

Ptarmigan Hillwalking & Mountaineering Club



Website: www.ptarmiganmc.org.uk

Monthly Newsletter

May 2024

The Meet on Sunday 5th May is to Glen Falloch

DETAILS OF THE MEET

The bus will leave Waterloo Place at 07.30 going via Shandwick Place (bus stop opposite Boots), Haymarket, Roseburn, PC World, M9, Stirling, A811 to Kippen, Balloch, A82 to Tarbet, Ardlui, arriving at Glen Falloch at approximately 10.30. The bus will park for the day in the lay-by at NN 370239, just south of Crianlarich, near Keilator Farm.

The bus will leave Glen Falloch at 17:30: Bus convener: Alistair Haig 07402 580588 (Be sure to have that number with you on the hill)

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

Maps required: OS 1:50 000 Sheets 56 Loch Lomond & Inveraray, 50 Glen Orchy, 51 Loch Tay

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

An Caisteal 995m, NN 378193 can be approached from Derrydaroch Farm via Stob Glas or from where the bus parks via a track by the River Falloch into Coire Earb. Faster parties could combine An Caisteal with Beinn a' Chroin 942 m, NN 388186.

An Caisteal can be linked to Beinn Chabhair 933 m, NN 367179 for a finish at Inverarnan but this is a route for very fast parties only. Beinn Chabhair can also be climbed as an out-and-back from Inverarnan.

Cruach Ardrain 1046 m, NN 409212 can be climbed from where the bus parks, returning the same way.

Ben Vane 915 m, NN 277098 or Ben Vorlich 943 m, NN 295124 can be ascended from Inveruglas, alternative approaches to the latter being via Ardlui or Ardvorlich.

Corbetts

Meall an Fhudair 764 m, NN 270192 can be climbed from opposite Glen Falloch Farm (NN 319197) and faster parties could combine this excellent hill with the Graham Beinn Damhain 683m, NN 282173.

Grahams

The Luss Hills are rich hunting grounds for Graham-baggers and can be combined in various ways to give interesting circuits.

Beinn Chaorach 713m, NS 287923, Doune Hill 734m, NS 290971, Beinn Eich 703m, NS 302946 and Mid Hill 657m, NS 321962 can all be approached from Luss.

Ben Bhreac 681m, NN 321000 and Tullich Hill 632m, NN 293006 are possible from Inverbeg via Glen Douglas.

Beinn Damhain 684m, NN 282173 is accessible from opposite Glen Falloch Farm.

Fiarach 652m, NN 344261 is possible from where the bus parks.

Low Level

There are good walks up Glen Luss or Glen Douglas.

The Glen Loin Loop is accessible from either Tarbet or Inveruglas.

The West Highland Way can be walked from Inverarnan, taking in the Falls of Falloch, to the bus terminus.

***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

Richard Love writes: There are times when you hope the forecast is going to be wrong but I think we all knew that it was going to be windy on the tops, as it was already quite windy in Edinburgh when we left. What I hadn't bargained for (based on my Met Office weather app) was how much rain would accompany the wind. At least it was fairly clear, if you could stand up long enough to peer through rain speckled glasses.

Despite all the moans eight of us (Colin, Robert, Emma, Michael, Steve, Wendy, Tim and me) set off from Dalwhinnie and followed the track from the Laggan road along the course of the river (Allt an t-Sluic), past the eponymous farm towards the Graham, Meall nan Eagan, our first summit of the day. After much switching from one bank to the other we eventually found ourselves on the wrong side of the river having run out of little wooden bridges, so we had to rely on a fairly easy boulder hop to cross further upstream.

As we ascended the slopes of the hill, the gale picked up, tumbling Michael down the slope at one point. However, we all eventually managed to reach the top, seeking 'shelter' behind some rocks, where we all decided it wasn't worth launching down the slope directly into the wind to head for The Fara. Tim may have been disappointed but we agreed to all stick together and largely retrace our steps back to Dalwhinnie via a smaller hill Carn na Ceardaich, which provided some relatively wind free space for a lunch stop.



