

Ptarmigan Hillwalking & Mountaineering Club



Website: www.ptarmiganmc.org.uk

Monthly Newsletter

June 2024

The Meet on Sunday 2nd June is to the Linn of Dee

DETAILS OF THE MEET

The bus will leave Waterloo Place at 07.30 going via Shandwick Place (bus stop opposite Boots), Haymarket, Roseburn, Drum Brae, Forth Road Bridge, M90, Blairgowrie (comfort stop), Glen Shee, Braemar & The National Trust Car Park Linn of Dee.

The bus will leave The Linn of Dee at 17:30: Bus convener: Alex Williamson 07931 371985 (Be sure to have that number with you on the hill)

Bookings and cancellations: Email bookings@ptarmiganmc.org.uk

Maps required: OS Sheets 43 Braemar & Blair Atholl, 36 Grantown and Aviemore and 44 Ballater & Glen Clova

The fare will be £25 and, while cash can be taken in the bus, it would be preferred if you could pay by bank transfer IN ADVANCE of the outing. The day before is fine. Please pay to:
PTARMIGAN MOUNTAINEERING CLUB (note name is not yet changed); 80-17-68; 00248765

Bus departure times - a reminder

We always aim for our buses to leave Waterloo Place promptly at 07:30 am on the day of an outing. It is difficult to predict the times at which the bus will arrive at other pick up points which will depend on traffic, any roadworks etc but the roads are usually very quiet at that time of day. We have a note of who is due to be joining the bus at Waterloo Place and the other pick up points. If anyone is missing, the bus will usually wait for two minutes at any pick up point but will not normally wait for any longer than that."

Route Options

Munros

From Linn of Dee [NO 064898]:

Beinn Bhreac, 931m, [NO 058971] Carn a' Mhaim, 1037m, [NN 994952]

Derry Cairngorm, 1155m, [NO 017980] The Devil's Point, 1004m, [NN 976951]

From Spittal of Glenshee [NO 108700]:

Glas Tulaichean, 1051m, [NO 051760]

Carn an Rìgh, 1029m, [NO 028773]

Beinn Iutharn Mhor, 1045m, [NO 045792]

A combination of all three would be suitable for fast parties only.

From Glen Shee ski centre [NO 141779]:

An Socach, 944m, [NO 080800]

Alternatively it is possible to climb An Socach from [NO 138833], going up the Baddoch Burn and descending via Glen

Ey to Inverey or ESE to the ski centre.

The Cairnwell, 933m, [NO135773]; Carn Aosda, 917m, [NO 134792]; Carn a'Gheoidh, 975m, [NO 107767]. All three could be done with the option of returning to the Spittal of Glenshee either by going south over Carn Mor or by a scenic descent westwards into Gleann Taitneach.

From the A93 north of the ski centre, at [NO 148800]: Glas Maol, 1068m, [NO 167765]; Creag Leacach, 987m, [NO 154745]; Carn an Tuirc, 1019m, [NO 174804]; Cairn of Claise, 1064m, [NO 185789]; Tolmount, 958m, [NO 210800]; Tom Buidhe, 957m, [NO 214788]

From Auchallater on A93, [NO 156882]: Carn an t-Sagairt Mor, 1047m, [NO 208843]; Carn a' Choire Bhoidheach, 1110m, [NO 226845]

Parties have in the past attempted Beinn a' Bhuid, 1197m, [NO 093006], though it is a long haul to the North Top, so it is advisable for fast parties only. For anyone considering Beinn a' Bhuid, the Corbett Carn na Drochaide or the Graham Creag Bhalg, you could leave the bus at Victoria Bridge [NO 103895] and cut through the policies of Mar Lodge (owned by the National Trust and freely accessible to walkers). This would also open up additional options for low-level walkers who want to explore the Glen Quoich/Glen Lui area.

Various through-routes can be followed up Glen Ey. One for fast parties only takes in the remote Munro Carn Bhac, 946m, [NO 051832], traverses some rough ground to Loch nan Eun and then descends Glen Taitneach to the Spittal of Glenshee. This can be shortened by staying low and omitting Carn Bhac, or made really challenging by adding on Beinn Iutharn Mhor as well. The Morrone-An Socach ridge can also be tackled in various ways from the Glen Ey side.

Corbetts

From A93 at Dalhenzean [NO 127681]: Monamenach, 807m, [NO 176706]

From A93 at [NO 114714]: Ben Gulabin, 806m, [NO 100722]

From A93 at [NO 140834]: Creag nan Gabhar, 834m, [NO 154841]

From Chapel Brae, Braemar: Morrone/Morven, 859m, [NO 132886]

From Victoria Bridge: Carn na Drochaide, 818m, [NO 127938]

From Linn of Dee: Sgor Mor, 813m, [NO 007914]

Grahams

From junction of A93 & B951 at [NO 142633]: Mount Blair, 744m, [NO167629], Mealna Letter or Duchray Hill, 702m, [NO 161672]

From track at [NO 079900], 2km east of Linn of Dee: Creag Bhalg, 668m, [NO 091912]

Low Level

A wide range of low-level walking is available from the Spittal of Glenshee onwards, with possibilities in Glen Cluny, Glen Callater, Glen Ey, Glen Lui, Glen Derry and Glen Quoich. The route from Spittal of Glenshee to Inverey via Gleinn Taitneach and Glen Ey (24 km) is recommended as "a fine direct pass" in *Scottish Hill Tracks*.

