



Cauldron Snout

A circular walk from Cow Green Reservoir

Terrain: road walking, riverside paths with a little scrambling

Start/Finish: Cow Green Reservoir car park (NY811309)

Distance: 7½ miles/12.0 Km

Climb: 720 feet/220 metres

Time: allow 4 hours

Maps: Ordnance Survey 1:25K OL31, OS 1:50K Landranger 92

Refreshments: The Langdon Beck Hotel



A wonderful circuit of Widdybank Fell, with an exhilarating scramble alongside Cauldron Snout been the highlight of the walk. It's probably best done during the Spring months when the Spring Gentians and Birds Eye Primroses are in bloom. Large patches of these can be found near the weather station beside the nature trail.

From the car park, turn left and walk back along the Cow Green Reservoir access road heading back towards Langdon Beck. It's easy walking, all downhill with great views over Upper Teesdale, but be mindful of the traffic, it can be quite busy at times. Keep right at the road junction and continue as far as the cattle grid beside the white barn. Leave the road here and turn right onto a rough track heading to Widdybank Farm. This track winds its way across a couple of rough pastures towards the farm, during the Spring months keep an eye out for the Birds Eye Primroses, tiny little pink flowers, on the side of the track especially around South Loom Sike. It's also a great bird spotting area, with Lapwings, Curlews, Black Grouse and Ring Ouzels to be seen.

On reaching the farm, which is now used by Natural England as offices for the Moorhouse Nature Reserve, go through the yard exiting through a gate onto open ground beyond. You will also join the Pennine Way here, which is followed as reach at the top of Cauldron Snout.

The path now follows the banks of the River Tees through the rocky outcrops of Whin Sill, on the opposite bank you have Raven Scar on Cronkley Fell and you will pass underneath Faclon Clints on the slopes of Widdybank Fell a little further along. This does mean however that the conditions underfoot become a lot rockier as well.

There are a few areas of boulders to be cross, a little bit of time and patience is needed to cross these, and a liberal use of the hands in places. The scenery is stunning, so there's plenty of excuses to take a breather and enjoy it. Cauldron Snout can't be seen until right at the very last moment, you'll probably hear it first as you approach the confluence of the River Tees and Maize Beck.

The climb up alongside the waterfall looks a little daunting from the bottom, its not that bad, probably easier going up then coming down it. There's a good route that climbs up through the rocks, the bottom section is probably the hardest part as there's a couple of bits where's hands and knees will be required to get up the rocky steps. As you gain height the paths levels off and you can enjoy the views of the water cascading down the falls. It's a very impressive sight especially when there is a lot of water coming down them.

On reaching the road/bridge at the top of the falls, leave the Pennine Way, turning right to follow the road back over Widdybank Fell. Pass the huge concrete dam that holds back the waters of the River Tees to create the Cow Green Reservoir, there was a lot of dispute about its construction back in the 1907's as it destroyed large areas of rare flora. Follow the road past the weather station to reach a gate, go through this and turn left onto a track, keep right where it forks and follow it back to the road, go left and walk back to the car park.