Walks in the Woods

Both walks start from Market Rasen and head through fields and woodlands towards Willingham Woods, the shorter one returning along a road. The longer walk takes you through farmland over the Coversands; soils which are very deep and acidic. On a clear day the views of the Lincolnshire Wolds rising before you are very impressive and you may be able to see Claxby Radar Tower on the horizon.

Points of Interest

The River Rase has had a long history of flooding Market & Middle Rasen and the surrounding farmland. The Environment Agency took action to help prevent this natural process from flooding the town by creating the River Rase Flood Storage Reservoir - a wetland area that allows floodwater to be stored effectively. This has had the added bonus of bringing a wider variety of wildlife to a previous arable area.

The woodlands near to Market Rasen are an important feature of the area. Many of them are owned and managed by the Forestry Commission which was set up after the First World War, by the government to ensure this country had enough timber for future wars. Whilst many conifer trees have been planted over the years, they are now being harvested and re-planting is taking place with a mix of native broadleaves and conifer trees. This will provide timber in the future and, with a mixed species woodland, will ensure more wildlife diversity.

Local Public Transport Information

For train times to Market Rasen, phone 03457 484950
For bus services and Call Connect services to Market Rasen
contact Traveline on 0871 200 22 33 or www.traveline.org.uk

One such native tree is the hazel. It is particularly visable at the edge of woodland paths from February onwards, first with its sticky yellow catkins, then in furry leaves and lastly its autumn harvest of nuts, a favourite of squirrels and mice. The hazel can often be seen with honeysuckle, a common plant which twines itself around young trees and saplings, earning itself the old name of woodbine. The leaves are one of the first to appear, sometimes in December, whilst the flower can vary in colour from purple through to pale peach.
The route

1. Start in the car park in John Street, Market Rasen. Leave the car park by the John Street entrance and turn right. At the end, cross the main road into the Market Place.

2. Go into the churchyard and follow the path to the left. Turn right, then first left into Church Street. At the T-junction, turn left and continue to the end.

3. Cross straight over the road to go down the footpath at the side of Waterloo House. Follow the path past the floodwater storage area.

4. As you continue on this path, ahead of you is Hamilton Hill and Willingham Woods. The footpath continues straight across a field and into the wood.

5. Keep straight on until the first path intersection then turn right, keeping the pines on your right. Follow the track over a small brick bridge and continue ahead.

6. At the next crossings turn right and continue on the gravel track until it reaches a T-junction by a yellow line hydrant sign.

7. Turn left, pass the building on the left and take the right-hand fork, along the gravel track to the T-junction. Turn right and take the path on the left at the second set of marker posts which leads to the car park and picnic area. There is a large Forestry Commission information board here giving useful information, and another at the road entrance, explaining all about the Lincolnshire Woolds.

For the Longer Version of This Walk

1. Continue to the left of the road to the hamlet of Little London. At the right-hand bend, ignore the waymarker off to the left, but follow the road around the bend until you reach another marker pointing to the right at Wood Side. Take this path by the farm, cross over a stile and enter Legby Wood. Keep to the main track throughout this broadleaf woodland.

2. Continue over the gravelled Forestry Commission track, and then exit the wood by a stile. Continue through the fields, which can be muddy at times, keeping the woodland on your right until you reach the driveway entrance to College Farm.

3. Cross straight over the next field diagonally left, aiming for the waymarker in Willingham Lane byoya. Cross the next field, which can be muddy, on the same course to the large tree and marker post. Continue diagonally left to the corner of Woodhill Farm and around the hedge to the farm entrance. Over the farm track and enter the next field, crossing the field diagonally right, in line with the tree in the hedge.

4. The path then follows the hedge downhill to a stile. Once over the stile, follow the fence on the right, and go over the next stile. Head to the corner of the bungalow and follow the path that goes between the houses to Legby Road.

5. At Legby Road, walk left until you reach a footpath on your left. Follow this path beside the cemetery and through a gate at the end of a wall.

6. The chimney on Laxamu Laxam Road was once used to steam power a windmill, at least when there wasn't enough wind! One of four eight-sided windmills on Lincolnshire, it was destroyed by fire in 1933; a similar eight-sided windmill can be seen at Heckington.

7. Continue on this route, passing through a metalised gate and over the end of the cul-de-sac to emerge at the corner of Nalings Court in Sarpenite Street. Turn left, cross over Linwood Road and go under the railway bridge, passing the impressive frontage of the Methodist Church into Chapel Street and then John Street, back to the car park.
COVERSANDS HEATHLANDS
RESTORING THE COVER

Lowland heathland is rarer than tropical rainforest, with the UK still having 20% of the world’s resource, despite massive decline over the last 200 years. The heathland found in the northern half of historic Lincolnshire and the eastern edge of Nottinghamshire is even more special, having a wider variety of plants than typical southern heaths, as well as characteristic short-cropped grasslands, lichen-rich heath and sand dunes. This area, known as the Coversands, has gradually lost its important wildlife to farming, forestry and development.

The £1.5 million Coversands Tomorrow’s Heathland Heritage Project has worked to restore this precious habitat. Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, this 5 year project restored 700 hectares and re-created 250 hectares of this internationally important heathland. The project was not just about wildlife; it also developed strong community participation and school links by working with local organisations and Coversands partners whilst boosting the economic prosperity of the area through grazing projects.

For further information or to request a DVD about the Coversands Heathland Project, contact the Environment Team, North Lincolnshire Council, Church Square House, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire DN15 6XQ – Telephone 01724 297390

Tourist Information - Tel: 01427 676666