

The Wenlock Edge Ride Cavaliers, Fossils and Folklore

Route 1



Wild Flowers

The limestone escarpment provides ideal conditions for a wide variety of wild flowers. In the Spring the ransoms (wild garlic) are almost overpowering and the display of bluebells is magnificent. Other limestone loving plants inhabit the Edge and include orchids, ox eye daisies and wild thyme.



Wenlock Edge

This limestone escarpment runs virtually unbroken from Ironbridge to Craven Arms. This section of the Edge is owned by the National Trust and the many tracks and trails are good for cycling as well as horseriding and walking. This popular route is part of the Shropshire Way as well as the Jack Mytton Way.

Old Railway

The old Much Wenlock to Craven Arms Railway opened in 1864. The engines used on the line were affectionately known by the locals as the 'Wenlock Bell' and the 'Old Faithful'. Closed in 1951, the old line now provides a valuable amenity route with excellent views through the trees over the Shropshire countryside.



Ride along the limestone escarpment of Wenlock Edge rich in folklore and legend. Travel through ancient villages where Romans walked and Parliamentarians fought Royalists.

Renown as a site for geologists Wenlock Edge even has an era of our world's history named after it. In the limestone rocks are fossils formed 425 million years ago when this was the floor of a warm Silurian sea. There are shells, trilobites and coral to be found all along the Edge.

But the escarpment is not just famous for its fossils. Legend tells of a cave where a robber baron called Ippikin lived. One day the rocks fell covering the entrance. Ippikin, his robber band and a vast treasure of gold were sealed in forever. Be careful, they say he lives on as a ghost and anybody who stands here and says

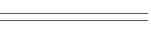
"Ippikin! Ippikin! Keep away with your long chin" will be dashed to death on the rocks by his evil spirit.

When you pass Blakeway Farm look up at the Edge. Here Major Smallman, a Royalist soldier, was cornered by Roundheads. His only escape was to ride his horse over the cliff. He survived by landing in a tree but the horse was not so lucky. To this day the spot is called Major's Leap.

You will also cross a Roman road by Lower Springs. Imagine the legions that walked this route from the Roman city at Wroxeter to fight the Celts on the western borders of their empire.



KEY to maps

-  Ride Route with direction number
-  Jack Mytton Way
-  Bridleway
-  Footpath
-  Byway
-  A Road / B Road
-  Other road

-  Public House
-  Telephone
-  Car Parking
-  Visitor Information
-  Cafe / Shop
-  Church
-  Public Toilet
-  Buildings

INFORMATION

Wenlock Edge Inn: 01746 785678

National Trust: 01694 723068

Start: Church Preen School Crossroads

OS map 217 • Grid Ref: SO555976

- 1 From parking place take the road north towards Kenley.
- 2 At T junction turn left and follow road for another 1¼ miles (2km) into Kenley.
- 3 After passing the church on your left take the next bridleway on your right. Follow this bridleway to join a farm drive and continue to tarmac road.
- 4 Cross road and follow farm drive down to The Gippols
- 5 Go through farmyard bearing left between farmhouse and buildings to gate and onto track. Follow track to field and follow round right hand edge to ford. Go through ford, turn left and follow bridleway to Blakeway Farm.
- 6 At Blakeway Farm turn right and follow stoned drive for 300m.
- 7 Go through field gate on left and cross field diagonally right up hill. Enter woodland and keep to track following it up to the left to reach stoned track.
- 8 Turn right onto the Jack Mytton Way. Follow the track, keeping downhill, to a gate and motorcycle trap. Continue along farm drive to road.

- 9 Cross road and follow Jack Mytton Way up onto old railway line. Turn right and continue for about 1 mile (1.6km) to a gate and motorcycle trap.

- 10 Cross railway bridge, bear hard left, leaving Jack Mytton Way. Drop down bank onto lane and continue downhill for about 2/3 mile (1km).

- 11 Go through farm and keep fenceline to right. Cross field to join track into coppice. Continue along track over bridge and out to road.

- 12 Turn right and follow road back to your starting point.

