



Llyn Mair trail



A hidden gem, Llyn Mair nestles in the vale of Ffestiniog and is a prime example of the beautiful and dramatic countryside of Wales. Ancient woodlands, the steam railway and the lake make this walk a pleasure in all seasons.

Directions to the start of the trail

From Porthmadog, take the A487 towards Blaenau Ffestiniog. At the Oakley Arms, turn left onto the B4410. After about a mile, you will see Llyn Mair on the left. Pass the car park on the right. After about half a mile, there is a sharp turn (taking you almost back on yourself) to the right, signposted to the Tan y Bwlch steam railway station. Park in the station car park.



Tree creeper

10

Trail information



Distance: 2 miles
Time: 1.5 hours
Grid reference (start): SH 651 416
Landranger 124 Explorer OL18

A moderate walk; there is a fairly steep section at the beginning and end, but these have steps.

Facilities

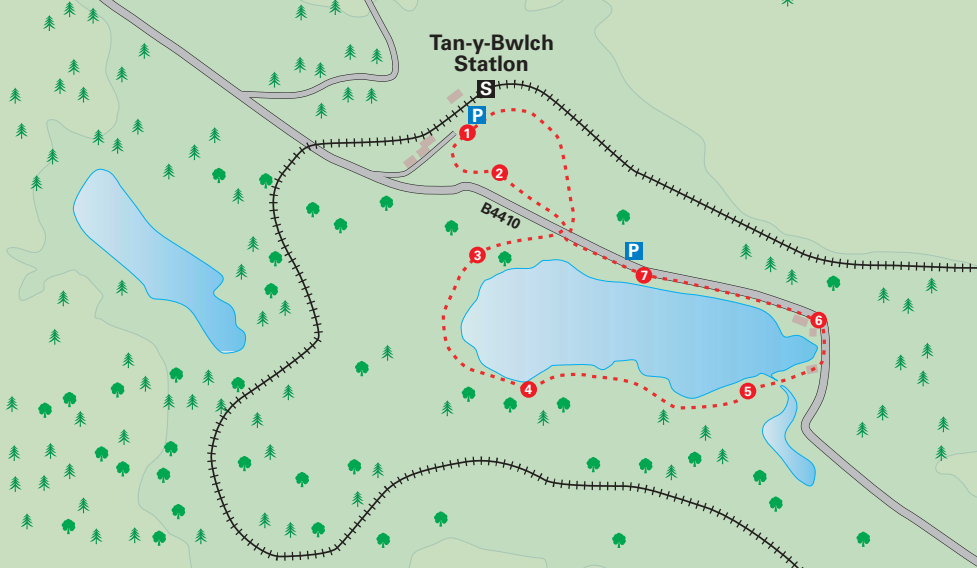
at beginning/end of trail



Photographs

Llyn Mair
(The Photolibrary Wales)
Tree creeper by Eric Woods
Nuthatch by Mark Hamblin
Dipper by Nigel Blake
Chaffinch by Andy Hay
(all rspb-images.com)

Look out for...



The route

- 1** Leave the car park by the gate marked '184'. Bear right, down the hill and through the mixed woodland. Go through the break in the wall and keep to the path, bearing left.
- 2** After 3-4 minutes' walk, you will see a short path on the left – venture to the end for a look at the tumbling brook below (mind the edge!). You may be lucky enough to see dippers searching for insect larvae amongst the rocks. Following the green markers, continue down the steps, keeping the river on your left.
- 3** When you reach the bottom of the steps, cross the road. Go through the gates on the other side into the park. The lakeside picnic benches are an ideal place for lunch. Friendly chaffinches will come very close to look for sandwich crumbs. Spend some time searching the trees and bushes for tits and scan the lake for diving and dabbling ducks.
- 4** Take the path to your right and continue round the lake, keeping it to your left. Look out for birds flitting above

your head in the mixed woodland. You might spot common woodland birds, including tits, nuthatches and treecreepers. Go over the stile. At the Y-junction, take the left fork, marked '26'.

- 5** The path brings you to a picture-postcard pond with a mini waterfall, surrounded by ancient trees and moss-covered boulders. As you enjoy the views here, listen carefully for high pitched, mouse-like squeaks. Look to the pine trees and you should be rewarded with great views of goldcrests as they busy themselves on the ends of fir tree fronds.
- 6** You will now come out into the open. Have another scan over the water to look for any newly-arrived birds. The path continues round the lake and finishes at a large wooden gate by a house. Go over the stile, watching out for vehicles on the road. After about 30 metres, the road becomes pavement. You will soon return to the woodland that you left earlier.
- 7** Return to the car park through the same wood, via the right-hand path.



Nuthatch



Dipper



Chaffinch