking is available opposite the Miners institute.

Picnic benches and a short, all-ability path allow access to the reservoir, and is suitable for wheelchair users and people with limited mobility.

A further 600m is along hard surfaced and fairly even terrain (see map for details).

Route Description

- 1 Start from one of the three parking areas indicated on the map. The walk begins at the Miner's Institute – a ruined building where there are several interpretation panels about the Bog Mine site.**

The walls are all that remains of what was at first an engine house, and later the Miners' Institute or 'The Welfare' which hosted Saturday night dances. An aerial ropeway was constructed by German prisoners of war during World War 1, to carry barytes ore away for processing. However, extraction in the Bog area became uneconomic and mining finally finished in 1922.

The mine and village were gradually abandoned and demolished and nature has begun to take

Leaflet design by www.MACreative.co.uk



A five year programme of work, starting in 2013, to raise awareness of, enhance and celebrate local history and wildlife. The Scheme is managed by a Partnership of professional and community representatives from Shropshire and Powys. The lead organisation is the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership, hosted by Shropshire Council.

The Stiperstones & Corndon Hill Country Landscape Partnership Scheme

www.records-stiperstonesandcordon.co.uk

area, please visit:

For more information on the history and archaeology of the Stiperstones and Corndon

www.shropshirehillsshuttles.co.uk

The Bog Visitor Centre is a stop on the Shropshire Hills Shuttle Bus service. This is a weekend bus service which runs through the Stiperstones to Minsterley and Pontesbury. For route, timetable, ticket pricing and walking information see

Public transport



over again. The spoil heaps are a habitat for a range of specialist wildlife, such as the rare Grayling butterfly. The Grayling is a master of disguise and blends in to the surrounding mining spoil. Look closely between July-early August, and maybe you will find it.

- 2 Follow the easy access path to the reservoir to reach the line of an old tramway ahead. Turn left and follow the raised, flat route.**

At the end of the tramway is a wide track, turn right here and continue ahead. You will pass a very boggy, overgrown section of the reservoir on your right.

- 3 Keep left at a fork and follow the track ahead, almost in a straight line, as you pass through mixed woodland. Shortly after, the wood opens up to a small scrubby clearing, with views over to Shelve Hill.**

Shelve Hill was created when two continents collided in the tropics, about 450 million years ago. This movement was accompanied by volcanic activity, with molten lava busting upwards through the overlying sea-floor. The sediments solidified into a hard, grey rock. This was quarried around the village of Shelve, and is well seen in the church and other buildings.



Grayling butterfly

The Bog is set in a legendary geological landscape and is noted in folklore for the exploits of 'Wild Edric', an Anglo-Saxon who led English resistance to the Norman Conquest in 1068-70. Dating back to the mid-18th Century, The Bog is one of the oldest lead mines in the Stiperstones area. It finally closed in 1924 and most of the mine buildings have been demolished. The main surviving building was the school, now a busy visitor centre and staffed by local volunteers between April and November. The nearby Miners' Arms has also survived, but as a private house. Many of the mine's features can still be found including the powder house, aerial ropeway footings and the 'Somme' Tunnel, built during WW1. 'The Bog' was just that - very boggy, until the Boat level drain was cut to take away a lot of the water. All the processes associated with lead and barytes mining were carried out here at one stage, although later ore was shipped down the valley by an aerial ropeway which inspired elements of the Malcolm Saville novel, 'Seven White Gates'.

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- 4 The path narrows and, after a row of tall conifers, crosses a track. Follow the path ahead along the edge of the wood to a kissing gate.**

After this go slightly right through the field, with Black Rhadley and Heath Mynd in the distance.

Aim to the side of a cottage ahead – there are good views to Corndon Hill on the right.

Pass the cottage and then go through the gateway on the left. Continue on the same line, along an old hedgerow, to a kissing gate in the row of pine trees ahead.

- 5 Cross a track to reach another kissing gate onto the road. Go over the road with care, and through the wooden kissing gate below The Rock.**

Walk through the heather until the path meets the Shropshire Way – turn left here to follow the waymarked route diagonally up the heather slope, towards the top of the ridge. There is a wooden kissing gate onto the Open Access Land around Nipstone Rock, with views to the Long Mynd in the East.

Traditionally local people have harvested Bilberries (known locally as Whinberries) using special combs and sold the fruit to make extra money. Nipstone Mine was worked for barytes in the late 19th-early 20th century.



Bilberry or whinberry



6 The path skirts to the right hand side of Nipstone Rock, which appears as views to the main Stiperstones Ridge open up. There is a track or two which lead from the path over to Nipstone Rock. The footpath reaches a kissing gate by a field gate in the fence ahead.

Nipstone Rock and The Rock are two of the high quartzite tors marking the Stiperstones ridge. The conifer plantations which once covered Nipstone were felled in the early 2000s to encourage the regrowth of heather and bilberry and the return of rare wildlife such as the Emperor Moth and Skylarks. Work to restore the heathland continues to this day.

7 Go straight ahead, crossing a track, towards the corner of a wood. A kissing gate takes you on a path along the edge of the wood, with the remains of an old hedgerow to the right.

Exit the wood into a field and walk ahead past the hawthorn and rowan trees, which are remnants of the same old hedge, until you reach a fingerpost.

8 Turn left here to a kissing gate and follow the path down the field towards the Bog Visitor Centre ahead. A final kissing gate takes you back onto the Bog Mine site. Some steps lead down before the path continues to the left.

9 When you reach an open area above the car park you can take a detour left to explore more of the mine site—the Somme tunnel and powder house. Turning right past the pond you can also then detour up to a viewpoint with more information about the mine.

The Somme Tunnel was built during the First World War and is still open for 120m, with a metal grille at the entrance that is locked in winter to protect hibernating bats. It is said that unemployed miners were paid to work this level just to prevent them and their families from starving or to protect them from conscription. Gunpowder (known as “black powder”) was kept in the powder house and distributed to miners before they went underground. The pond held water for processing the lead ore and condensing steam for the mine’s steam engines.

What better way to finish a walk then to visit the Bog Visitor Centre for tea and cake...?

