

Ptarmigan Mountaineering Club



Website: www.ptarmiganmc.org.uk

Monthly Newsletter

June 2019

The bus on 2 June is to Glen Etive via Callander. Fare £20.

The bus will leave Waterloo Place at 0730 and go via Shandwick Place, Haymarket, Roseburn and PC World, arriving in Glen Etive at 1050 approx.

Bus Convener: Kevin Russell

The bus will leave the foot of the glen at 1720 prompt; so please make sure you are back on the road by 1715 at the latest, as stopping on the road for any length of time may be difficult for the bus, with restricted parking available.

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.

Maps required: OS 1: 50 000 sheet 50 Glen Orchy and Loch Etive; sheet 41 Ben Nevis for low-level and other options.

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. For those members who have one 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.

***Disclaimer:** The routes outlined below 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.*

Route Options

The estimated 6.25 hours of walking time available to members is enough for a single Munro, but probably not two, bearing in mind that for most objectives the start is from around sea level. The bus will be able to drop off at the Coileitir road-end for Ben Starav, Glas Bheinn Mhor and Stob Coir an Albannaich, but Beinn nan Aighenan may be just out of range. The bus will then proceed a mile or so further to park for the day, allowing access to the excellent Corbett Beinn Trilleachan.

Munros

Ben Starav 1078m, NN125427

Glas Bheinn Mhor 997m, NN153429

Stob Coir an Albannaich 1044m, NN169443

Corbett

Ben Trilleachan 840m, NN086439

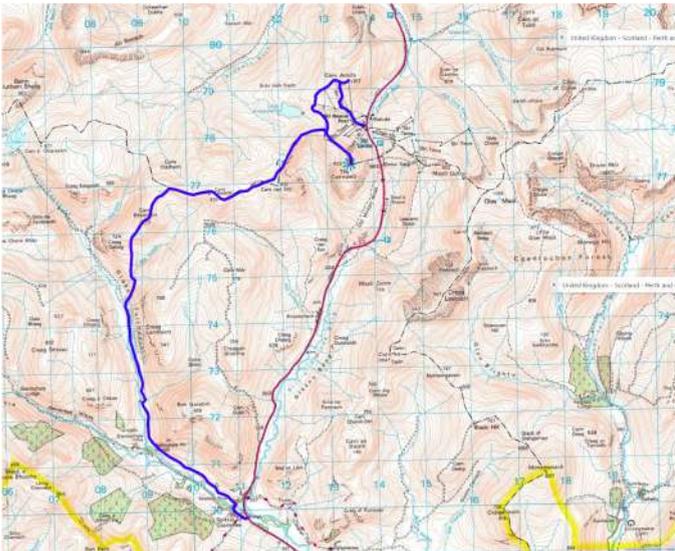
Low Level

From Dalness, NN171514, walk the Lairig Eilde north, then north-east, to the A82. Follow the path beside the A82 eastwards to the Lairig Gartain, then south-west back to Dalness (or in the reverse direction).

Paths along the north and south shores of Loch Etive; West Highland Way

What we did last month

Bill, Eric, Tim H and new guest Michael E jumped off the bus at Spittal of Glenshee at the sorry remains of the former hotel. Bill says: "That was about the only negative of the whole day as the weather was clear, bright and blustery which meant that we were afforded fantastic views all afternoon. The walk up Gleann Taitneach was stunning, and the wide bowl corrie of Glas Choire Mhor looked a tempting proposition for a return visit. We ascended northwards up an initially steep, heathery, tussocky slope, following the Allt Aulich before hopping across (most of us made it dry!) and then climbing the long slog up towards Carn Bhinnein. From there, we followed the well established route of the 'Cairnwell 3', albeit in reverse."



The route



Glas Choire Mhor from the eastern slopes of Gleann Taitneach (photo by Eric)

Jennifer, Christine, Michael G, Anna, Dave B (welcome back, Dave) and Elsa left the bus at Baddoch and set off for Sgor Mor. Jennifer relates that before long, "Anna was initiated into crossing a river (last month's lesson being 'On climbing a deer fence') which we did via stepping stones, a little island and a splashy dash before reaching the other side with, I think, no wet feet. The day was cold but dry at this point with just a little sunshine. We were quickly gaining height; and thereby getting warm! A few on/off jacket changes stopped once the hail and sleet arrived, though this was not particularly heavy or wetting. Not surprisingly, the summit was windy but at least it was dry and we were pleased to be there and to enjoy a snack. We continued on over good walking ground, wide and fairly even, with beautiful colours in the grasses and mosses and a few tiny wildflowers blooming brightly. We reached Carn Ghriogair and continued on to Creag a' Mhadaidh, then on more rocky ground to Carn na Drochaide. We were

hungry by this time but, as there was no respite from the strong wind, we kept going to find a sheltered place to enjoy our lunch. We then picked up a track heading to Morrone or Morven and decided not to stop until we reached the shelter of the buildings beside the radio mast on the top there. A poignant notice told us of the death of a walker from exposure in this area some years ago. We appreciated this opportunity to have our lunch sitting out of the wind, and then headed down towards Braemar with a reasonable descent route. As the bus was not due for another hour, we made our way to The Fife Arms (which has only reopened in recent months) where we were intrigued, and entertained, by the unusual choice of decor. Quirky or weird depending on your point of view!"



