



Sycamore Gap & Crag Lough

HADRIAN'S WALL



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Frontiers of the
Roman Empire
inscribed in the World
Heritage List in 2005



Northumberland
National Park



Sycamore Gap, Hadrian's Wall

FROM THE SILL OR STEEL RIGG CAR PARK

Route: ●●●●●●●●●●

Grade: Moderate

Distance: 4 miles / 6.4 km

Time: 2 hours - 2 hours 30 mins

Map: OS OL43 Explorer 1:25000
Hadrian's Wall

Start & Parking: The Sill or Steel Rigg
Car Park - Please note that car parking
charges apply at both sites

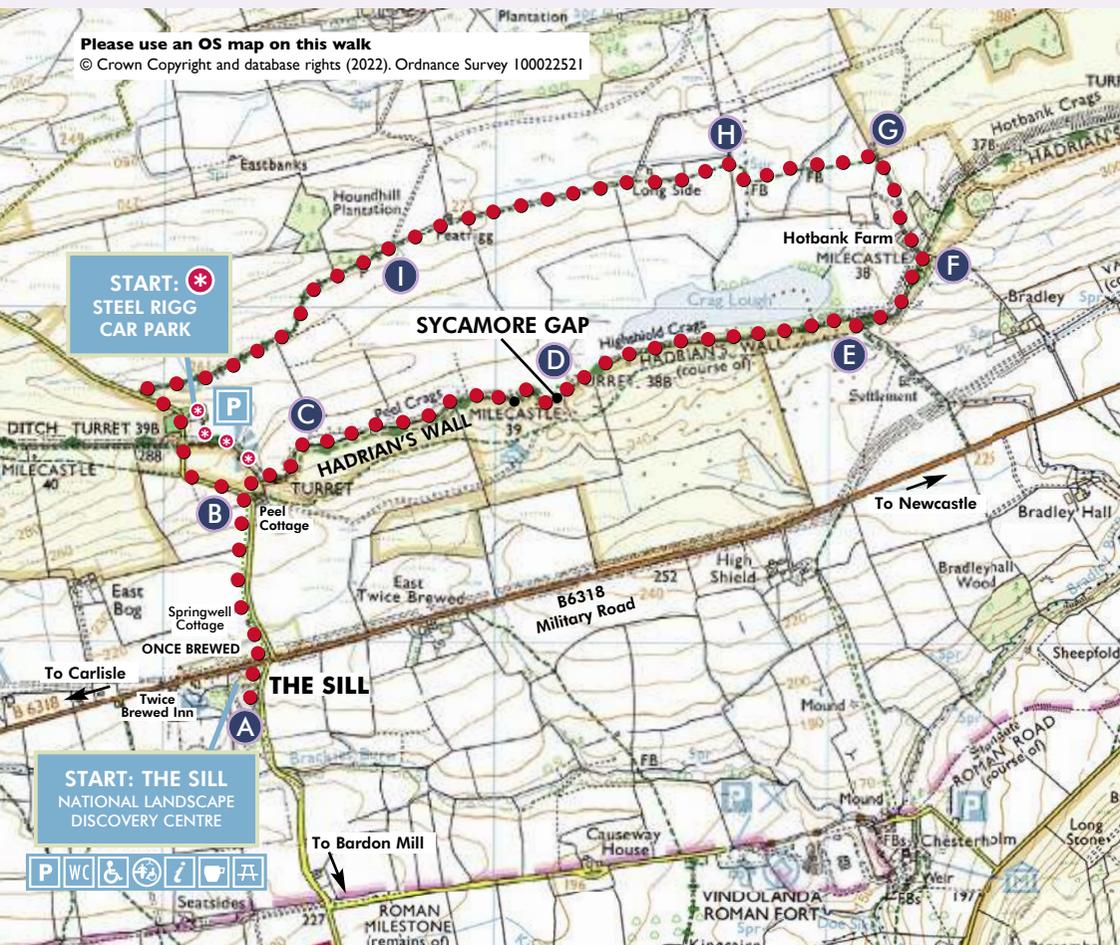
Terrain: Footpaths, tracks, stiles, steps

Description: A circular walk along one
of the most scenic sections of Hadrian's
Wall, involves some short, sharp ascents

Toilets: The Sill

Local Services: Haltwhistle, Bardon Mill

**Please keep dogs on a lead, livestock
(sheep and cattle) graze the fields
along Hadrian's Wall**



Please use an OS map on this walk
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START: *
STEEL RIGG
CAR PARK

SYCAMORE GAP

START: *
THE SILL
NATIONAL LANDSCAPE
DISCOVERY CENTRE

A **STARTING FROM OUTSIDE THE SILL.**
Facing the main entrance follow the path
around the right-hand side of the building
to the wicket gate by the main road. Cross
the road and go through the gate into the
small woodland. Go out the next gate and
turn left, heading up the footpath that runs
alongside the country road.

B At the end of the footpath cross the
road and walk past Peel Cottage, then go
through the gate signed 'Hadrian's Wall'.
Take the left hand path heading uphill. Go
through the gate that cuts through Hadrian's
Wall and turn right down the flagged path.

