

Ptarmigan Mountaineering Club



Website: www.ptarmiganmc.org.uk

Monthly Newsletter

April 2019

The meet on 7 April is to Glen Creran. Fare £20.

Polite reminder: if you cancel your booking after 8 am on the Friday before the meet, or if you fail to turn up, our Code of Good Practice expects you still to pay your fare (to the Treasurer) unless the reasons for your non-cancellation or non-appearance were beyond your control.

The bus will leave Waterloo Place at 07.30 and travel via Shandwick Place (bus stop opposite Boots), Haymarket, Roseburn, PC World, M9, Callander (comfort stop), Crianlarich, Tyndrum, A85 Taynuilt, Connel, A828 Loch Creran and up the road on the south side of the loch. The bus should arrive at the Forestry Commission car park at Elleric (head of Glen Creran) [036489] around 11.00. A short refreshment stop will be made in Callander on the return journey.

The bus will leave Glen Creran at 17.30 sharp.

Bus Convener: Dave Law

Bookings and cancellations: either
or

1. Text and phone Tim Featherstone 075 49 48 0321
2. Email bookings@ptarmiganmc.org.uk

Emergency Number 075 49 48 0321 must be taken on the hill with each party.

Main map required: OS 1:50 000 Sheet 50 Glen Orchy & Loch Etive. All grid references are prefixed NN.

Route Options

Munros

Beinn Sgùlaird (937m) [053461] from Glen Creran. A great viewpoint in good weather, it can be done as a "there and back" from Elleric via Glen Ure. Or it can be done as a linear walk starting at [010454] where there is a gate leading onto the hillside. Head for the first small knoll (488m) and then follow the grassy slopes of the ridge through granite outcrops to the top at 863m. Continue over Meall Garbh (848m) before reaching the main summit. Return to the bus at Elleric which can be done via Glen Ure. Alternatively you can descend due west from the summit. This is quite steep, but it soon becomes easier and will lead you to Taraphocain [019464] with a walk of about 4 km back to the bus at Elleric.

Beinn Fhionnlaidh (959m) [095498] from Elleric is possible but only recommended for faster parties. From Elleric head via Glen Ure before commencing the ascent of Beinn Fhionnlaidh's south-western slopes to Leac Bharainn and onto the summit. Return by the route of ascent.

Cruachan Hills (Stob Diamh (998m) [094308] and Ben Cruachan (1126m) [069304]) from the power station on Loch Awe. From the power station [079268] take the road leading past the Falls of Cruachan. On reaching the dam access road, continue on the east side of the reservoir. Climb Stob Garbh and then continue north onto Stob Diamh. From here the main ridge goes westwards around the rim of a corrie to Drochaid Glas and past Coire Caorach before reaching the top of Ben Cruachan. Descend by heading due south towards Meall Cuanail, and pick up the path from

Coire Dearg back to the Cruachan dam and thence to the power station.

Beinn a' Chochuill (980m) [110328] and Beinn Eunaich (989m) [135328] can be climbed from Glen Strae leaving the bus at the junction of the A85 and the B8077 [132283] approx. 3km west of Dalmally. A track leads north-west passing west of Castles Farm and across the lower slopes of Beinn Eunaich. After 3km bear right and continue up the south-east rib of Beinn a' Chochuill to the summit. Traverse the ridge to Beinn Eunaich before descending the south ridge to the starting point.

Ben Lui (1130m) [2662430], Beinn a' Chleibh (916m) [251256] are possible and can be accessed from the car park on the A85 west of Tyndrum at [239278]. A grand traverse of the four Munros in the Ben Lui group also to include Beinn Dubhchraig (978m) [307255] and Ben Oss (1029m) [288253] is possible starting at Dalrigh and finishing at the same car park on the A85 (or vice versa) but this route should be attempted only by very fast parties.

Corbetts

Beinn a'Bhuiridh (897m) [094283] from the power station on Loch Awe.

Creach Bheinn (810m) [023422] from Loch Creran. Best approach is by following the Allt Buidhe (starting at [006448], near Druimavuic) to the bealach between Creach Bheinn and Beinn Sgulaird, then heading south-west along the ridge taking in the 804m top.

Beinn Mhic-Mhonaidh (793m) [208350] from Glen Strae with the same drop-off and pick-up as for Beinn a' Chochuill and Beinn Eunaich.

Grahams

An excellent walk is the ascent of Meall Garbh (701m) [168367] from Glen Strae. Walk up Glen Strae before taking the path on the western bank of the Allt Dhoirean. Aim for the col between Meall Garbh and Meall Beithe before ascending to the summit. Return by the route of ascent.

Beinn Bhailgairan (636m) [202241] can be approached from the A85 at the Brackley Farm road-end east of Dalmally [178273]. Meall nam Gabhar (743m) [235242] is also possible from the A85 at Corryghoil [193276] using forestry tracks and fire-breaks. These two Grahams might be combined to make an excellent traverse but this is only recommended for faster parties.

From Crianlarich Fiarach (652m) [345260] can be ascended from the West Highland Way. Meall Odhar (656m) [297298] can be approached from Dalrigh on the A82 road [343292] and it is possible to return to Tyndrum via Creag Bhuidhe and Sron nan Colan.

Lower level

A number of good low-level options are available.

A very enjoyable walk (17km), (a good foul weather option which could be done in either direction), is between the same starting point for Beinn a' Chochuill and Taynuilt through Glen Noe. Time permitting, this walk could be combined with a visit to the Bonawe Furnace at Taynuilt which is well worth a visit. Another good low-level walk starts at Taynuilt and follows the track on the east side of Glen Etive towards Ardmaddy Bay, returning by the outward route.

