
Walk 6 Foremark Reservoir and Carver's Rocks

Carboniferous river deltas, Triassic deserts and a Site of Special Scientific Interest

Distance: about 9 km (5.5 miles) Time: about 3 hours

Carver's Rocks.

This walk starts from the car park [1][SK 33440 24379] at Foremark Reservoir, owned by SevernTrent water. From the A514, take the road towards Milton and the reservoir entrance is on the left. There is an automated pay-on-entry system so make sure you have plenty of change. From the car park, walk down to the water's edge and turn left. Here you can see some small outcrops of pebbly Triassic sandstone of the Kidderminster Formation [2][SK 33432 24299] (p.9). Go back up to the car park and refreshment kiosk. There are a lot of paths to explore in this area and more than one way to reach our next point of call, at Carver's Rocks. Head south from the refreshment kiosk on the path close to the shore. The main route you follow is hilly with quite steep slopes, but there are steps cut into the steepest sections to aid walking. After a little way, you will see a sign on your left- hand side to Carver's Rocks. Take the right-hand of the two paths and continue parallel to the shore. This wooded section of the walk has a wide range of trees and wild flowers [3][SK 33412 23474] and you will pass a National Forest interpretation board. Cross a small valley and on the other side, take the right-hand fork in the path. After entering more woodland you will encounter an interpretation board that provides information concerning the Carver's Rocks Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Note the outcrops of sandstone along the floor of the path [4][SK 33238 23048]. Shortly you will see a cliff of this sandstone and it will be possible to examine it in more detail.

Carver's Rocks has been designated an SSSI due to its ecological importance, with its marshy areas supporting locally important plants. During summer, the marshes are a good place to see reed buntings and the reservoir fringe has breeding great crested grebes. It also contains one of the last areas of heathland in lowland Derbyshire. In open areas, you may hear woodcock on early summer evenings. The reservoir boasts an abundance of butterflies including dingy skipper, brown argus, Essex skipper and purple hairstreak. Carver's Rocks also supports two nationally rare invertebrate species as well as nationally uncommon moths, beetles, hoverflies and sawflies. Some of the flowers you can see include bluebells in the spring and pink foxgloves in the summer.

Cross another small valley with a bridge and bear left. After a short distance, take the first path on your right and this will lead you down to the 8–10 m high crags of Carver's Rocks [5][SK 32999 22704]. This area is part natural outcrop and part man-made as the rocks were quarried in the 19th century for the construction of local buildings. This outcrop, plus the quarry at Melbourne, apparently provided the best building stone in the area. The name is thought to be associated with Lawrence Carver of Ticknall (born 1701), although in 1836 they were called Repton Rocks and more recently, Dawson's Rocks. The outcrop is composed of crags of Millstone Grit sandstone deposited from a major river delta in Carboniferous times. The rocks are actually made of the youngest (or uppermost) sandstone horizon in the Millstone Grit succession, known as the Rough Rock. This unit formed an extensive sheet of thick sandstone that spread across the Carboniferous Pennine Basin — today it can also be seen as a prominent feature in the landscape of the Peak District and the Pennines. The crags are covered in lichen, so little is visible of the geological features. However, you will be able to see that the sandstone is generally fine to medium grained and, in places cross-bedding can be observed (pp.8 and 10).

At the end of the crags, continue on down the hill. You will come to a junction in the path and here take the right-hand path.

Turn left at a second meeting of paths, proceeding over a bridge and up the hill.

About 30 m after the highest point, take a footpath off to your right, going down some steps and across another bridge. You will soon come out of the woodland and into an arable field. Head along the path across this field and then into a pasture field, eventually reaching a gate which you go through. The path runs alongside woodland on your left, crossing

more pasture fields. At the end of the woodland, you pass Hartshorn Bog on your left and then you come to a road [6][SK 32327 22668]. Turn right here, passing a wood (Repton Shrubs) on your left. Where the road bears off to the right, continue along the track by the wood. Again, note the range of plant life on this section of the walk, with a variety of trees, wild flowers and grasses [7][SK 31672 23996]. After about 1 km, the track meets a road and you carry on in the same direction.

The next stage of the walk takes you down a hill with some good exposures of Triassic rocks [8][SK 31512 24952]. Near to the top of the hill, patchy exposures of sandstone and mudstone from the Bromsgrove Sandstone can be observed. Lower down the hill, there are some excellent exposures of the Kidderminster Formation where you can see conglomerates and sandstones(p.9).

Some cross-bedding (pp.8 and 10) is visible, showing that the river flowed to the north. Note also the profusion of quartzite pebbles in the conglomerates and how some of them show graded bedding, that is with large pebbles at the base and progressively smaller pebbles towards the top.

At the bottom of the hill, you come to a road junction. Take the road to the right and climb back up a hill.

