

Cliffs, valleys & beaches... 3 miles Crackington Cracker!

Explore a stunning stretch of North Cornwall's coastline on a walk that leads you from Crackington Haven's sandy beach, to magnificent vistas of Cambeak Headland and the cliffs beyond, before returning by the sheltered woodlands of Ludon Valley. Intriguing rock formations and varied wildlife are just some of the highlights you'll discover on the way.

Start: Crackington car park – grid ref: SX143968 – maps: OS Landranger 190 and Explorer 111

How to get there & local facilities

By foot: the South West Coast Path runs south along the North Cornwall coast, passing through Bude and then onto Crackington Haven

By bike: National Cycle Network Route 3 to Wainhouse Corner, then 3 miles to start of walk along minor, quiet roads with some hills.

By bus: Western Greyhound 595, Boscastle – Bude, regular service to Crackington Haven

By road: 11 miles from Bude on the A39

Car park (pay & display), WCs (inc. accessible ones), pub, cafés, shops and surf hire in Crackington. RNLI beach lifeguard service (seasonal). Contact us on 01288 331372.

Things to look out for...

Geology

This stretch of coast is renowned for striking rock formations and slumped and fissured under-cliffs, dating back over 300 million years ago. The excellent exposed rocks help geologists interpret the area's history. Look out for contorted rock layers at Crackington and a natural archway at Strangles called Northern Door.

Wildflowers

Colourful blooming wildflowers cover the rich maritime grasslands on the cliff-tops in spring and summer. Some have weird and wonderful names like kidney vetch, bird's foot trefoil, tormentil and thrift. In autumn look out for the purple and yellow blaze of gorse and heather.

Beaches & coves

For the adventurous, there are secluded and dramatic beaches and coves to explore. These were once used by smugglers, favoured for being inconspicuous and not as closely guarded by patrol vessels as the south coast beaches.

Ludon Valley

This peaceful valley is a stark contrast to the exposed coast. Mature broadleaf trees of oak and ash, mixed with streamside hazel and willow, provide homes for a lot of wildlife. If you're lucky you may spot birds such as the pied flycatcher or willow warbler.



There are spectacular views across Tremoutha Haven to the Cambeak headland from Crackington. On a clear day you can see as far as Trevoze Head near Padstow to the south and Lundy Island in the Bristol Channel to the north.



Soay are a traditional, rare breed of sheep with large curled horns. They graze the cliff top heath and grassland in winter, along with goats and cattle. This helps to limit the growth of scrub so rare wildflowers can flourish.



A farmstead has existed on the site of Trevigue Farm since the Norman Conquest. The current farmhouse dates back to the 16th century. Trevigue Farm is now run by Trust tenants who practice wildlife-friendly farming. See heathland butterflies, such as common blue, clouded yellow and small copper. Look out for birds like kestrel, buzzard, stonechat and linnet here too.

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“A fascinating walk, contrasting rugged Cornish coastline, wildlife-friendly farmland and lush woodland valleys”

Mike Simmonds, National Trust Countryside Warden

Directions...

1. From the car park in Crackington, cross the road bridge and follow the South West Coast Path south (clearly marked with an acorn symbol).
2. The path climbs to cliffs above Tremoutha before descending into a series of small, hanging valleys, with footbridges crossing the streams.
3. Just below Cambeak Headland there is an option to cut up a permissive path through a spur valley to your left, rejoining the main coastal trail a short way further on. The coast path itself climbs a steep slope to Cambeak Headland where there are fantastic, far-reaching views.

Continue on the coast path with the vast under-cliff and bays of Little Strand beach and Strangles beach below you.