Jennifer, Michael, Dave, Christine and Elsa on Sgor Mor (photo by Anna, provided by Jennifer)

Further on, at Linn of Dee, Richard, Colin, Adrian, Cheryl plus relatively new members Ewan and Emma had a cold start for their walk from Linn of Dee to Derry Cairngorm. Richard tells how they set off in good spirits from the car park through the pine woods up the track to Derry Lodge. "The air was clear, there was just a hint of a snow shower, which came to nothing, and there we were on the hill, making good progress up the recently restored path onto the main ridge.

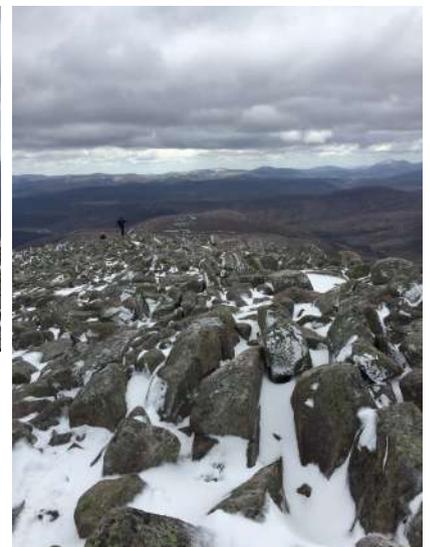
"After a steady climb, we took a slight diversion round a bad step before heading into an increasing cold wind until we hit the heights above the 3000 ft mark where snow was lying a few inches deep. The final ascent to the summit, which is strewn with granite boulders, was well covered in snow, so care was needed to avoid dropping into snow drifts between the boulders. We managed the turnaround at the halfway point timewise, so had plenty of time for a leisurely return by, mostly, the same route. I chose a more direct line of descent which took in an old snowfield, giving easier progress compared with the rough terrain of our ascent, so we had time for a well earned late lunch break back at Derry Lodge in the sun before an hour's stroll to Linn of Dee. We were treated to two stags in the forest just before we reached the bus and were still able to leave 15 minutes early, giving us time to catch the final episode of LOD (Line of Duty for the uninitiated) when we got home. A big hill, a fish supper and we still don't know who H is. What more can you ask?"



Eye-catching drainage patterns in Glen Derry (photo by Ewan)



Beinn a' Ghlo from Derry Cairngorm (photo by Colin)



Emma and Ewan approaching the summit (photo by Adrian)

Dave L and Tims F and N chose to do a “Glenshee Epic”, starting at the ski station and basically following the administrative boundary south over Glas Maol, Creag Leacach, Monamenach, Duchray Hill, and all the lumps and bumps in between, coming down to road level at Cray.



Tim F descending from Glas Maol toward Creag Leacach
(Both photos by Tim N)



Dave enjoying his lunch overlooking an unmarked glen
(possibly Gleann Daimh, after the burn)

Wanted! A new Secretary for the Ptarmigans

Christine is retiring as Honorary Secretary at the AGM in November, having done six years in the post. Could you take over? The job involves general correspondence and communication (mainly by email) with Ptarmigan members and guests, with the Highways Hillwalking Club, Mountaineering Scotland and with members of the public; setting up and minuting the occasional committee meeting and the AGM; arranging the annual high tea; and producing the monthly newsletter. The last duty takes up the most time but even that is only a few hours each month. You need to be able to put a document together with MS Word or its Apple or Chromebook equivalents. There is an archive going back many years of old newsletters and the route information can usually be copied and adapted from them. As for the other newsletter material, members are very helpful (when nudged) with photos and accounts of their exploits.

Interested? Christine would be delighted to talk it through with you!

Midsummer weekend at Aultguish

Twelve Ptarmigans have booked for the weekend of 21 to 23 June (two nights) at Aultguish Bunkhouse. Please could you all make sure that you have paid in full by 7 June to secure your place? Christine will shortly get in touch with you all to make any last-minute arrangements, the main one being transport. Some participants are taking cars and have seats available, while others plan to go by public transport (summer timetables should now be available) but will be hoping for lifts in the Aultguish area. If you could email Christine (secretary@ptarmiganmc.org.uk) with:

- permission for her to circulate email addresses and phone numbers within the group
- confirmation of whether you're taking a car or not
- confirmation of how many spare seats you will have available for the journeys between Edinburgh and Aultguish

...then that would be very helpful - thank you!