

Saturday 23 September 2017 - Yarner Wood, Trendlebere Down, Becky Falls and Houndtor Ridge with Mike and Paula Paddison

The weather looked promising as the walk leaders and three others gathered at Newton Poppleford Sports Ground. Cars were quickly sorted and we set out promptly for Yarner Wood.

After an uneventful journey, we were thankful to find plenty of parking spaces and the other members of the group who had directly driven there.

Shortly after arriving, whilst we were getting kitted out, a cry went up as one walker had discovered that their other half had forgotten to pack their walking boots. Heads were put together and shoes were offered from various sources. The relative merits of the Manlo Blahnic, Jimmy Choo and Tamara Mellon offerings were discussed at great length, but in the end common sense prevailed and a simple functional pair of shoes and two pair of socks were chosen (function over form)! Even after all this excitement we were able to start the walk on time.

We set off on a long but steady climb, past the first of several hides, through the wood in dappled sunshine. The leaves were just beginning to change colour and the wood had a heavy atmosphere because of the recent rains. We continued along the ridge within the wood and at the top we emerged into bright sunshine at the NE entrance to Yarner Wood where brief drinks were enjoyed.

After a short stretch on the road, we left the woodland behind to strike off on heathery moorland paths.



At the highest point on the path over Trendlebere Down we stopped for coffee to appreciate the panoramic views over Bovey Tracey towards the sea to our right and to Manaton Church on the left hand side.



We continued along the moorland path until the Bovey Tracy/Manaton road was in sight and we descended through the prickly furze to the road. Alongside the road was a leat that 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.

Next we entered the Bovey Valley woodlands and skirted Becky Falls. The low water levels meant that again we couldn't have a "free look" at the waterfall itself.



Along the path, just under Houndtor Ridge, we found our favourite picnic spot where we shared a three seat wooden bench! Fortunately the grass and ground nearby was dry and we had our lunch in the sunshine enjoying wonderful views towards Black Hill and beyond.

The last part of the walk went through the valley, passing the ancient stone Hisley Bridge where we stopped and Mike explained how the OVA Parke/Lustleigh walk in August passed Hisley Bridge, but on the other side of the river. Finally we reached the end of the woodland and Trendlebere Down to enter into Yarner Wood and back through woodland to the car park.

We had completed the walk in record time so it was decided to adjourn to the nearby Ullacombe Farm Shop for refreshment. Most walkers simply had tea, but significant others were tempted by the generous portioned cakes on display. When all was finished one couldn't help thinking that the proprietor must have thought that Christmas had come early.

Mike Paddison (with contributions from Rosemary Hatch)

25 September 2017