

STEPPING OUT – a series of walks around the East Leake Area.

This month's walk is through the Notts Wildlife Trusts nature reserve in Bunny Old Wood. Notts Wildlife Trust has recently renovated the nature trail through the wood with clear indications of each of the eighteen stations on a circular trail through the wood. There is also a newly published pamphlet about the history of the wood with a map and description of what you might find on the Nature Trail. A copy of the pamphlet can be had by sending a stamped addressed envelope to The Notts Wildlife Trust, The Old Ragged School, Brook Street, Nottingham, NG1 1EA.

You can of course visit the Nature Reserve by leaving your car at the entrance to the reserve on the left hand side of the A60 just after leaving Bunny on the way to Costock. But if you want to combine your visit with a five mile walk around the area then follow the route described below.

Bunny Old Wood, Bunny, Fairham Brook, Bunny New Wood, Ash Lane, Bunny Old Wood.

4¾ miles about 2 - 2½hours

It is easier to leave your car at the east end of Bunny Old Wood rather than at the main entrance to the reserve at the west end on the A60. Go via Costock to Wysall. Take the Keyworth Road from Wysall and then just as you leave the village take a narrow road to your left – Bradmore Road. After about 1½ kilometres this will bring you down the hill with Bunny Old Wood on your right. There is parking for several cars just after the entrance to the wood.

Go into the wood and walk along the bridleway along the lower edge of the wood. This first part of the wood does not belong to the Wildlife Trust and is not part of the Nature Reserve. After almost a kilometre you will enter the reserve and after another 150 metres you should look out for a stile and footpath on your right which leaves the wood and soon becomes a wide track above and to the right of an old roadway which entered the gypsum mine which used to be under Bunny Hill. Follow this track past the remains of the old buildings associated with the mine and you will emerge onto a narrow lane by the large metal gates which used to be the entrance to the mine workings. Turn left along this lane and then right along the main road into Bunny and take the first road on your left. This is Main Street which runs along the south of the churchyard.

Walk to the end of Main Street where you will find finger posts for three footpaths. Take the left path where the finger post indicates a route to Gotham. This goes diagonally across the field to the Fairham Brook which at this point runs in a culvert under the path. On crossing the brook turn right to walk along the south bank of the brook in the direction of two large bushes. Here you have to cross a ditch by ditch boards then immediately turn left on a footpath along the bank of the ditch. On reaching the road cross slightly to the left and then follow the footpath along the field edge. About half way up the slope the path goes off at an angle to the right to enter Bunny New Wood.

Before entering the wood at the top of the slope pause for breath and look at the magnificent view behind you.

Follow the path through the wood and then across some duckboards over very swampy ground. Then cross a cart track before going diagonally to your right through the next field. Follow the path through two more fields and round to the left of a house before emerging over stile onto a track. Turn left along this track and then left again along Ash Lane. At the end of Ash Lane turn left along the footpath above the main road. You then go down the hill and emerge onto the main road immediately opposite the main entrance to the Nature Reserve. Cross the road and enter the reserve and walk along the waymarked nature trail. You will pass stations numbered one to ten before leaving the reserve and following the route back to your car along the track through that portion of the wood which is not part of the reserve.

Dennis Fox