Jock's Road and Glen Callater: from Auchallater, [NO 156882], 3km south of Braemar on the A93, follow the Callater Burn south, continuing along Loch Callater. Jock's Road, a historic drove road, climbs steeply to a pass at about 880m on the way to Glen Doll, Glen Clova and the cattle marts in the south. Return by the same route.

Morrone Birkwood is a nature reserve of very fine birch and juniper. From the centre of Braemar take Chapel Brae to a car park. A track gives access to a way-marked loop and view point...and there is always the path up Morrone!

The Lairig Ghru loop, 18miles/29km: from Linn of Dee west to White Bridge; north up Glen Dee into the Lairig Ghru; then from [NN 986956], near the site of the Corrou bothy, south-east into Glen Luibeg and Derry Lodge; south-east then south to Linn of Dee.

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 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.

'Everyone should be aware that the Scottish hills can provide more challenging days than the height and distance alone may indicate. Preferably robust boots should be worn and clothing worn or carried suitable to deal with wet, windy and cold weather at any season. A change of clothing in the bus is also advisable too. See additional advice for winter conditions.'

WhatsApp Group

You are reminded that we have now set up a WhatsApp group to enable members to exchange plans for the day in advance which may take some pressure off the bus convener. If you have not already joined and would like to do so, please email this link will allow you to join: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/G1wg91LQctt7M5X46SN0Q7>

Highways Hillwalking Club

For many years we have had an informal association with the Highways Hillwalking Club in terms of which our members are welcome as guests on their outings and vice versa without restriction of the number of such outings that can be attended. The HHC operates a programme very similar to ours, also using MacLeod Coaches, but usually on the second Sunday of the month. The combined programme for both clubs can be found in the Meets section of our website and full details of the HHC including how to sign up for their outings are available at their website: <https://sites.google.com/site/highways3102/home> "

What we did last month

A sprawling and rather neglected Corbett

The title is the Walk Highlands description of Meall an Fhudair – a rather neglected Corbett. 7 of us (Alex, Colin, Lesley, Don, Emma, Ewan and Jo) decided to give it some tender loving care. We got dropped off at the Hydro track near Glen Falloch farm and set off up the bulldozed track. We gained height quickly and easily. Say what you like about bulldozed tracks and there's plenty to say about ruining the landscape with an unsightly scar, but they don't half help you get started up a mountain.

We were all still together by the time we reached the point where we had to leave the track and take to the open hillside. With no track and no path we slowed down considerably, but could enjoy the beautiful view down to Loch Lomond while we fought for breath. The wonderful thing about Corbetts is that you seem to reach the summit a lot quicker and in better condition than if you go "full Munro". Although in our case it was Troisgeach at 733 metres we reached quickly. We still had around 2km of mixed terrain to cross to reach Meall an Fhudair at 764 metres.

We had been watching the clag for most of the morning hoping that the blue sky was going to burst through. It didn't and from shortly before summiting Troisgeach all the way to Meall an Fhudair to our final descent down to Gleann Nan Caorann we had to navigate in poor visibility. Colin took some summit photographs of the group on Meall an Fhudair, but with no views at all, it could have been anywhere.

We were still a party of 7 when we descended to the Glen and picked up the hydro track back to the foot of the open hillside. There was good visibility and we took a risk to descend directly to the Inverarnan hotel. It was a good call

by Colin and Ewan, aided no doubt by it being the only way we were going to have time for a drink. There was an intermittent path and no obstacles, so a well deserved pint was the reward for the day's efforts. And at least for that one day Meall an Fhudair could feel that it was not neglected. (Alex Williamson)



The summit of Meall an Fhudair: Pictures by Ewan Dawson & Colin Shepherd.

With the forecasters predicting low cloud over the higher summits, I thought it might be worth tackling the Graham (otherwise Fiona) Beinn Damhain and the Corbett Meall an Fhudair at the top end of Loch Lomond. Even that seemed a tad optimistic as we were travelling west on the M8 into the drizzly mist at Harthill and then around the south side of Glasgow, where the tops of the high rise blocks were obscured in cloud. By the time we had crossed the Erskine Bridge however and had started along the west side of Loch Lomond the prospects looked rather more inviting, with the cloud level rising and a little sunshine even breaking through.

Most of the people in our group of seven favoured tackling the Corbett first and in the event that turned out to be more than sufficient for the day. Disembarking from the bus opposite Glen Falloch Farm we made speedy progress up a hydro road on to the lower shoulder of Troisgeach before turning off to follow an intermittent path up through the rocky crags leading towards the first summit. As we climbed we heard the first of several Cuckoos calling in the wooded Glen below as well as a number of Willow Warblers singing. Unfortunately we were soon enveloped in the mist which persisted throughout the day at around the 500 metre level. The summit plateau between Troisgeach and Meall an Fhudair lacks any obvious features, comprising several knolly outcrops, interspersed with numerous small lochans, making navigation in the low cloud tricky, but with the aid of GPS we were able to locate the Corbett top where we stopped briefly in the shelter of the summit cairn wall.

More good navigation was required to take us accurately down the north facing slopes of Coir' an Longairt to pick up a track in Gleann nan Caorann which soon joined up with the hydro road we'd used on the way up. This facilitated a speedy descent and, with the aid of a final short cut across a field, brought us down to The Drovers Inn at Inveranan in time to quench our thirsts with a well earned drink while sitting outside in the warm late afternoon sunshine.

Colin Shepherd

Finally, some pictures of the group of Ptarmigans up Cruach Ardrain and Beinn Tulaichean



Ptarmigans at the start: Picture by Wendy Farmer:



Ptarmigans on the summit: Picture by Agnes Kupcsik