



The Rufus Stone Trail

A long and occasionally strenuous walk from the Rufus Stone, out to remote and rugged parts of the New Forest

Essential Facts

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| ▪ Route distance: | 20.5 km (12.8 miles) |
| ▪ Approximate time: | 5 hours |
| ▪ Optional shorter route: | 18.0 km (11.3 miles) |
| ▪ Approx. total ascent: | 150 metres |
| ▪ Start point Grid Ref: | SU 270 125 |
| ▪ GPS Ref: | SU 27032 12518 |
| ▪ Recommended O.S. Map: | Explorer OL 22 |
| ▪ Toughness Rating | Hampshire 4 |

Please see the notes on Toughness Ratings at the end of this report

Up For A
CHALLENGE ?

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Full Info from the Great Walks web site

THE ROUTE

The walk begins at the Rufus Stone car park near Upper Canterton, off the A31 west of Southampton.

Emerge from the car park, **S**, turning left along the road, with the Rufus Stone to your right. After 300 metres pulling up hill, turn right through a barrier onto the marked cycle trail. Keep ahead, enjoying extensive views over the Forest. The grassy path meets a gravel track, **A**. Turn left, continuing through the underpass to shortly emerge onto a gravel lane. Turn left. Keeping ahead, bear right after the cottage. Stay on the main route, ignoring side tracks. The now tarmac lane swings left; your route veers right to cross Furzey Gardens car park. Turn right onto the signposted gravel track heading into the trees.

Keep ahead following the marked route downhill to a stream. Cross via the footbridge. Walking ahead, descend wooden steps to cross a further stream. Follow the route left, climb the stile, and continue along between boundary fences to emerge onto a tarmac lane at Oak Leaf Cottage.

Walk ahead following the lane to a junction; turn right beside the telephone box. Carry on to the crossroads, continuing ahead along a no-through road, signed Acres Down. En route, look out for a humorous sign to your left.

Shortly after the farm, turn right, then left to Acres Down car park, **B**. Turning left through the car park, veer diagonally uphill on the indistinct grassy path aiming for the birch trees. Ignore the sandy hill path. The views are spectacular as you reach the brow of the hill. Your route, not reflected on the map, continues over the crossing track; ignore the path into the valley. Shortly emerging onto a gravel track, turn right, keeping to the ridge to reach junction, **C**. Veer right. Stay ahead on the main 'boot trodden' route at all times, as the indistinct path swings into the trees. Ignoring side paths, carry on to meet the cycle trail, **D**. Turn left, continuing ahead to Millyford Bridge car park.

Emerging onto the road, turn right for 400 metres passing the documented Portuguese fireplace. Turn left off the road, **E**. (Your walk can be shortened by not visiting the reptile centre, as the visit returns to this point.) Continue through the gate onto the cycle trail. After 150 metres, swing left at the T-junction and carry on to the Reptile Centre.

Retrace your route to **F**, turning left onto the grassy footpath. Continue ahead through woodland to junction **G**. Turn right along the gravel track, following the red banded posts north to reach the road. Turn left. After 600 metres, leave the lane, turning right onto a track through a low barrier. Continue through a gate into Holmhill Inclosure, staying ahead to reach a path junction. Turn left.

Your route continues through deciduous woodland to reach the junction with a cycle trail after 800 metres. Turn left, following the track ahead to path junction, **H**. Leave the trail temporarily, turning left onto a path climbing steeply uphill. Rejoin the cycle route at the junction, turning left and continuing ahead to the Bolderwood car park and Deer Sanctuary, signs direct you to the viewing platform. Toilets available.

Continue through the car park, turning right onto the road. Stay ahead. At the junction, turn left towards Fritham.

Follow the road to the Canadian Memorial, turning right onto the cycle trail at the car park, signed Minstead.



The Rufus Stone



A New Forest Cottage



The Portuguese Fireplace

Carry on ahead. As you walk, enjoy extensive views over the forest. Leaving the cycle trail at the fork, and bear left onto a lovely forest track. Continue to meander downhill through re-established forest aiming for the inclosure fence ahead. Continue on, veering right across a footbridge.