* **STARTING FROM STEEL RIGG
CAR PARK.** Near the ticket machine go through
the gate signed 'Hadrian's Wall'. Head
straight on, when you meet Hadrian's Wall
turn left through the gate and follow the
footpath downhill.

C Climb up the steep stone steps to
the top of Peel Crags. Keep to the path
as it runs alongside Hadrian's Wall. Go
down the stone steps to Milecastle 39 and
continue on, up the path, then down the
stone steps to the tree at Sycamore Gap.

D You can return to The Sill or Steel Rigg
Car Park from here, by walking back the
way you came.

D **OR,** continue along the path, up to
Highshield Crags where you look down to
Crag Lough, a glacial lake. **Take care, steep
drops here.** Follow the path down through
the wood and out the gate. Keep straight
ahead, along the path, and out the gate.

E Cross the farm track and go through the
gate, signed 'National Trails / Housesteads'.
Continue following the footpath up.

F By Hotbank Farm turn left and cross
over the stone step stile. Walk across the
farmyard, keeping the farm buildings on
your left. Go through the gate and up the
track to the brow of the hill to a ladder stile
by a gate. Cross over the stile.

G Turn immediately left and go over
the stile by the footpath sign. Head straight
ahead across the field, and over the stile.
Follow the signed path across another field,
The path curves to the right and heads up
to a wall. Cross the stile over the wall.

H Head straight ahead, keeping the two
barns and enclosure on your right. Continue
straight on with the stone wall on your right.
Cross the stile over a wall, and keep straight
on, past another barn and a woodland.

I The path becomes a stone track, follow
this all the way to the gate by the road. Go
through the gate and turn left up the road
to Steel Rigg Car Park. To return to The Sill
continue on down the road.

INFORMATION



The Sill: National Landscape Discovery Centre



Skylark



SYCAMORE GAP & CRAG LOUGH WALK

Directions to walk start point

From Newcastle: Follow the A69 west, after Hexham take the A6079 (Acomb). Turn left onto the B6318 (Military Road) for about 12 miles. The Sill: National Landscape Discovery Centre is on your left. Or you can, turn right up to Steel Rigg Car Park, which is at the top of the hill.

From Carlisle: Follow the A69 east for approximately 18 miles. Turn left onto the B6318 (Military Road) at Greenhead. After 5 miles The Sill: National Landscape Discovery Centre is on your right. Or you can turn left up to Steel Rigg Car Park which is at the top of the hill.

Public Transport

www.traveline.info T: 0871 200 2233

Hadrian's Wall Bus AD122

www.gonortheast.co.uk/ad122

The Sill and local facilities

Drop in to The Sill: National Landscape Discovery Centre for information on what to do and where to go. Explore the exhibition showing how landscapes have changed over thousands of years, or relax in the café and savour the local food, then take a walk on the whin sill grassland roof for a panoramic view of Hadrian's Wall and beyond.

www.thesill.org.uk T: 01434 341200

The Youth Hostel next door offers great accommodation perfect for discovering Hadrian's Wall UNESCO World Heritage Site. www.yha.org.uk whc.unesco.org

The Twice Brewed Inn nearby, offers a wide range of refreshments and has its own micro-brewery. Bardon Mill, 4 miles south, has a village shop and cafe, a pub, pottery and petrol station. hadrianswallcountry.co.uk

Photos ©: Laurie Campbell, Roger Clegg, David Taylor.

A little bit of history

The Emperor Hadrian gave orders for a Wall to be built in AD122, as part of a grand design to fix the frontiers of the Roman Empire. At 73 miles (117 km) long, or 80 Roman miles, it took about six years to build!

The Vallum runs parallel to the south of Hadrian's Wall. It is a flat-bottomed ditch (in some places a double ditch) with a mound either side. Originally it could only be crossed at a Roman Fort. Milecastles are small fortified gateways built every Roman Mile, often protecting weak points along the Wall.

The Military Road (B6318) was built after the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745, when the poor condition of the roads between Newcastle and Carlisle prevented General George Wade moving his troops to stop Bonnie Prince Charlie's march south from Scotland. A new road was built, known as the 'Military Road'.

Wildlife to look out for

This area is dominated by the dramatic whin sill ridge along which Hadrian's Wall is built. This rock was here 295 million years before the Romans! Rare whin grassland plants such as thyme, wild chive, biting stonecrop, rockrose and mountain pansy grow on this hard rock along Hadrian's Wall.

Birds such as snipe, curlew and skylark can be seen over the moorland and kestrel regularly fly above the crags on Hadrian's Wall.

Pipistrelle and other bats use the local farmhouses and barns as roosts. Look out for them flying around The Sill at dusk.

The tree at Sycamore Gap grows right in the middle of a 'nick' (glacial meltwater channel) in the whin sill - it is a great spot for taking a photo!

www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk

Milecastle 39, Crag Lough and Hadrian's Wall



Crag Lough and Hotbank Farm



Pipistrelle Bat



Mountain Pansy

