



Ingleborough

National Nature Reserve



working today
for nature tomorrow

Limestone pavements at Scar Close / Peter Wakely / English Nature



Ingleborough's strange wild world

Ingleborough National Nature Reserve is renowned for the wildlife and geology of its limestone pavements and other limestone features. The area's national and international importance has been recognised by English Nature through the creation of this National Nature Reserve which covers an area of 1014 hectares.

Primaeval pavements

Ingleborough Hill is one of the famous Three Peaks in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, the others being Pen-y-ghent and Whernside.

At Ingleborough, natural processes over the ages have created a majestic landscape of exceptional limestone pavements, gritstone capped peaks, underground caverns and a wealth of wildlife.

The range of rock types, soils and altitudes, together with the effects of human management down the years, have produced intriguing and varied communities of plants, insects, birds and other animals.

The rocks at Ingleborough were laid down some 300 million years ago. The huge expanses of Great

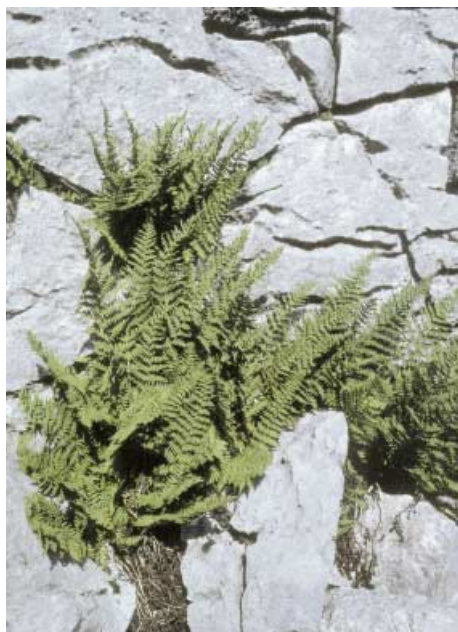
Scar limestone rock, revealed and pressurised by glaciers, produced dramatic exposures of so-called pavements. Ingleborough Hill is famous for this stark, giant cobbled 'runway' and for other limestone features including the scars, dry valleys and extensive cave systems.

Iron Age fort

Aerial photographs show many archaeological features including ancient fields ... peat excavations ... traces of lost villages – an Iron Age fort tops the summit plateau!

Evidence is strong that man has farmed this area since prehistoric times when the limestone terraces provided good grazing for stock.

Woodland clearance began several thousand years ago. Livestock



Rigid buckler fern / Peter Corkhill

grazing has changed the vegetation from woodland to scrub, heathland or grassland.

Intensive farming across the second half of the 20th century damaged the area's wildlife; however the limestone grasslands and heathlands offered a natural sanctuary where native plants, birds and other wildlife continue to adapt to upheaval and change.

Clints and grikes

Some of the best limestone pavements in Britain can be found on the Reserve. The pavements at Scar Close are superb examples of this rare rock formation whose signature is a complex system of clints - level rock surfaces – and grikes or deep crevices

which support a bewildering array of attractive and unusual plants.

Specialist plants like the very rare Yorkshire sandwort grow on and around the clints while the grikes reveal rare plants like baneberry, limestone polypody fern and naturally dwarfed forms of ash and hazel.

The sheltered conditions in the deep grikes also encourage many wild flowers, such as wood anemone and bluebell, more commonly found in woods.

Garden spiders spin vast webs across the grikes ... northern brown argus butterflies sip nectar from rock-roses ... lizards dart ... the moorland rings with the cries of curlew and red grouse ... and occasionally roe deer startle at the sound of scrunching hikers' boots.



Garden spider

The vast areas of rich limestone grassland surrounding these pavements support early purple-





Yorkshire sandwort / Peter Wakely / English Nature

orchids, salad burnet and rock-rose, while globeflower and bird's-eye primrose inhabit the wetter parts.

Moorland

Higher up the reserve and where the soil is deeper, there is blanket bog, grassland and heathland. In these areas heather and other bushy plants have been reduced by the heavy grazing of sheep; but the plants continue their hearty recovery.

Heather and cottongrass, bog mosses, cranberry and sundews grow on the bog surface; whereas the heathland supports plants like bilberry and crowberry as well as heather and a range of grasses.

Woodland and scrub

The reserve holds a few small and fragile areas of the original ancient woodland and shrub cover. In these,

ash trees have been stunted by poor soils and the upland climate. Hazel, hawthorn, guelder rose and bird cherry grow alongside the ash providing moist and sheltered conditions for a luxuriant growth of mosses, ferns and plants such as dog's-mercury, giant bellflower and the rare alpine cinquefoil.