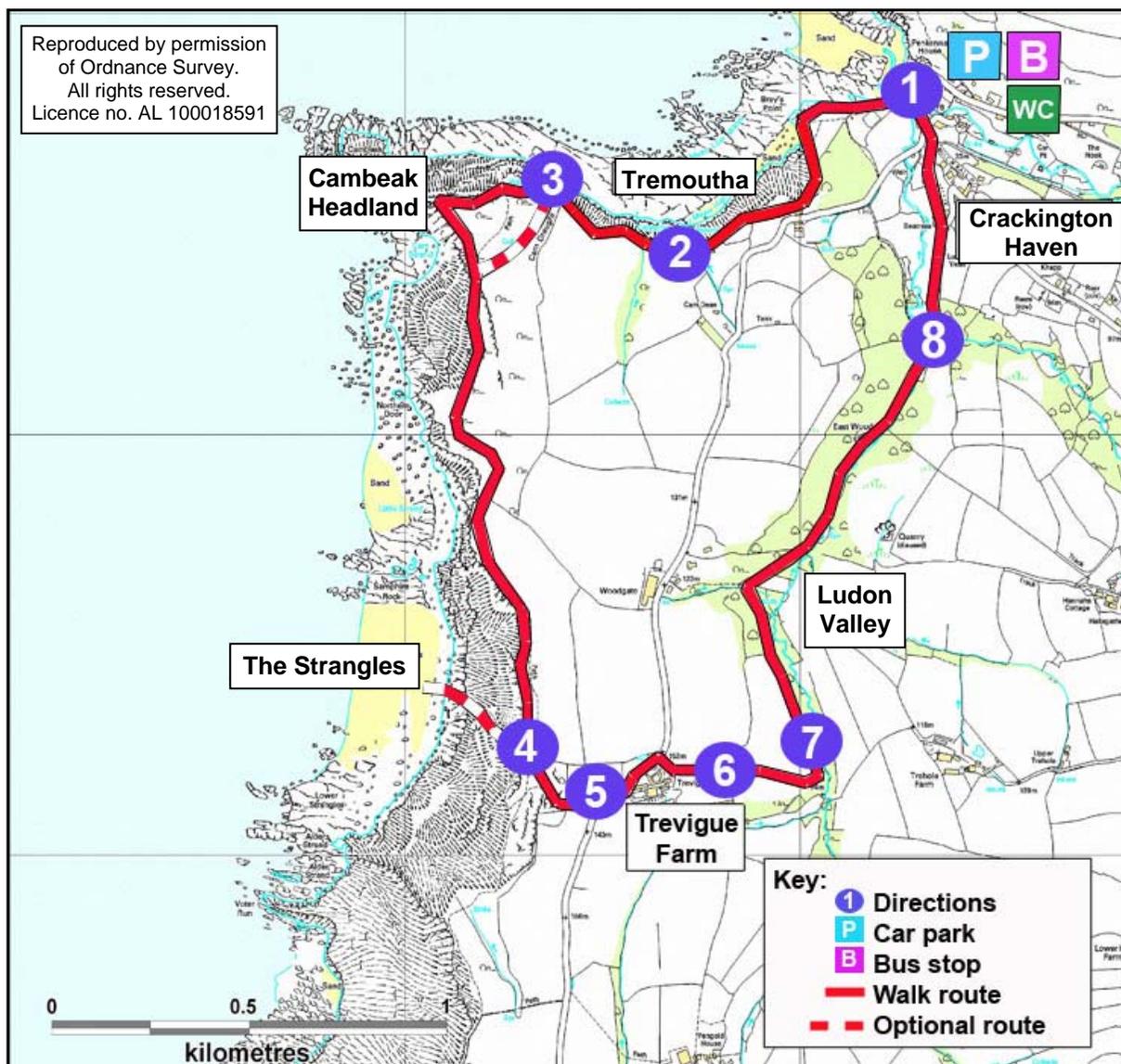
4. Optional route: When you reach a sign pointing to Strangles car park (200m inland), there is a path to your right to Strangles beach. This route is steep in places, with steps and a rocky descent, but it rewards you with golden sands, rock formations, smooth striped pebbles and interesting flotsam and jetsam.
5. Follow the path off the coast path and inland to a minor road, then bear left, skirting round the north side of Trevigue Farm.
6. Take a track through a gate set in a stone wall and descend into Ludon Valley across open fields.
7. Turn left at the valley bottom and head north alongside a stream towards Crackington. Stay on the path as it enters woodland, keeping the water to your right.
8. Cross two footbridges at the far edge of the woodland before following a quiet, residential track back to the car park.

National Trust places to visit nearby...

Boscastle Harbour, the Valency Valley, Tintagel Old Post Office

Terrain & accessibility

3 mile (5km) walk with an optional extension of ½ mile (1km) to Strangles beach. Paths are mostly uneven natural surfaces. Route includes some slopes, steps, stiles and unfenced cliff top. Strangles beach is remote with dangerous currents. Allow plenty of time around low tide.



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