

SURREY

## Headley Heath butterfly walk

Follow this circular 2-mile walk through Headley Heath, rambling through woodland and heathland. See how many different species of butterfly you can spot along the way.



### Information

Address: Brimmer car park opposite Headley Grove Farm.

OS map: Explorer 146

Activity: Walking

Easy: Mainly flat or gently undulating land, with a some slight descents and ascents. Can be muddy. For further details, please see Terrain section.

Dog friendly: Dogs welcome, but please keep them under control around grazing livestock.

Full trail: Miles: 2 (km: 3.2)

Access: Challenging

Duration: 4 hours

### Terrain

This is a circular walk across mainly flat or gently undulating land, with a moderately steep descent and a moderately steep ascent. Many of the paths are muddy, even locally boggy after rain. There are myriad paths, especially through the woods, so you'll need to follow directions carefully.

### Total steps: 7

Start point: Brimmer car park opposite Headley Grove Farm, grid ref: TQ206533

1. In Brimmer car park, with your back to the road, take the footpath that leads from the gate in the extreme right-hand corner of the car park, along a broad path through birch woodland. Take the second left turn, which soon appears at a crossroads where the trees thin. Follow this track, then take the fourth turn on your right past the second pond. (You'll need to count as the first is soon after the second pond and the fourth soon after the third).
2. This section is entirely in woodland. After turning fourth right, follow the track down, across a bridleway and down and out of a hollow. Carry on as the path veers to the right, leading to and over a very muddy patch. Continue and stop when the path reaches a circular glade fringed by tall oaks.
3. Walk across this glade (at the junction of six tracks) and turn round to look up at the two tall oaks at the end of the muddy path you've just walked. The dense-leaved oak on the left is a purple emperor 'master tree', where every afternoon during late June and July (from 12.30pm until early evening) male purple emperor butterflies gather and chase each other and other winged creatures about, whilst waiting for females.
4. Take the second exit from the right at the end of this circular glade, and follow this vehicle track downhill. It opens up onto heathland, with gorse patches, and becomes a broad, short grassy ride. Carry on past a cattle trough and a big oak on the summit of a hill. Carry on walking – halfway down the slope the geology suddenly changes from acidic sands to chalk, and the vegetation changes to chalk grassland and scrub. Go down the steps to the bottom of the valley.
5. In the combe bottom, bear right onto the track. Then, at the base of a set of steps on your left, take the minor path that runs gently uphill and above the broad chalky vehicle track. This minor path meanders uphill, before rejoining the chalky track below the hill summit.

6. The chalky track leads up to a crossroads of six tracks at the summit. At this junction, take the second path from the right, past a bench. This runs for a long way on level ground, through scrubby heath and woodland and past Aspen Pond on the left. Follow this track, past various intersections with very minor paths, all the way along to a major T-junction.
7. At the T-junction, bear left and walk back along part of your way out, to the two ponds. Opposite the first pond, turn right down a narrow path with shallow bushes and brambles that leads to the car park.

End point: Brimmer car park opposite Headley Grove Farm, grid ref: TQ206533

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