Continue uphill leaving the woodland for open heathland. Keep ahead to path junction, **I**, Stonard Wood. Ignoring the grassy pathway ahead, veer left. Almost immediately, fork right along the gravel track and continuing to a further fork, keep right again. Carry on along the gravel track through the gorse, ignoring side paths. After 300 metres, the track turns abruptly right; fork left to the cottage and road. Cross, taking the track opposite, signed Foxhill House.

Walking past the houses, continue ahead through a gate, onto a footpath. Follow the grassy path through the woodland, heading downhill to reach a drainage ditch, step over carefully, the sides are steep and may be slippery. Shortly, turn left beside the cottage, ignoring the gate and stile ahead. Stay to the edge of the wood. Keep right at the Y-junction keeping the fence and field to your right. Don't descend into the forest. Turn left at the stile, to rejoin your outward route. Continue to the path junction, following the direction arrow to the right.

Reaching Furzey Gardens, bear left onto the footpath, shortly rejoining the main track. Keep ahead, ignoring side tracks. After 600 metres, turn right through the gate onto the marked cycle trail. Continue through the underpass, and ahead. Bear right at the cycle trail marker, continue ahead to the road. Turn left back to the car park, **S**.

Refreshment

Sir Walter Tyrrell
Public House
Canterton
Tel: 02380 813170
Hot meals. Real ale.
Outside seating

The Green Dragon
Public House
Brook
Tel: 02380 813359
Bar snacks and full meals

Mad Hatter Tea Room
Café
10 High Street,
Lyndhurst
Tel: 02380 282341
Alice in Wonderland
theme, sandwiches,
meals, cream teas



The Walter Tyrrell Inn

LOCAL INFO

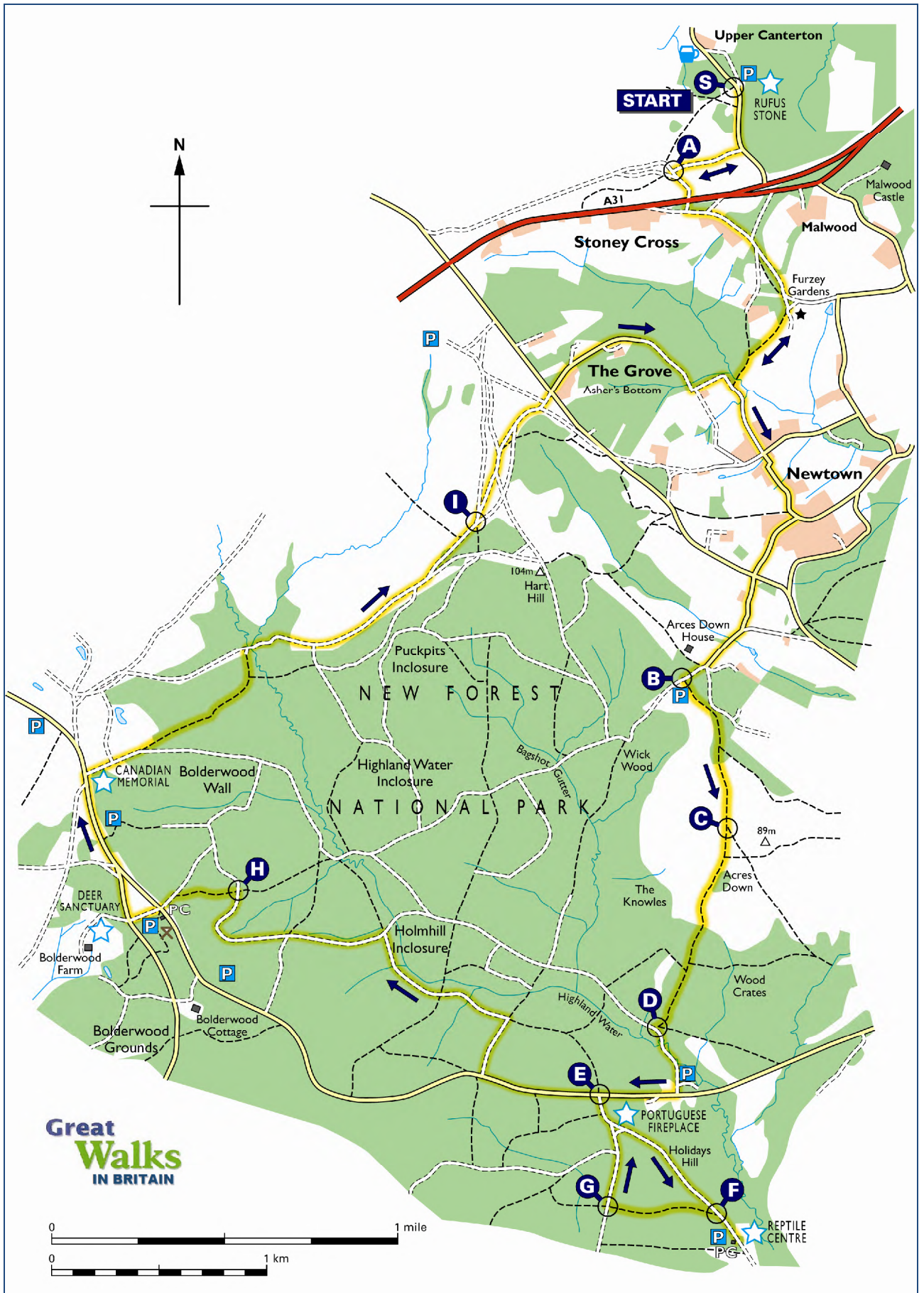
The **New Forest**, now designated a National Park, is well over 900 years old and has been a favoured royal hunting ground since the time of William the Conqueror. Today it comprises woodland, open heath, and bog areas.

