

Saturday 31st August 2019 “River Otter Source to Mouth Stage 4 - Newton Poppleford to Ottermouth” with Penny and Paul Kurowski

23 walkers set off from Newton Poppleford on a rather breezy Saturday morning. It was great that so many had stuck with us all the way from the Otter's start high in the Blackdown Hills, and that others had joined us for one or more of the four stages of this walk.

The terrain was familiar to many but Paul had, as ever, trawled the internet (especially the excellent OVA website!) for fascinating facts, such as the silk factory that once existed in Millmoor Lane (formerly Factory Lane) in Newton Poppleford. I for one was astonished that so many of the bridges that cross the Otter are Grade 2 listed, despite their somewhat mundane appearance.

We were soon within sight of the Otter and then, from Colton Raleigh, we walked beside it, breathing in the scent of Himalayan Balsam as we went. We stopped for a coffee break beside the newly replaced Ricketty Bridge which was looking very smart.



Back on route a lucky few saw a kingfisher and a dipper.



Near Clamour Bridge there was much evidence of beaver activity – they must have a hungry family to feed. Just below White Bridge a party of us stopped to watch “something” making a large wakes in the river. Could it be beavers? Otters? The consensus was that no, it was a party of grey mullet having fun.

So onwards to the finish, at Otter Mouth, just beyond “Donkey Turn”. This is named because it was where the donkeys turned, having picked up/delivered their loads (thank you Jacqui for that fact).

We broke out the champagne to toast our success and gave out certificates to the 11 of us who had completed the whole 35 miles.





Thank you to all for the company.

Penny Kurowski