The push to the Cafe & enjoying tea & cake: Pictures by Steve Thomson & Colin Shepherd

Another hour or so and we arrived, windswept and drookit at The Apiary for tea, cakes and in some cases beer before being gently encouraged to head back into the storm as they closed at 4 pm. We sought some rudimentary shelter in front of the Deerstalker, which was closed for a family bereavement, although the Apiary reported that it had been closed for some time. After another good soaking in a hail and rain downpour, the rest of the party from Moy picked us up about 5.30 for a return in glorious sunshine and rainbows. Just our luck!



And yes, we did enjoy the day.

Waiting for the bus: Picture by Wendy Farmer

“This diminutive Munro is dwarfed by its higher neighbours”, says WalkHighlands of Creag Pitridh. It’s time to speak up in defence of the diminutive, say I. We had a fabulous walk, though it must be said that the weather played a big part in making it memorable.

We set out from Luiblea in relative calm, and made good time up the track to the end of Lochan na Earba. We enjoyed fine views up to a snow-brimmed Beinn a Chlachair; good conversations were had, as is the way.

Pictures by Cherie Hamoudi and Justin Elliott



After the lochan we (Andrew, Cherie, Katya, Lewis, and Justin) split off from the low-level group and headed up Coire Pitridh. There was a decent slope, which was no real challenge for our fresh legs; and a fresh breeze, which really didn’t seem like a challenge either. How wrong we were. We decided to take the direct route, making a beeline for the summit along the southwesterly shoulder, with the wind behind us. That was fortunate/well judged, because the wind ratcheted up as we gained height. By 700m it was pleasingly strong. By 800m it was powerful enough to make

you stumble after an incautious step. By 900m it was like nothing I had ever walked in – but still tolerable. In the last 25m to the summit (924m) it went beyond that: we literally crawled the last few metres. It was on the brink of being too much – but never passed the brink.



We decided, unsurprisingly, to find shelter before having a snack. Shelter we found, soon enough – a mere 50 metres down, to the North East, there was a lovely spot with super views, completely out of the wind. From then on the walk was more conventional, though no less enjoyable. Descending through boggy conditions past swollen streams, we made it to the good track beside the Lochan. The walk now took us straight into the wind – which was doable

down here. We enjoyed the dramatic views up to Binnein Shuas, and the impressive surf on the Lochan. At one point we were treated to a magnificent rainbow; there were occasional views of sunlit snowcapped peaks (the Grey Corries?) and frequent dramatic cloudscapes. And so we came back to the bus. Diminutive it may be, but Creag Pitridh was a fine hill that day. (Justin Elliot)

Rainbow over Lochan Earba: Picture by Justin Elliott



A tale of 3 lochs (or is it 2)

8 of us (Alex, Elsa, Lesley, Catherine, Coney, Emily, Jo and newcomer Diahann) took a look at the forecast wind and decided that staying low was the best option for the day. As no-one was heading to Fersit, the bus parked up in the layby at Moy. Our group, together with the Creag Pitridh 5, set of up the track to Lochan na Earba. The lochan usually has a beautiful sandy beach at the western end, but today the beach was under about 5 feet of water.

At the lochan we said goodbye to the Creag Pitridh 5 and set off east down the lochside track. The wind was at our backs and it felt as though it was getting stronger. Finding a handy gully at the eastern end of the loch we sheltered and had some lunch. No-one was looking forward to facing into the wind on the way back if we followed the original idea of doing an out and back. Elsa suggested that we could get to the eastern end of the second loch and skirt around the end of Binnein Shios to return along the side of Loch Ericht. This was unanimously agreed and we set off to walk the length of our second loch of the day. Or was it? The second loch is also called Lochan na Earba. So maybe it is the same loch. Elsa found out that there are plans to flood the dry gap between them so it's a moot point and some time in the future it will appear as a single loch as well as being named the same.

It was a good track down to Loch Ericht – the third loch of the day (or maybe only the second). Elsa assured us all that “Shrek’s House” was on that track, but it couldn’t be found. Although we were now facing into the wind, the trees offered enough shelter for it to be no problem.

By doing this route we got the best of day. A lot of sunshine and avoided the strong headwinds. It was about 13 miles and we climbed a couple of hundred metres so we still managed a good walk. All in all a very enjoyable day and worth the trip out of Edinburgh. (Alex Williamson)



Happy Ptarmigans (Picture by Alex Willaimson)