

Welcome to Tay Forest Park

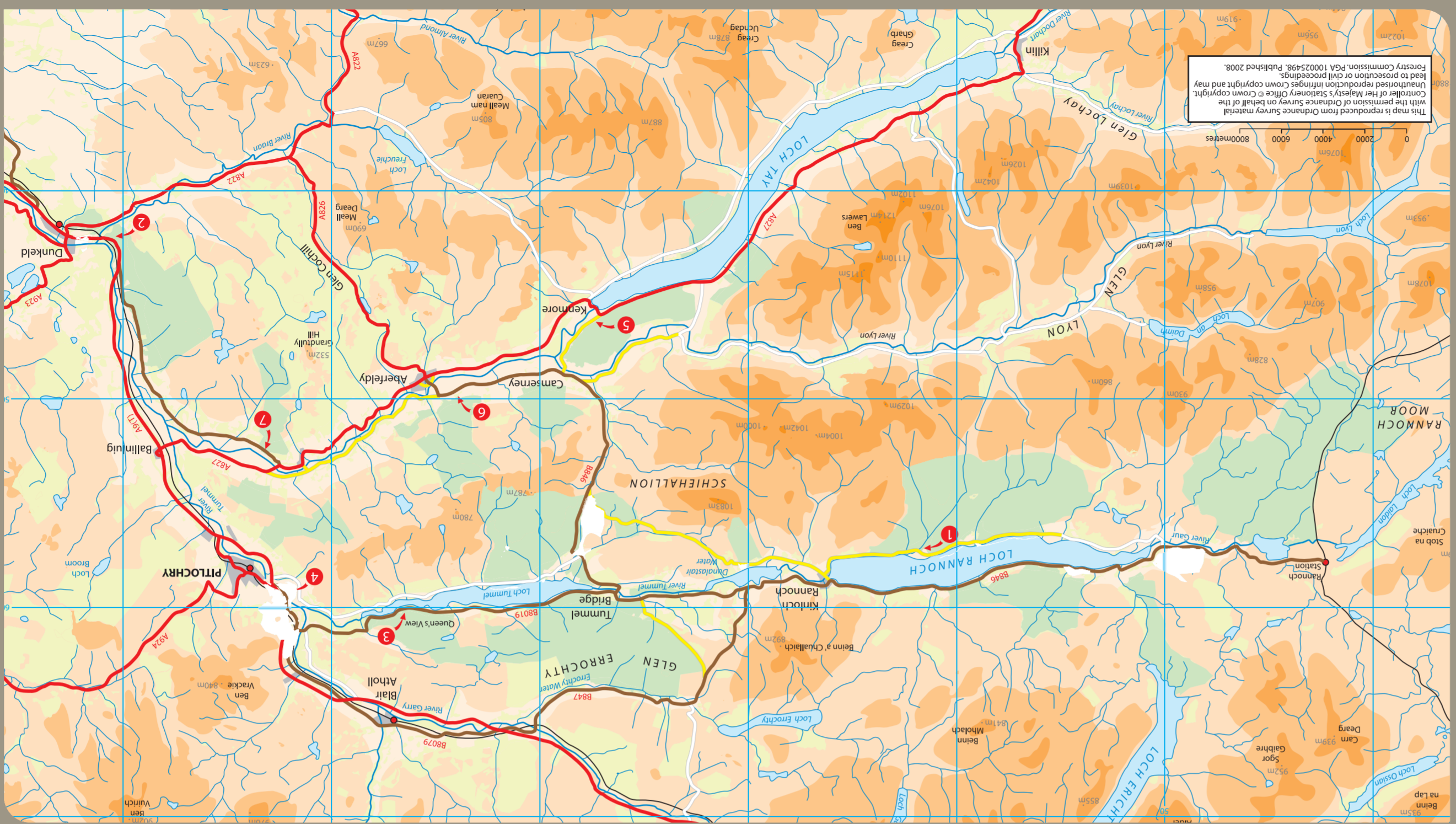
lochs & legends, mountains and mist-ery

Ferthshire, Big Tree Country, is the cradle of Scottish Forestry – and the Tay Forest Park helps everyone to enjoy their time among the trees. You'll discover legends about demons and dragons, saints and queens. You'll follow woodland walks that give you spectacular views of the mountains and lochs that make this part of Scotland so memorable.

