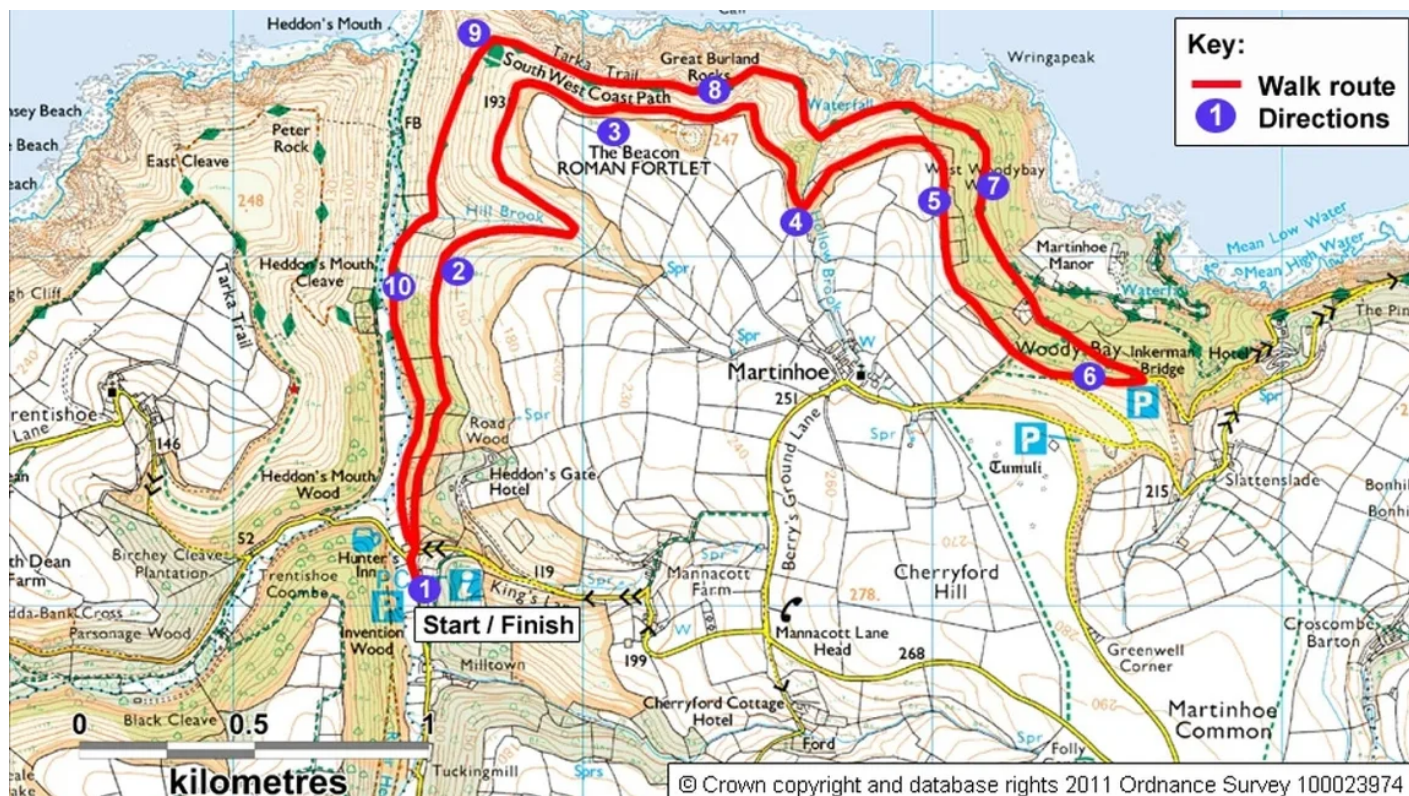


## DEVON

# Heddon Valley to Woody Bay walk

A varied walk that follows an historic 19th century carriageway and a section of the South West Coast Path. You'll take in views along the coast and across to Wales as you walk along some of the highest and most dramatic cliffs in England. Along the way you'll pass a Roman Fortlet, walk through ancient sessile oak woodlands, and in the spring and summer, spot a variety of sea birds on the cliffs.



## Information

Address: Heddon Valley, North Devon

OS map: Landranger 180

Activity: Walking

Challenging: Long incline followed by undulating paths along the cliffs. For further details, see section marked Terrain.

Dog friendly

Full trail: Miles: 6 (km: 9.6)

Access: Challenging

Duration: 2 hours 30 mins - 3 hours

## Terrain

This circular walk has a long incline at the beginning before undulating along the cliffs in both directions with some steep sections in places. Some parts of the path are very muddy in winter; very wet all year at Hollow Brook waterfall. Although coastal paths are well maintained they are very exposed in poor weather. Please wear appropriate clothing and footwear for your walk, and remember the climate may be very different on the cliffs to that at your starting point.

## Total steps: 10

Start point: National Trust gift shop, grid ref SS655480

1. With the National Trust shop on your right, walk down the road towards the Hunter's Inn public house. At the junction turn right, and then left along the bridleway by the side of the inn. At the fork take the footpath to your right signposted Woody Bay 2 3/4 miles. You are now walking through Road Wood along a wide track known as 'The Carriageway' that you are going to follow along its length up and along the cliffs to Woody Bay. This first section along Hill Brook Combe is home to bilberry, common cow-wheat, wild strawberry and wood avens. In early summer this section is full of foxgloves.
2. Carry on straight up and along the Carriageway as it climbs around the headland above Heddon's Mouth and Highveer Rocks. On a clear day there are far-reaching views over the Bristol Channel to Wales, down to the lime kiln at Heddon's Mouth, up the Heddon Valley and to the northwest to Lundy island.
3. As you follow the track you can see Woody Bay, Valley of the Rocks, Lynmouth Bay and Foreland Point stretching out before you. Look for the signpost on your right that leads up to Martinhoe Roman Fortlet.
4. Returning to the main track, continue towards Woody Bay. Above Hollow Brook Combe the path is flanked by sessile oaks and rare whitebeams. This is an excellent place to look out for the peregrines and buzzards that breed in this area.
5. Pass through the gate, closing it behind you. You are now walking through West Woody Bay Wood, home to ash, larch and birch, as well as more oaks. Keep an eye out for red deer and woodpeckers.
6. Stay straight on the Carriageway to where it meets the road on sharp hairpin bend. Turn left and follow the road down the hill, past a small National Trust car park an alternative starting point for this walk. Just past the car park turn left down a road shown as a dead end that leads to Woody Bay.

7. On a very sharp right-hand bend in the road look for the South West Coast Path on your left, signposted 'Coastpath Hunters Inn'. Turn onto this path which you are going to stay on all the way back to your start point. Follow the steep incline up the side of the cliff and pass through the gate into a woodland of sessile oaks, sheared by the wind over decades into a myriad of twisted shapes.
8. Carry on up the side of the combe to Great Burland Rocks. This is an excellent vantage point from which to look for the guillemots, razorbills and other seabirds in the bird colony down below you to the east at Wringapeak.
9. Carry on along the footpath to where it turns back up the Heddon Valley along the side of the combe. This is a good position from which to look down onto the beach and the lime kiln, and across the valley to where the coast path makes its way precipitously around the headland and on to Combe Martin.
10. Carry on down the hill, across some scree, where you will meet a footpath signposted to the right to the beach. Unless you wish to make a short detour to the pebble beach and lime kiln at Heddon's Mouth, turn left along South West Coast Path signposted ½ mile to Hunters Inn, follow the signposts back to the pub and the Trust gift shop and ice cream parlour.

End point: National Trust gift shop, grid ref SS655480

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