

Ben Lawers walk

Quite a hard walk but excellent panoramic views all the way

Ben Lawers mountain of the hoof, or possibly 'loud mountain' (running water)

Ben Ghlasgreen or grassy mountain

Description:

Distance 6 miles

Height 3981 ft

Start The Lawers nature reserve car park

Approx.time 3-5 hours

Parking Car park at Lawers nature reserve, Loch Tayside 3 miles east of Killin

Warning - Although a relatively simple though strenuous walk in good weather, this becomes difficult and hazardous in winter conditions with icy surfaces and severe drifting in gale force winds. Time for trip may be doubled! In poor visibility any approach other than from the car park can be hard to navigate

Ben Lawers is not really in the Trossachs but it's a great climb and you get a head start from the carpark at 1400 ft.

From Stirling take the A84 via Callander, Strathyre and Lochearnhead then after Glen Ogle, turn right at Lix Toll through Killin to the north Loch Tay road. 3 or 4 miles east of Killin turn left onto the Ben Lawers road and up to the nature reserve car park.

Throughout this walk you may see rare Alpine flowers in season. They are protected species and must not be damaged. The walk is carpeted with 'Alpine Lady's Mantle' and scented 'Wild Mountain Thyme' made famous by the song.

The Route

From the Ben Lawers carpark walk up the duckboarded path over the wet ground in a northerly direction towards the mountain. Once off the duckboards, follow the Edramucky burn northwards up the gully for about half a mile until the track turns suddenly east (sign posted to Ben Lawers) and crosses the burn. Follow the track with the burn now on your left, through the game gate then ascend the shoulder and on up to the top of Bein Ghlas.

Excellent views here to Ben Lawers with an Stuc and Meal Garbh hiding behind.

Continue north eastwards from Bein Ghlas and descend the ridge to the col at the foot of the final ascent to Ben Lawers. In poor visibility keep away from the steep cliffs to your right.

The climb becomes steep and rocky, more scrambling than walking where eroded, for 600 feet to the Lawers summit.

Beware steep slopes to the west at the top – it's a long slide down and a longer climb back up!

Views here over vast stretches of Scotland cannot fail to impress!

From the summit on a clear day you may see the east coast at the Firth of Tay as well as the Firth of Clyde far off to the south west. Ben More with it's ridge to Stobinion are obvious to the west. Lochan nan Chat may be seen below below Meal Garbh and An Stuc to the north east of the summit. The Tarmachan range lies to the west and Glen Lyon to the north.

Take a short walk along the ridge to the south east (toward loch Tay) to see a fantastic lunar landscape with a 'crater' containing the remains of a Victorian mapping expedition base. The remains are in the form of some dry stone building ruins sheltered by the craggy sides of the 'crater'. Mind your footing here as there are opportunities to damage yourself by falling into the 'crater'. The crater often harbours snow well into summer.

Retrace your steps to the summit then back down to the col and look for the track leading down to the north as you come off the steep descent. Follow this track to the right (often treacherously icy with frozen meltwater in winter) down the north side of Beinn Ghlas then into the bealach to follow the burn southwards and re-join the ascent track near the game gate.

Escape

This last track to the north side from the bealach between Lawers and Bein Ghlas can provide a valuable escape route to lower levels if on the ascent the weather deteriorates unexpectedly.

Descend to the car park by the track.

