



The Upper Adur

Trail Summary

Trail : SUSSTR0024
Activity : Walk
Type : Nature
Author : Ben Perkins
Distance : 5.5 miles / 8.9 kms
Ascent : 131 feet / 40 metres
Location : TQ212179 / BN5 9AL

The quiet upper reaches of the River Adur provide the focus for this peaceful riverside walk from Mock Bridge to Wineham, returning along the disused back drive to Shermanbury Place.

The trail has been taken from the book *Waterside Walks in Sussex* by Ben Perkins. It has been reproduced with the kind permission of the publisher, Countryside Books.

Trail Description

The River Adur derives its name from a 17th-century topographical description of England, penned in verse by a certain Michael Drayton, who was under the false impression that Shoreham, at the mouth of the river, was the Roman Portus Adurni. The river is formed from two main tributary streams rising near West Grinstead and Wineham respectively. Public access to one of these tributaries has, in recent years, been greatly improved following the diversion of a public footpath and the opening up of another section of river bank under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme as a permissive route which will remain in being at least until the year 2002. It is a delightful walk beside this modest, gently flowing river.

Please note that parts of the walk are liable to flooding after winter rains, so go well shod.

1. From the parking area, head north beside the A281. Opposite the Bull pub, turn right over a stile and footbridge, bear half left across a meadow to another stile and go forward along a left field edge. In the field corner go over a third stile and head across a field to the next stile with the Adur away to your left. On the other side of the field, cross a stile and sleeper bridge and go forward for 60 yards.
2. Where you have a choice of signed paths go directly ahead, ignoring the path to the left which will provide your return route. On the far side of the field, go ahead with trees on your right. In the field corner go ahead through a gate and on for a few yards before turning left with the farmhouse at Shiprods with its fine Horsham stone roof across a lawn to your right. A well trodden path winds through rough ground, squeezes between fence and hedge and then goes left out to reach the River Adur.
3. Turn right along the nearside river bank and follow this beautiful stretch of river upstream. After about 3/4 mile turn left on a signposted path which crosses an Environment Agency bridge over the Adur above a small weir. On the other side turn right along the river bank, now on a path, indicated by white arrows on a green base, opened up under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme. It takes you beside the river for another 1/2 mile or so out to join Wineham Lane.
4. Turn left along the lane for a little over 1/2 mile. About 60 yards short of the Royal Oak pub, turn left along an enclosed path, soon ignoring a stiled path to the right. Where the enclosed path ends at another stile, go forward along a right field edge. Just after passing under power lines, sidestep to the right through a gate and resume your previous direction on the other side of the hedge. In the field corner, go over a stile, bear right to a gate and go ahead along a left field edge with trees on your left.

5. In the next field corner go left over a stile and forward, ignoring a second stile on your right. A delightful grassy path between wood and hedge heads south. After about 200 yards, go left over a grass covered culvert, right over a stile and continue southwards along a right field edge. Just short of the field corner go right over a stile, through a wood to a second stile and then left to pass through a gap and skirt to the right of the house, garden and pond at Springlands. Just past a barn on your left, go through another gap and left along a field edge to join the drive from Springlands. Turn right to follow it out to a lane.
6. Turn right along the lane. Where the lane turns to the right, go left over a cattle grid and along a drive, signed as a private road but also as a public bridleway. After about 350 yards, fork left off the drive along a fenced track, once metalled but now reverting to grass. Ignore the first signed path to the left and continue along the main track, passing, on the left, the 18th-century Shermanbury Place and the church of St Giles, a modest structure with a timber belltower. Inside, the box pews bear the names of the local farms.
7. After another 200 yards or so, turn left along a path which starts between white gate posts. Cross the Adur and veer half right across a meadow back to the path junction at point 2. Turn right and retrace your steps to the start.

The Royal Oak

A minor detour at the start of the return route allows us a visit to the Royal Oak at Wineham, one of the few completely unspoilt pubs left in the county. The building, 600 years old, has housed a pub for the last 300. Set back from the road and fronted by a spacious beer garden, it offers a particularly warm welcome to walkers. The interior has all the traditional attributes of the ideal English pub, an uncarpeted flagstone and wood-boarded floor, plain bench seats, a beamed ceiling and an open fire in winter. The beer, Harveys Sussex Bitter and Marston's Pedigree, comes straight from the barrel and the food does not dominate, being confined to sandwiches, plain or toasted, plus ploughman's at lunchtime from Monday to Friday, and a home made soup in winter. The pub is open from 11 am to 2.30 pm and 5.30 pm to 11 pm on Monday to Saturday and from 12 noon to 3.00 pm and 7.00 pm to 10.30 pm on Sunday. Food is served during opening hours.

Leonardslee Gardens

A few miles to the north along the Horsham road are Leonardslee Gardens. The gardens are open daily from April to October.



Trail Map



Location

Follow the A281 south from Horsham or north from Henfield. The start of the walk is just to the south of the Adur crossing at Mock Bridge. There is parking along a loop of old road, now a picnic site, segregated from the A281 by trees and accessible beneath low height barriers.