

Wednesday 28th September 2016, Yarner Wood, Trendlebere Down , Becky Falls and Houndtor Ridge with Mike and Paula Paddison

We were looking forward to doing one of Mike and Paula's favourite walks - especially on such a sunny, bright and warm autumn day. Ten of us met in Yarner Wood Nature Reserve Car Park and a warm welcome was extended to a new OVA member who was walking with the group for the first time.

This circular walk had been cleverly designed to include the rare western oak woodlands, some open moorland and, on the return leg, the Bovey Valley. We set off on a long but steady climb through the wood, in dappled sunshine. The leaves were just beginning to change colour. Fleeces were shed as we scaled the hill and at the top we emerged into bright sunshine. Here we left the woodland behind to strike off on heathery moorland paths, with panoramic views over Bovey Tracey towards the sea to our right and to Manaton Church on the left hand side. We descended through the prickly furze to a lane and walked for a while alongside a leat once used to supply water to a pottery in Bovey Tracey which closed back in the 1950s. Here by the roadside we were rewarded by a show of interesting colourful fungi, including the attractive but poisonous red and white Fly Agaric, which Stella photographed. Next we entered the Bovey Valley woodlands with Houndtor Ridge above us and skirted Becky Falls. The low water levels meant that we couldn't have a "free look" at the waterfall itself but we had our lunch enjoying wonderful views towards Black Down. The last part of the walk went through the valley, passing the ancient stone Hisley Bridge, yet another stunning vista at Trendlebere Down and back through woodland to the car park. We'd made such good time we decided to adjourn to a nearby farm shop to have tea (and some were tempted by the cakes.....) before driving home. Thanks to Mike and Paula for organizing such a superb walk, which we all enjoyed.

Rosemary Hatch
4 October 2016