

RUBY



COUNTRY

Ruby Trails

Cookbury / Bradford Trail



A Real Gem

The heart of the Ruby Country landscape is formed by a series of high, shallow ridges.

Its character is dominated by height, by the wind and the rain and by infertile soils. The landscape pattern of pasture and hedgerows is particularly characterised by the existence of unimproved grassland. This, the Culm grassland, forms

a mosaic of heath, tussock grasses, rushes and willow unlike anything else in England. The pastoral pattern is interspersed by substantial woodland plantations, principally conifers, punctuated by wet grassland and scrubby woodland.

Cutting through the ridge landscape are a number of distinctive river valleys. Generally flat floored and

wooded, they provide a contrast in the landscape, yet even here, especially in the higher valleys, the characteristic texture of the Culm grassland is found, binding the landscape character of Ruby Country.

Front cover photos: Barn Owl, D. Smith.
Ruby Red Cattle, Kit Hill Farm. Peacock,
English Nature.
Inside spread photo: Roe Deer, D. Smith

FACT FILE

Traveline have timetable details
0870 6082608.

Grid Reference
SS 421 073

Walk Length
11 km/6.5 miles.
There are two stiles
and only one or two
gentle climbs.

Facilities
Priestacott village
and Holemoor have
public telephones.
Neither village has
a car park, so parking
near the churches
may be easiest.

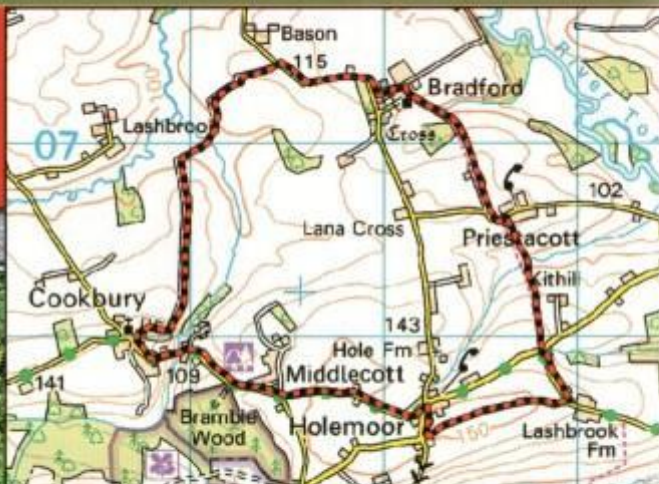
www.therubycountry.com



The Walk



This is an exceptionally beautiful and remote trail incorporating a large area of Culm grassland which is approached through grazed fields. Visitors are likely to see buzzards here and possibly spot deer and otters. The trail incorporates two pleasant villages, Cookbury and Bradford. Nearby is the National Trust property of Dunsland House.



Cookbury is four miles north east of Holsworthy, and has a population of 301 and 1833 acres of land in its parish.

Much of the route follows quiet lanes. Look out for the red Ruby Country waymarks.

1 Start the walk from Bradford near the All Saints Church and Cross. Turn right along the lane from the Cross and take the first right down the farm track. Take the first right down the old green lane (note: halfway down the lane is a DEFRA Culm grassland circular walk 0.4 km long which takes you along the river and through fields of Culm).

This ancient track supports hedgerows full of woody species, like willow, hawthorn, holly and oak. Look out for the roe deer tracks in the mud on the lane.



2 The green lane brings you out onto the Priestacott road. Turn left along this road until you reach the first footpath sign on your right, between the driveways of two houses.

3 Walk down the left-hand side of the first field and through the right-hand gate. Continue down along the left-hand side of the field to a small foot bridge. Cross the

OS maps for this walk:

Landranger: No. 190 Bude and Clovelly (1:50,000 scale)

Explorer: No. 112 Launceston and Holsworthy (1:25,000 scale)

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stile, keeping to the left-hand field boundary until you reach a metal gate, opening onto the Lane End Crossroad. Walk straight up the lane towards Lashbrook Farm.

4 At Lashbrook Farm turn right. At the next road junction turn right again. Then at the next junction turn left passing the local school. Continue along this lane until you reach the village of Cookbury.

Nearly all of the original Norman church of St John and the Seven Maccabees in Cookbury survives. On entering the church look out for the medieval tiled floor of the Barnstaple design, not unusual in this part of Devon.

5 At Cookbury, turn right into the un-metalled green lane. This takes you all the way up towards Bradford Manor crossing the River Waldon. When you meet the metalled road turn right, back into Bradford.

