

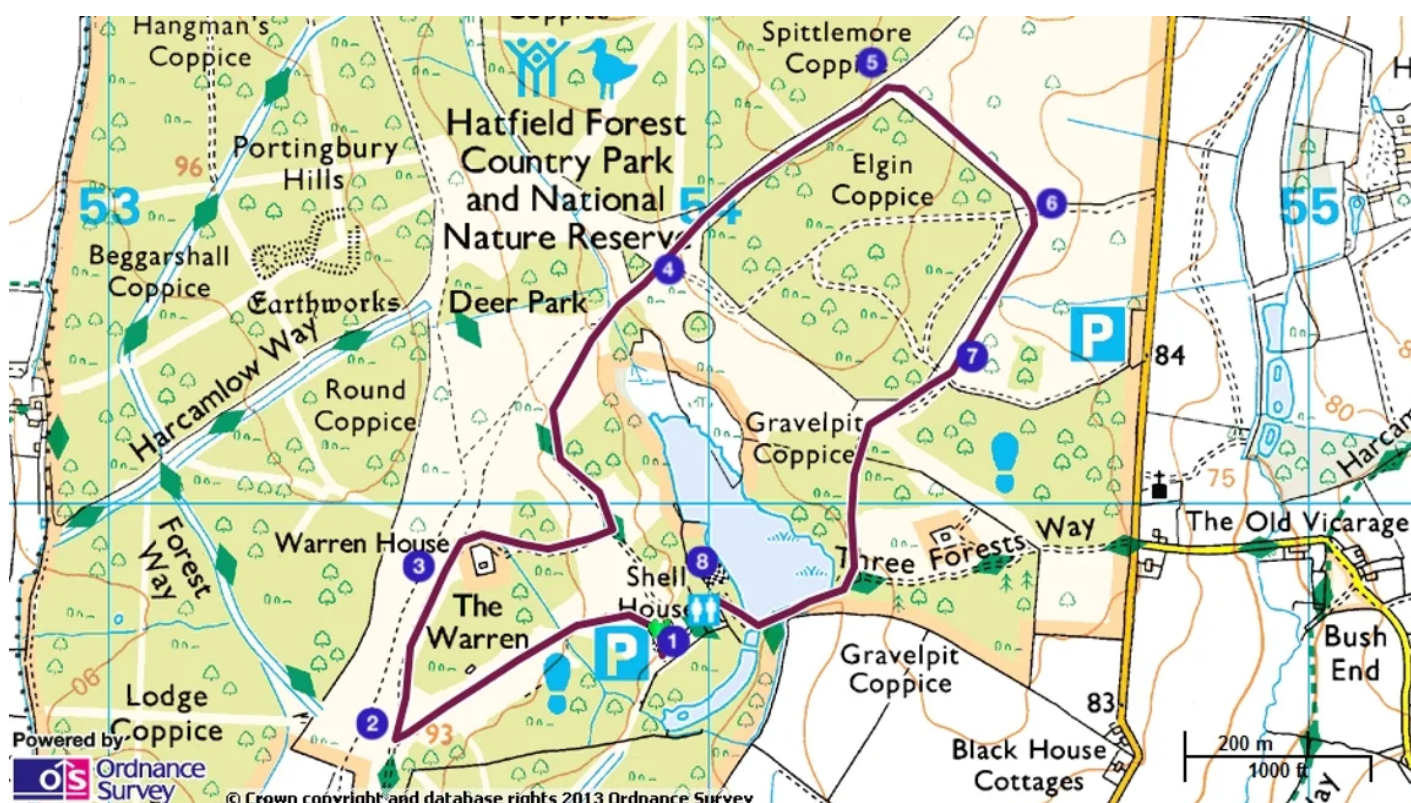
ESSEX, BEDFORDSHIRE & HERTFORDSHIRE

Hatfield Forest buttercup walk

The plains at Hatfield Forest can be walked at any time of the year but, if you visit in May or June, you'll see them carpeted with over 300 million buttercups. This walking trail takes you through the best places to see the buttercups; there are so many, your boots will turn golden yellow!

Trails status

The trails in the Forest can become very muddy during winter, so this walk is best enjoyed from April to October. In addition, we may have to close some parts of the route (even in summer) to allow the ground to recover. If so, we'll offer an alternative route. During the winter months you will have to book your parking for weekends and school holidays.



Information

Address: Hatfield Forest, Bush End Road, Takeley, Bishop's Stortford, Essex CM22 6NE.

OS map: Landranger 167

Activity: Walking

Easy: Mostly level ground and often muddy paths. Please see Terrain section for further details.

Dog friendly: Dogs welcome, but please keep them on leads near livestock, around the lake and wherever temporarily signed.

Full trail: Miles: 3.4 (km: 5.44)

Access: Easy

Duration: 1 hour 30 mins

Terrain

Some of the paths can be muddy throughout the year and extremely muddy during wet weather. Sturdy footwear is recommended all year round.

Total steps: 8

Start point: Shell House car park, grid ref: TL547203

1. Start at the gate to the lakeside area car park, walk to the far left-hand corner and take the path just past a wooden bench. Follow this path until reaching an open ride with coppice on either side. There is a metal fence on your left. Keep walking uphill until you reach the end of the ride and the main plain. Turn right here and walk straight in a northerly direction.
2. Continue heading north along the main plain, passing a chestnut paling fence on your left. Cross over the gravel track (which leads to Forest Lodge, a private residence).
3. Pass a clump of dead horse chestnuts on your right. From here you can see Warren Cottage (House), another private residence. Follow the gravel track from Warren Cottage and you will shortly reach the main estate road. Turn left along this road and go downhill until you reach the stream with a culvert, which goes under the road. Watch out for traffic in both directions on the estate road.
4. Walk uphill on the grass beside the road, until you reach the point where the road bears to the right. Do not follow the road but, keeping to the grass, walk straight ahead to a wide ride, known as Halfway Ride, in front of you.
5. Continue along Halfway Ride for about ½ mile (800m) to the end, (this may be muddy), and turn immediately right through the gate. You are now on Takeley Hill.

The ground is level throughout and the route goes along grassy plains and woodland paths where you'll encounter tree roots and gates.

6. Keep the tree line to your right and keep an eye out for grazing animals. Walk straight ahead (south) following the distinct marked path in the grass until reaching the estate exit road. Cross over the road and continue in the same direction until reaching the estate entrance road.
7. Cross the road and look for the boardwalk in front of you. Follow the boardwalk for 220yd (200m) and go through the gate to enter the woodland.
8. Follow the boardwalk to the end (be careful after wet weather as it can become slippery). Continue along the dam, keeping the lake on your right, until reaching Shell House and the Forest Café for a well-deserved cup of tea and perhaps a slice of cake.

End point: Shell House car park, grid ref: TL547203