From the destination at Elleric a walk can be taken to Glen Ure before returning the same way and there are also forest walks. There is a circular walk from Connell taking in the Black Lochs (2 – 2.5 hours and for which you would need OS Sheet 49). The West Highland Way between Crianlarich and Tyndrum is also an option.

The Club's Code of Good Practice

The Club's Code of Good Practice notes that parties should comprise two, preferably three, people and those **members must have a map of the area and compass and know how to use them.** A first-aid kit, survival bag, whistle and torch should also be carried. **The group should stick together and be alert for signs of anyone feeling**

unwell or getting into difficulties. It does no harm to carry a mobile phone, though it is important to understand that there is no guarantee of signal availability and this should never be relied upon.

Winter Conditions: If possessed, an ice axe and crampons should be carried and may be needed on frozen ground at any level. A careful judgement must be made on the prevailing conditions. Do not wait until you are on steep ground and/or above the snow line. Be prepared to moderate plans according to experience in the party. The bus convener should be able to advise individual parties on the day.

Disclaimer: The routes outlined above are merely descriptions of walks in the area; they do not represent invitations or recommendations by the Club or any of its Officers to members to go on these routes. It is the individual and sole responsibility of each club member to choose a route that is within their capability, taking due account of the timings given and the weather conditions prevailing.

What we did last month

As Storm Freya came barrelling in from the west an intrepid flock of Ptarmigans headed north, bound for Butterbridge. No-one fancied the Luss Hills; instead everyone opted for Le Tour des Alpes (the Arrochar variety). Much use was made of the Cowal Way: Colin and Adrian used it to get to Lochgoilhead for a civilised cup of coffee, though Colin was quick to point out afterwards that it involved 500 metres of ascent each way; Walter and Ronnie tackled the newish Corbett, Cnoc Còinnich; and Lyn and Tim F yomped 16 miles to get to Beinn Reithe and back.

Michael, Christine, Douglas, Jan, Elsa and Benedetta started from Succoth to follow a medium-level route lifted from the Scottish Rights of Way guide, *Scottish Hill Tracks*. This involved following the well-worn track up to the Bealach a' Mhaim, between The Cobbler and Beinn Narnain. The buffeting wind and steady rain made a coffee stop under the Narnain Boulders very welcome, but soon other walkers, some improbably clad in tights and shorts, were queuing up to take our place; so we reluctantly headed back out into the rain which was now turning to sleet and stinging our cheeks.



Having reached the col we turned eastwards down an unexpectedly long, steep and treacherous grassy slope at the head of Coiregrogain. By now the rain had eased and lunch beside a stream flowing from Loch Sloy was almost pleasant. From there we walked down Glen Loin, noticing just one sign of spring (see photo left) and finishing with a welcome drink and opportunity to dry out in the Arrochar Hotel.

Meanwhile Jim's bus had gone on to Butterbridge, enabling Tim H, Bill, Bryony and Ben to go up the Corbett Beinn an Lochain. Despite the "sodden, dreich

day" with biting icy winds above 800m, they all enjoyed it! They decided to leave the other planned Corbett, Ben Donich, for another time and got a lift in the bus to Ardgartan from where they walked back through the forest to Arrochar.

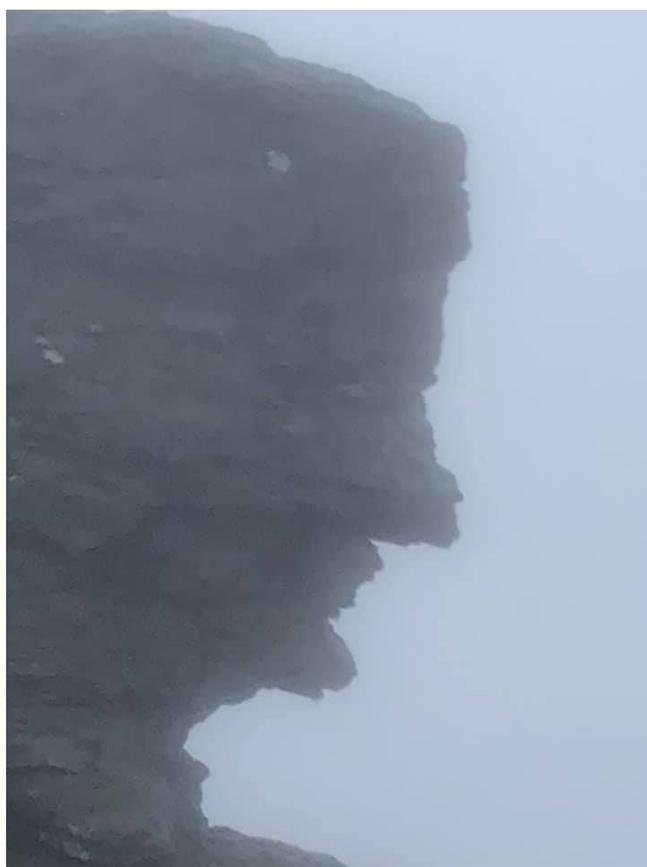
Right: Tim, Bill and Ben celebrating on Beinn an Lochain. Photo supplied by Bill.



From Butterbridge Sue and Ron chose to do Beinn Luibhean and The Cobbler while Dave, Graeme and Tim N tackled whiteout conditions (see photo below), with ice underfoot, as they took a Sunday afternoon stroll back to Arrochar via Ben Ime and The Cobbler.



Tim threads The Cobbler's needle
Below: marching on a compass bearing between Ben Ime and The Cobbler (photos supplied by Graeme)



Remind you of anyone?