You need to come here often – the landscape changes with the seasons. Lochs that sparkle in the summer sunshine take on a different appeal when half-hidden by gentle spring and autumn mists. Changing seasons bring new opportunities to see rare capercaillie, soaring golden eagles, visiting sea eagles, fishing ospreys, hunting goshawks – and the goldeneye duck which nests in trees! Then there are red and roe deer, red squirrels and pine martens, lots of butterflies and much much more. The Forest Park is not one forest but a series of contrasting woodlands in the heart of Perthshire at the heart of Scotland. The area was once part of the great Caledonian pine forest and its remnants – like the Black Wood of Rannoch – are now protected and helped to regenerate.

The Duke of Atholl, Sir Duncan Campbell and the Menzies family were three of the lairds who planted commercial forests at Craigynear, Drummond Hill and Weem. They imported European larch and employed plant hunters such as David Douglas to bring back other seed from the Americas. Selling timber is still vital to the local economy and pays for the conservation of woodlands and recreation facilities for local people and visitors.

For thousands of years, people have lived here among the woods, making use of native oak, birch, hazel, aspen and pine – and the occasional juniper for its berries! The Picts left us hilltop forts and later folk farmed the land. Drovers passed this way with their herds and General Wade built his military roads. For many centuries, Gaelic was the language of these parts and it's alive in all but a few placenames. Find out how they describe the landscape as you explore.



KNOW THE CODE BEFORE YOU GO

Enjoy Scotland's outdoors responsibly

- Take responsibility for your own actions
- Respect the interests of other people
- Care for the environment

What the walk symbols mean

Walks are graded according to degree of difficulty and type of conditions to be expected.

- Easy** Suitable footwear
- Moderate** Suitable Looser
- Moderate** Waterproof Footwear
- Moderate** Waterproof Footwear
- Strenuous** Hiking boots
- Strenuous** Hiking boots

Take care on the hills

- Wear suitable footwear
- Take suitable food
- Carry map & compass
- Know how to use them
- Turn back if it gets too cold and windier than at tops of hills are often much colder
- Low levels despite clear skies
- Here are some pointers for a safe and enjoyable trip.
- In emergencies call 999 and ask for the OJCE
- Location of the incident and stick to it
- Tell someone where you are going and when you expect to return
- Take adequate warm & waterproof clothing
- Wear suitable footwear
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Information

What the symbols mean

Key to maps

- Forestry Commission Land
- Forestry Commission Woodland
- Suitable for the Less Able
- Toilets
- Picnic Place
- Cafe
- Information
- Viewpoint
- Childrens Play Area
- Campsite
- Caravan Site
- Orienteering

(detailed on trail maps)

- Start of Forest Trails (colour coded)
- Forest Trails
- Footpath
- Forest Drive
- Road/Track
- Forest Road
- Minor Road
- Secondary Road
- Main Road
- Other Woodland
- Forestry Commission Land

Explore Enjoy and Discover

Tay FOREST PARK

Facilities

- Carie Walk**
0.75 km | ½ mile | 30 min
The trail leads between oak woodland and Norway spruce, the red squirrel's favourite seed source, then past the burn with its flood-sculpted banks.
- Kilvrecht Walk**
1.2 km | ¾ mile | 1 hr
The trail extends the Carie Walk across the burn and up above the old fields.
- Allt na Bogair Walk**
8 km | 5 miles | 3 hr
The trail follows the burn through native broadleaves and Scots pine and provides panoramic views of the loch and the sweeping hills.

Raineach is Gaelic for fern or bracken. It gave its name to the Moor of Rannoch which lies west of here and was once covered in woodland. The Black Wood of Rannoch is a Special Area of Conservation, protected for the many special plants and animals that live among the pine trees.

In Rannoch Forest you'll see native trees including the doughty oak, shimmering aspen, graceful birch and tough hazel. There's a stand of ancient Scots pine, with their reddish trunks, near Airigh nan Cuileag and watch for three red animals – deer, squirrel and pine marten.

The Queen's View

but which Queen was it?

Queen Victoria recorded that the iconic view, looking westwards along Loch Tummel, was named after her, following her visit in 1866. However, Queen Isabella of Scotland, wife of King Robert the Bruce, is widely believed to have inspired the name about 550 years earlier!

What the argument highlights is how popular the area is with visitors who revel in this part of Scotland with its wooded hills reflected in long, lingering lochs and rushing rivers. One hill in particular, Schiehallion, is also the subject of debate. Does it mean 'fairy hill of the Caledonians' or 'maiden's pap'? What is certain, however, is that in 1774 the mountain was used in a mathematical experiment to estimate the mass of the Earth.

