

Paths Around Drumnadrochit

1 Craigmonie & Balmacaan woods

This hill takes its name from an 11th century Scandinavian prince 'Monie'. The Norsemen were defeated in a battle with local people, Monie and his sister took refuge on the rock before fleeing up Glen Urquhart. They were overtaken at Corriemoney where Monie was slain. Evidence suggests that Craigmonie has also been used as a hill fort.

From the car park at the Tourist Information Centre, turn right along the main road then take the first right along Pitkerrald Road. Follow the waymarkers for a choice of routes or extend your walk by adding route 2, Cnoc a' Bhuachaille. The climb to the top of the hill is rewarded by the exceptional view.

Specimen trees were planted by the 7th Earl of Seafield. See if you can find the Sequoia planted in 1857, the giant Sitka Spruce and the record holding Grand Fir. The wood is owned and managed by the Woodland Trust and the Forestry Commission in partnership with Craigmonie Woodland Association.

Allow 2 hours 30 minutes – 6.5km / 4 miles
Parking – village car park (Tourist Information Centre)
Moderate – waterproof footwear

2 Cnoc a' Bhuachaille

Cnoc a' Bhuachaille (shepherd's hill) provides further walking opportunities to Balnain and Glen Coiltie on Forestry Commission tracks. Follow the start of route 1 and head out towards the Milton viewpoint. The track leads out of Craigmonie from just above the viewpoint. Climb up the hill to join the forestry track to access fantastic views over the Glen. Return through Craigmonie woods.



From Cnoc a' Bhuachaille

Allow 2 hours – 6km / 3.8 miles
Parking – village car park
Moderate – waterproof footwear



3 Divach Falls

Follow the start of route 1 and continue along the path at the foot of the hill toward the site of Balmacaan House. At the end of this path turn right onto the road. River Coiltie is on your left. Follow the road across the bridge and up the hill. There is a small car park where the path for the Falls leaves the road. Return via Lewiston (see walk 4).



Divach Falls

This spectacular waterfall drops over 30 metres (100 feet). The falls have inspired artists and authors such as the artist John Phillips whose painting of the falls now hangs in Buckingham Palace.

The Falls were also responsible for the first tourism in the area. Tourists would arrive by boat at Temple Pier and then be transported to the Falls. The wood is managed by the Forestry Commission.

Allow 3 hours – 8 km / 5 miles return
Parking – village car park (if parking at Divach Falls car park, allow 20 mins – 500 metres / 0.3 miles)
Easy – sensible footwear

4 Lewiston

This historic village was planned by Sir James Seafield to improve housing for people on his estate. This was seen as very forward thinking at the time! He built the houses along the river bank so the houses would have good access to water.



View from Craigmonie

From the village car park, turn right along the main road and follow the Right of Way sign just past Balmacaan Road. This path will take you into Lewiston village. Turn right to pick up the path at the foot of the hill of Craigmonie (walk 1) or turn left to rejoin the main road through Drumnadrochit.

Allow 1 hour – 3.4 km / 2.1 miles return
Parking – village car park
Easy – sensible footwear

5 Urquhart Bay Woods or 'the Cover'

This is the best way to walk to the shores of Loch Ness! Turn right along the main road from the village car park then take the first road left. Follow this road down to Old Kilmore cemetery. The track to the woods is at the steps over the wall.

These interesting woods lie between two rivers, the Enrick and the Coiltie. When the rivers are in spate, the woodland is flooded. The floods carry down silt from the higher ground and this enriches the soil in the wood. However, this means that the plants and animals that survive there have to be able to cope with flooding several times a year. Look out for the wild flowers and dragonfly amongst the alder trees and Dippers on the river banks.



Southern Hawker dragonfly

This wood is cared for by the Woodland Trust.

Allow 1 hour 30 minutes – 5km / 3 miles return
Parking – village car park
Moderate – waterproof footwear
Note – the path can be muddy and wet

6 Urquhart Castle

Turn right along the A82 from the village car park. The path follows the road up the hill to Urquhart Castle. The Castle is managed by Historic Scotland and there is a charge for entry to the site. The walk up to the castle offers excellent views over Loch Ness and towards Creag Noy.

Allow 2 hours 30 minutes – 7 km / 4.4 miles return
Parking – village car park
Easy – sensible footwear



Urquhart Castle