The **Rufus Stone** was erected in memory of William the Conqueror's heir, King William II, known as William Rufus because of his shock of red hair. Killed by an arrow shot by his friend Walter Tyrrell in a tragic hunting accident in 1100, the stone marks the spot where the king's body fell. He was later buried in Winchester Cathedral.

William Rufus was regarded as a poor and unpopular monarch. There has always been much speculation as to the exact circumstances of his death.

**THE RUFUS STONE TRAIL
G.P.S. WAYPOINTS**

WAYPOINT NAME	MAP REF		CO-ORDINATES		ELEVATION: Metres
RUF S	S	SU	27032	12518	78
RUF A	A	SU	26725	12112	101
RUF B	B	SU	26744	09717	83
RUF C	C	SU	26984	09061	88
RUF D	D	SU	26649	08114	42
RUF E	E	SU	26391	07811	57
RUF F	F	SU	26944	07261	41
RUF G	G	SU	26426	07291	48
RUF H	H	SU	24704	08764	79
RUF I	I	SU	25816	10480	109



MAP LEGEND					
	Great Walks route		Church with tower		Spot height - metres
	M6 Motorway		Church with spire		Information centre
	A23 Main road		Other place of worship		Parking
	B2116 Secondary road		Cathedral / Abbey		Public convenience
	Minor road		Building		Public house
	Other road		Built up area		Picnic site
	Track		Woodland		Camp site
	Footpath		Sand, shingle or mud		Major tourist feature
	Bridleway		Water feature		Other tourist feature
	National trail				
	Railway				

Safety First

Safety should always be your first priority in planning and undertaking a walk, whether on your own or leading a group. Please read these Safety First and Walking Our Routes notes.

Lead a group of other walkers only if you have leadership and navigational experience adequate for the 'worst case' conditions which may be encountered on the particular walk, bearing in mind the terrain, possible weather and navigational demands.

Weigh up the capabilities of your party, in terms of fitness and walking speed. Adjust your time expectations accordingly.