After about 400 m, you will come to a footpath on your right [9][SK 31633 25490]. Follow this, crossing over a track and then stile, to continue along the footpath. As you walk downhill, you pass down from the Bromsgrove Sandstone, on the higher ground, back into the underlying Kidderminster Formation; note that the soil has become very pebbly here [10][SK 32452 25022]. The path joins a track; turn left and the track becomes a tarmacked road, then turn right onto another road. Continue along this road for just over 1 km; it is not a busy road but take care to walk on the verges for most of the way.

Note the good variety of grasses and wild flowers on the verges and in the neighbouring fields. Just past Bendall's Lodge and Farm, you will come to the right turn into Foremark Reservoir [11][SK 33571 24825]. Return to the car park and visitor centre where there are toilets, a refreshment kiosk and plenty of areas for a picnic.

Figures

(Figure 87) Carver's Rocks.

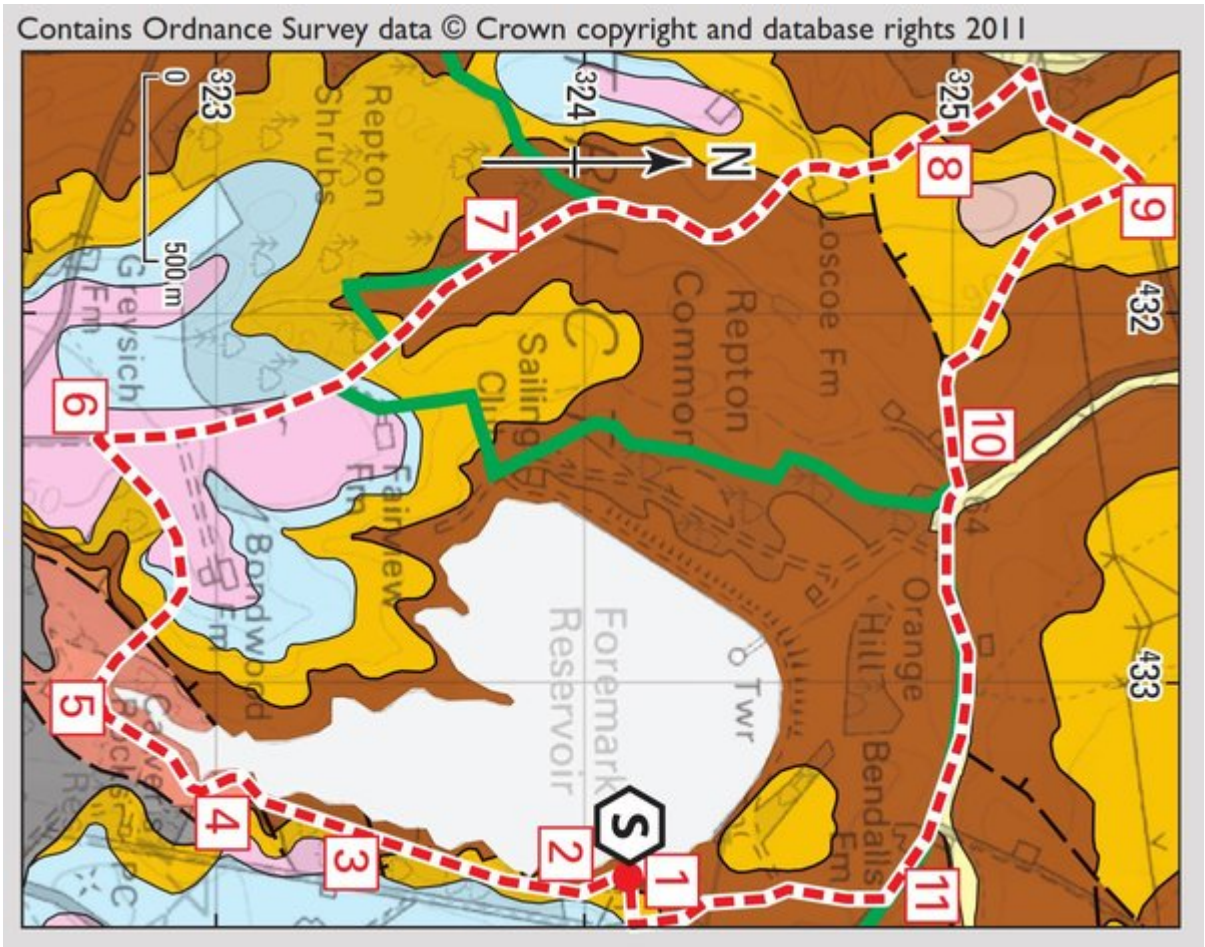
(Figure 88) Walk 6 route map. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database rights 2011.

(Figure 89) The southern end of Foremark Reservoir near carver;s Rock.

(Figure 90) Kidderminster Formation in the road cutting.



(Figure 87) Carver's Rocks.



(Figure 88) Walk 6 route map. Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database rights 2011.



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