Elsewhere juniper shrubs cling to limestone and peaty soils. All these areas provide shelter and food for



Male redstart

redstarts, willow warblers and woodcocks.

Managing our heritage

English Nature is managing the reserve in partnership with local farmers and other bodies including the Yorkshire Dales National Park and the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust to maintain and restore the area's rich wildlife inheritance.

Innovative conservation techniques complement traditional farming practices as the team works to restore and maintain hay meadows, woodland and heather moorland. There is also a maintenance programme for the vast network of drystone walls.

Education and research

The reserve is an important natural study* resource for students of biology, geology, geography - from primary school to university level. Knowledge gained from research and experimental work benefits our understanding of nature and informs conservation work around the world.

** Remember, please, that special permission is needed to carry out any studies involving fieldwork or specimen collection.*

Considerate, careful walkers only, please!

Footpaths are provided for your safety and convenience. Protect the reserve by keeping dogs on leads and following the Country Code. Remember, Ingleborough is a hazardous upland area: walkers should observe the Mountain Safety Code.

Access

Car parks and lay-bys are shown on the map. There are no bus services but the area can be reached by rail using either Ribbleshead or Horton in Ribblesdale

stations on the splendid Settle to Carlisle railway.

Because of the difficult nature of the terrain the reserve is not recommended for disabled access.

Like to know more?

More detailed leaflets on sections of the reserve are available free from our Leyburn office – address over the page. In addition a number of newly-created leaflets focus on interesting local walks of varying duration and difficulty:

- Ribbleshead Quarry Walk. 2.5km. About an hour. Easy to medium
- Limestone Walk. 5km. 1-1.5 hrs. Easy to medium
- Sulber Nick Walk. 9km. About 2.5hrs. Easy to medium
- Summit and Ridge Walk. 15km. About 4.5 hrs. Medium to difficult