Ensure all your party are adequately clothed for the weather and conditions. Footwear is particularly important. Clothing must protect against cold, wet or strong sun according to the time of year.

Emergencies are quite rare, but it is essential to think ahead about what to do if someone in your party sustains an injury. Will you have a First Aid kit? Is there a qualified First Aider in the party? How could help be summoned in a serious eventuality?

Refreshment, particularly water, can be vital. Dehydration in hot summer conditions can be rapid, and frequent intake of fluids is essential.

On tougher walks it is a good idea to tell someone where you are planning to go – and when you expect to be back. Remember - mobile phones often lose reception in mountainous or isolated areas.

All our walks use legitimate routes: Public Rights of Way, Public Footpaths, Bridleways, Permissive Paths, Access Land, Byways and Roads.

Road walking calls for particular care. When there is no defined footpath or verge wide enough for safe walking it is usually best to walk on the right – facing oncoming traffic. An exception may be a tight bend, where walkers would be more visible on the left.

Occasionally you may find a public footpath blocked or unuseable. It is perfectly in order to take the shortest available diversion without damaging crops, perhaps around a field margin.

It is courteous to close gates after passing through, sometimes even if the gate was open when you arrived – particularly if it is obvious livestock may escape.

Mutual respect for farm animals is to be encouraged! Don't frighten or annoy them, but equally don't put your party members in danger or discomfort. You certainly wouldn't be the first walkers to go round the outside of a field of frisky bullocks.

Dogs should always be kept on a lead anywhere near farm animals, and under close supervision elsewhere in the countryside.

Walking Our Routes

Our walks are designed to be negotiated using the route directions in conjunction with the map section provided. We suggest walkers also take the Ordnance Survey Explorer or Outdoor Leisure map recommended for each walk.

On mountain, moorland and open heathland walks it is **ESSENTIAL** to have navigational expertise and tools, including the recommended Ordnance Survey map(s).

Take care to observe any cautions in the route description; exposed paths, areas liable to flooding etc.

Consider conditions before setting off. Will heavy rain have made a water meadow impassable? Will frost or snow make a path slippery?

When navigating the route look for clues to confirm you are in the right place. Are map features where you would expect on the ground? Are features mentioned in the text where expected? If you suspect you may have taken a wrong turn, take action sooner rather than later. It is better to re-trace to a known point rather than carry on regardless with the possibility of becoming increasingly confused.

All our routes are carefully checked before publication, but features can change on the ground – sometimes surprisingly quickly. Footpaths may be re-routed, buildings can appear or change significantly and these days pub names seem to change frequently.

The approximate time given for each walk is based on an average walking speed of 2.5 miles per hour (4 km/hour), plus an allowance for ascent, descent and any difficult terrain.

Total ascent is the approximate total ascent over the whole walk.

GPS users can enter in the waypoints provided in each of our walk reports. It is important to read our guide **Introducing GPS for Walkers**, available as a PDF file from the Great Walks in Britain web site.

Remember that GPS is a great navigational tool, but only one of those available to the navigator. Never dispense with conventional map and compass – and the training and skills to use them, especially on mountain, moorland or open heathland walks.

TOUGHNESS RATINGS

All our **Hampshire & New Forest** routes can be undertaken by reasonably fit walkers able to utilise our map segments, together with the route guidance notes. Always consider recent and forecast weather.

Each walk has been allocated a **Toughness Rating**:

1. Easier walks with modest ascent and generally on well defined paths. There may be stiles or narrow gateways to negotiate.
2. Routes which are more demanding. They may include more ascent and possibly paths which are looser or more difficult underfoot.
3. More strenuous walks with some steep sections, higher paths or places which may be wet and boggy.
4. The most demanding walks in this edition. There may be prolonged steep ascents. Conditions may be challenging underfoot.

Toughness Ratings are allocated in the context of the terrain in the edition area. For example a walk rated as demanding in Hampshire may be equivalent to an easier or moderate route in the Brecon Beacons..