

Wandering in woodland

A pretty pool glistening in the sun is the perfect way to round off this figure-of-eight walk near Abbots Leigh.

Park at Abbots Pool Wood but instead of entering the woods here, return to Manor Road and turn right up the lane.

Walk along the lane, with an orchard on your right, until you reach Orchard Lodge.



Immediately after the house turn right and follow a rough track upwards, which then veers round to the left. This path is a bridleway and can get very muddy in parts so wear suitable footwear.

The track continues straight ahead for about three quarters of a mile until it meets Sandy Lane.

The entrance to West Tanpit Wood is immediately on your left. You could start the route here but there are less car parking spaces.

The woodland contains tall larch trees, oak and coppiced hazel. It probably

got its name from Markham Brook which was once used for leather tanning. It is believed a tannery existed here in medieval times, belonging to St. Augustine's Monastery in Bristol and the oak was used to line the tan pits.

Go through the main gate and follow the path until it forks into two. Take the woodchip path on the right, which veers down towards the brook. Cross the wooden bridge and continue on the path, with the brook now on your left.

After a short walk you will reach a crossroads in the path and see a sign for the Gordano Round recreational path. Carry on a few more metres (past a wood carving) and then cross the stream. Join a small path, turning

Walk information:

Distance: about 3 miles

Difficulty: medium – mainly level footpaths with a couple of steeper sections. Paths get very muddy so wear suitable footwear (wellies needed)

Accessibility: 4 stiles. Not suitable for wheelchair users / buggies

Duration: about 2.5 hrs

Maps: OS Explorer 154

Refreshments: The George Inn, Abbots Leigh (on the A369)

right and following the stream now on your right.

After about 80 metres of a gentle uphill climb, you will come to a junction and join the main path. Carry on straight ahead, which is the Gordano Round.

Pass through a kissing gate, past a small pond on your right and cottages. Continue onwards then cross the stile in the barbed wire fence. Head diagonally right up the slope.

At the top you will come to a field (Failand Farm). Head diagonally left towards the top left hand corner of the field. At the top, go over the stile and take the path bearing right (along the coppice on your right).



Features to look out for:

- West Tanpit Wood
- Abbots Pool Wood
- Gordano Round recreational route

Go through the kissing gate and follow the path straight ahead, along the edge of the field. Continue to follow the path round, and Failand



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ahead. You will then come to a track, so turn right here and follow the path into Abbots Pool Wood.

An information sign gives details about the pool and woodland. The name dates back to the 12th century when

abbots from St. Augustine's dammed the stream to create three fishponds. The depth and size of the pool was increased in the 1930s, when the pretty cascades, bathhouse cave and little island were also created.

The path you are on leads back to the car park but it is worth spending some time at the pool and exploring the paths around the stream before heading home.

Golf Course will be on your right. Follow the edge of the field downwards.

At the bottom of the field you will come to the rough track you walked along at the start of the route. Go through both gates and continue ahead across the field, towards Scutché's Plantation.

Go through the plantation and at the boundary cross the stile and follow the left hand side of the field, into Fish Pond Wood.

Go through the gate and you will see three paths into the wood. Take the middle one, which goes straight



Did you know?

Walks previously published in *Life* can now be downloaded in PDF format from the council's website. Visit www.n-somerset.gov.uk/lifewalks

How to get there:

Car

Abbots Pool car park is reached by Manor Road, off the A369 at Abbots Leigh village

Bus

First bus services **357, 358** and **359** run between Bristol and Portishead, along the A369

