

COUNTRY WALKS FROM THE DOORSTEP: ROBSON SPRING WOODS, SPROXTON

When we advertise the cottages as having country walks from the doorstep, we really mean it. We recommend trainers/strong shoes (or wellies if it has been raining heavily) and ideally long trousers due to low growing brambles across parts of the route. The main track is easy going. The walks within the woods are more uneven, sometimes slippery, can have briars and not all are clearly marked. The length of the walk depends on how much of the woods you want to explore – from an easy 20 minute stretch of paws to more lengthy ‘off road’ nature walks. The quieter you are the more wildlife you are likely to see - we often spot the Sproxtton barn owl, pheasants and hares, and love to glimpse deer. We often spot new plants in bloom and the peacefulness of the woods means you hear birds all around.

1. From your doorstep, head out of the drive and turn right. Please keep your dog on a lead until at least past the farm and the fields of livestock. When the track forks, go straight ahead rather than taking the left hand path.
2. Continue down the track for about quarter of a mile. You can either stay on this track and then take the track to the left (after you pass an ancient tree with bench underneath), or you can head into the woods. The following is the route through the woods (loop 1).
3. **LOOP 1:** Take the path into the woods (a few metres before the bench), photo 1. Bear left (near the tree trunks laid out in a square). The path will be visible throughout the walk but keep a look out for low timber trunk ‘bridges’ that help avoid the most boggy areas (but be careful, these get very slippery) and the waymark posts (a combination of pieces of wood painted blue and more formal looking posts). Photos 2 & 3.



4. The path arcs round deeper into the wood before starting to head downhill. Continue on the path which takes you past several trees that have blown over, and more small ‘bridges’ before you rejoin the track. You can either turn right and take this route back to the cottage (turn right again and you will be back at the bench/entrance to the woods), or you can continue your woodland walk...
5. Turn left and walk downhill a few metres (photo 4). Take the path on the right into the woods (photo 5). This path is less used but has marker posts. Follow this path up hill (walking parallel to the main track), photos 6 & 7.



6. When you reach a ‘T’ junction of paths, either turn right to rejoin the main track back to the cottages, or turn left. Turning left takes you deeper into the woods and you are more likely to see deer on this part of the walk and in Spring the bluebells are fantastic. This is loop 2 and is more ‘off road’ than loop 1 and not well marked.
7. **LOOP 2** Turn left and follow the path as it gradually heads downhill. The route bears left and then opens out into a clearing (past deer feed barrels).

In April/May there is a dense coverage of bluebells. We think deer often sleep here - look out for patches of ground where the leaves have been moved.



8. After this point there isn't a clear path (or much of a path at all!). Continue past the clearing, gently downhill. You will come to a narrow, shallow stream, photo 11. Deer often drink here so look out for footprints on the bank. Step over and continue straight ahead. The ground starts to rise slightly; towards a wooden look-out tower/



9. Join the path and turn left, photo 12. Continue along this path until you reach a clearing. Turn left on to the track rather than going heading straight on into the field, photo 13. Head uphill and then bear right at the top and walk back to the cottages. Loops 1 & 2 create a figure of 8 shaped walk.

If you want to walk loop 2 only, then head along the farm track, past the first entrance to the woods until you come to the track heading left. Before the track starts downhill (and just after the pile of stones) look out for the waymark sign and head down that path. Continue with the directions as from 7 above.

Please take care in the countryside and please take care of the countryside. We take no responsibility for mishaps but if you do get lost and need some help please call 01439 770980 or 07814 962761. All the local dog walkers and horse riders know our cottages so if you see someone, they will help you re-orientate. If in doubt, just retrace your steps. Muddy paws (and boots) can be washed in the dog shower (to the right of the telephone box). Dog towels are in the cupboard under the sink in each cottage. **Primroses, wild violets & holly, evidence of recent deer:**

