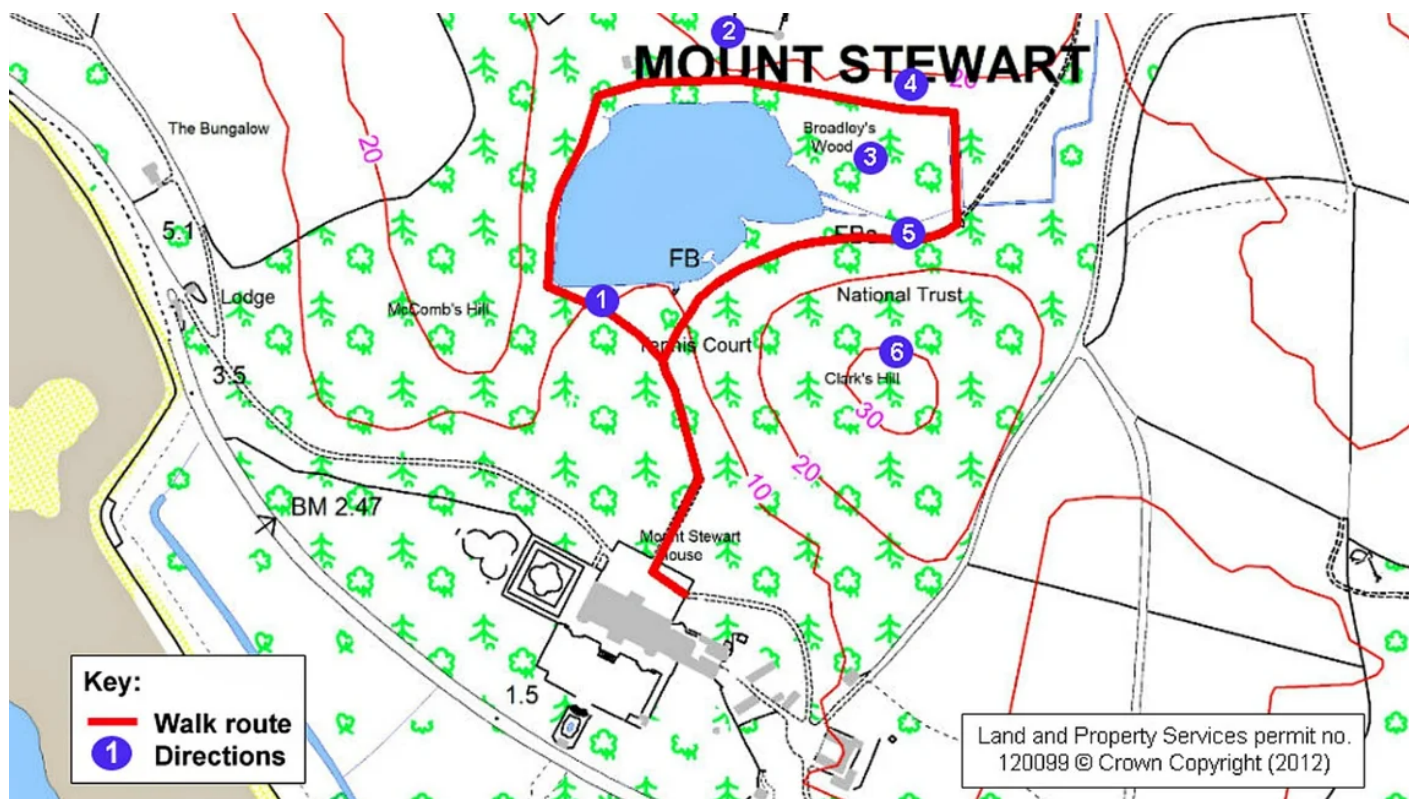


NORTHERN IRELAND

Mount Stewart lake walk

Mount Stewart in County Down is one of the most unique and unusual gardens managed by the National Trust, enjoying the mild climate of the Ards Peninsula. This circular walk takes in the majestic views around the lake.



Information

Address: Mount Stewart, Portaferry Road, Newtownards, County Down BT22 2AD

OS map: N/A

Activity: Walking

Easy: Care will need to be taken in some parts. For further details, please see Terrain section.

Dog friendly: Dogs are welcome, but please keep them on a lead and be mindful of other visitors.

Full trail: Miles: 0.6 (km: 0.96)

Access: Easy

Duration: 45 mins

Terrain

The route is mostly level, though there are some gravelly surfaces. In bad weather, it may also become quite slippery in places.

Total steps: 6

Start point: Reception area, Mount Stewart. Grid ref: NW671233

1. From the reception area, walk along the wide, gravelled path to the north front of the mansion, then head left around the seven-acre lake. The banks are planted with primulas, irises and other water-loving plants, as well as gunneras, known for their large leaves.
2. You'll pass the private burial ground known as Tir N'an Òg, which translates as Land of the Ever Young. On the slopes of the hill, there are paths and steps running through a variety of shrubs and plants that favour a hotter climate. Take the time to explore them before returning to the original trail path.
3. At this point, you can either follow the lakeside grass path known as the Rock Walk, or the gravel path alongside Jubilee Avenue.
4. No matter which of the two paths you chose to take in step 3, you'll end up at a little stone bridge over a stream. Crossing this will bring you to the Ladies' Walk.
5. To the left rises Rhododendron Hill – once you've explored it, return to the main trail route. Follow it past the lake, under the great cork oak and back to the front of the mansion house.
6. If you want to finish your walk off the beaten path, follow the Himalayan Walk to Clark's Hill, where you can wander among some of the plants brought back by renowned collectors Forrest, Rock and Kingdon-Ward.

End point: Reception area, Mount Stewart. Grid ref: NW671233