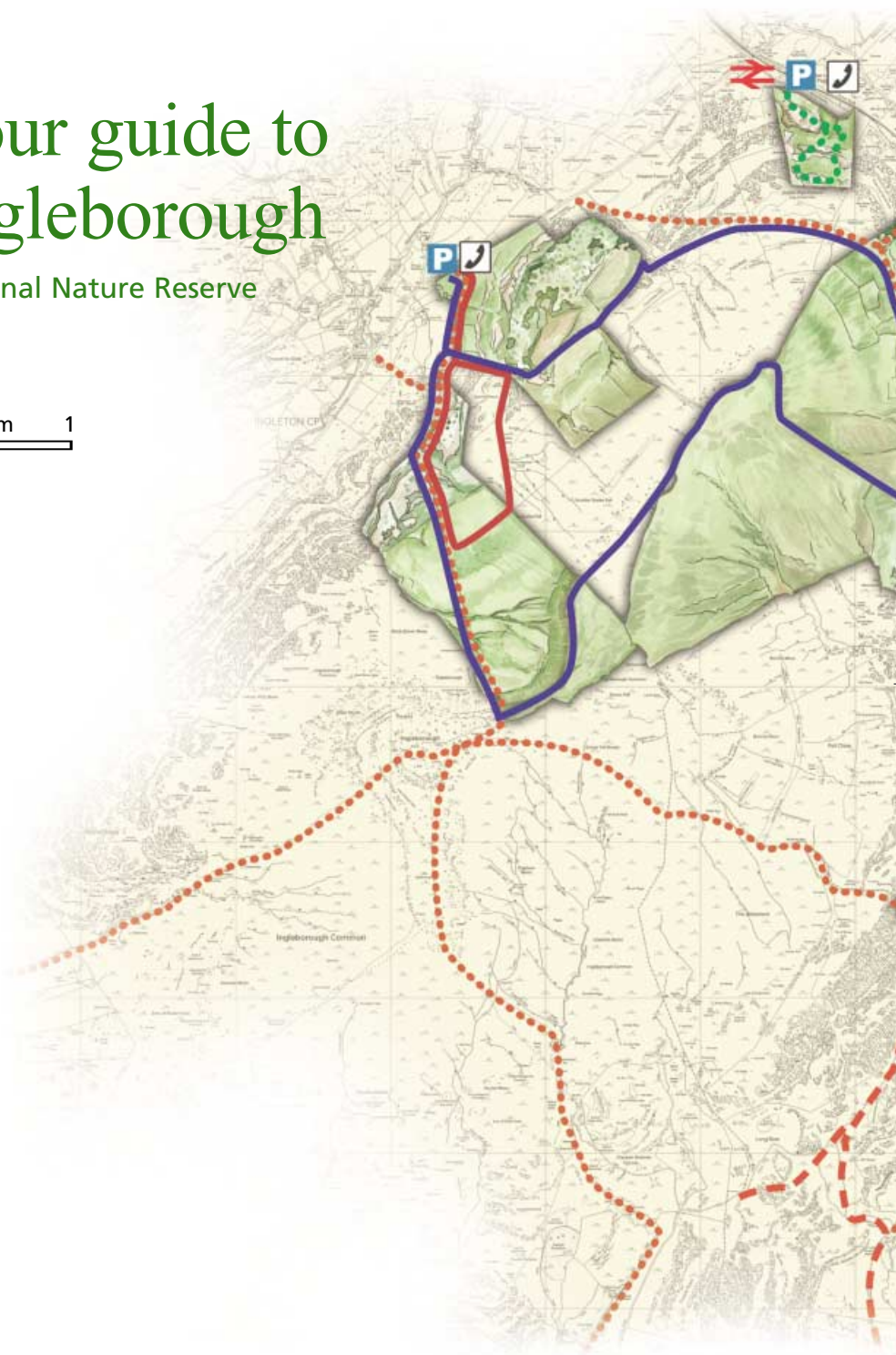
Bellflower / Peter Corkhill



Your guide to Ingleborough

National Nature Reserve

0 km 1



KEY

Public Footpath



Bridleway



Path



Sulber Nick Walk



Ridge Route



Limestone Walk



Parking



Railway Station



Telephone



Take your own safety seriously

There is much to see and enjoy here, but peace of mind is something only you can ensure by being informed and prepared.

Ingleborough is a wonderful but demanding reserve. A remote and often deserted mountainous area (rising to 650 metres) it is subject to extreme weather conditions, including sudden and dense hill fog.

Even the lower levels are best tackled with appropriate sturdy footwear. Simple precautions will make your visit to this extraordinary place safer and even more enjoyable. We recommend you equip with the following:

- A map and compass – make sure you know how to use them
- Waterproofs, spare clothing
- Emergency food and water
- A torch and whistle
- Mobile phone - limited reception but worth a try
- A rucksack to carry it all in

It makes sense to tell a responsible person exactly where you are going, how long you plan to spend and what time you will return. If there are any serious doubts about your wellbeing your safety

‘backstop’ should alert the rescue services by calling the police at Skipton on 01756 793377.

The lie of the land

The combination of grikes (large crevices) in the limestone pavements together with peat bogs can make going tough and slow, even for experienced walkers. Many rocks are slippery and loose and there are deep holes concealed by vegetation, so keep your eyes peeled and don’t try to travel in poor light.

There are many caves and potholes. Unless you are part of a properly equipped, experienced and supervised group, stay well away from them. The substantial quarry on the Southernmost section of the reserve on Moughton Fell is a fully operational site, and on no account should you cross its perimeter. If you hear a siren, it may indicate imminent blasting at the quarry – you should move well away from the boundary.

Take care with the old dry stone walls – many are topped with rusty barbed wire. They may be unstable and must not be climbed over or on - use the stiles or gates provided. Avoid any reserve management activities like tree felling, haymaking, herbicide spraying or stacked materials such as timber or hay bales.



Limestone pavements / Paul Glendell / English Nature

Keeping an eye on livestock

Livestock bulls are traditionally run with suckler cows in the summer. Although these are the more docile breeds, they can still be aggressive and dangerous.

- Stay close to the edge of field furthest from the bull.
- Watch for signs of irritation like head tossing, pawing and foaming at the mouth.
- Cattle can be defensive when suckling calves – give them a wide berth.
- Don't let your dogs harass the herds.

Occasionally, rabbits are shot to control numbers. There may be no warning notices posted so listen out for shots and skirt round the area.

Food for thought

- Don't pick and eat anything - keep a very close eye on children in

particular, there are poisonous plants and fungi about.

- Don't eat anything that has been on the ground - the land is used for grazing sheep and as a result there are a great many tiny parasites.
- Wash your hands before eating if you can.

Lyme disease

Sheep ticks can transmit Lyme disease, a potentially serious, debilitating illness. Wear light coloured trousers, tucked into your socks and check for ticks regularly. If you think you have been bitten, see your doctor when you get back.

Public phones

Public phones are located at: The Old Hill Inn (SD743776), Selside (SD785757) and Horton in Ribblesdale (SD807726).



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Front cover photographs:

Top left: Bloody crane's-bill / Peter Corkhill

Bottom left: Drystone wall maintenance / Peter Corkhill

Right: Colt Park Wood / Peter Wakely / English Nature



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