General Wade left his legacy in the memorable bridges at Aberfeldy and Tummel when he was sent north to help 'quell the rebellious Scots'. Not all of them feel they've been quelled yet!

You can find out all about these and many other fascinating facts at the Queen's View Visitor Centre at the eastern end of Loch Tummel. This is part of Big Tree Country and the displays and a stunning audio-visual programme describe the many attractions of the Tay Forest Park. There's a good selection of books and gifts in the shop and it's an excellent place to stop for a meal or a refreshment break in the café before exploring the woodlands.

The hills have seen many other comings and goings – of travellers following 'the road to the Isles', of drovers herding sheep and cattle to the fairs, or markets, at Crieff and Falkirk and of military map makers and road makers.

Forestry Commission Scotland

Big Tree Country

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For information on what's available from Forestry Commission Scotland in the rest of Big Tree Country and surrounding areas please contact

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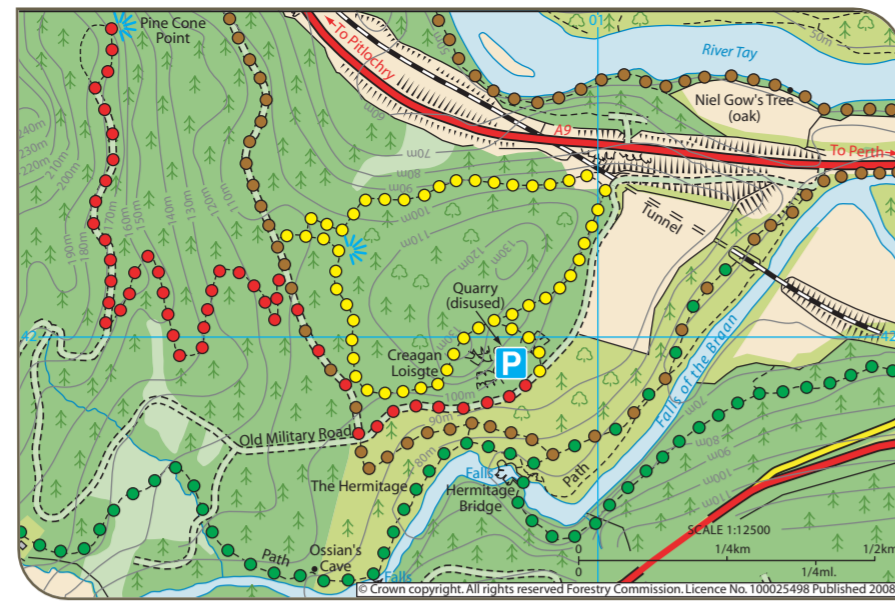
Craigvinean 2

A goat's eye view of Strathtay



Facilities

- Creagan Loisgte Walk**
2.6 km | 1½ miles | 1 hr
The trail leads to a folly and viewpoint overlooking the Hermitage and Telford's bridge in Dunkeld.
- Pine Cone Point Walk (easy access route)**
4.9 km | 3 miles | 2 hrs
The trail leads to an exciting structure with spectacular views.
- Dunkeld & Birnam walks**
The eight walks cover 58 km / 36 miles around Dunkeld. The tourist information centre has details.



The Dukes of Atholl were foremost among the 'Big Tree Country' lairds who created commercial forests. The second duke planted European larch at Craigvinean (from Gaelic, crag of the goats) and used cannon to scatter seed on Craig a Barns!



These woods have attracted visitors since Victorian times and you can still enjoy the follies and viewpoints reached by walks through 'cathedrals' of now great trees. A folly at Creagan Loisgte (burnt hill) has been rebuilt in contemporary style. Make sure you visit the unique timber-built 'pine cone' for views up Strathtay. They are just as dramatic on misty days.

Look out for goshawks hunting at the woodland edge, capercaillie and red squirrels among the trees.

Allean 3

Trees to match the land



Facilities

- Clachan Walk**
3.0 km | 2 miles | 1 hr
The trail passes the former farmstead through mixed woodland with great views over the Tummel valley.
- Ring Fort Walk**
4.0 km | 2½ miles | 1 hrs 30 mins
The trail extends beyond the Clachan Walk route and gives panoramic views of the landscape before returning past the ring fort.



Allean Forest shows how to use the terrain for trees. Douglas fir predominates on drier land and Scots pine thrives among the heather. Spruces grow well on wetter areas and larch in the bracken.

Like all the woodlands in the Forest Park, Allean is home to a variety of plants, insects, birds and animals. Among the larch and pine on the lower slopes, you'll see or hear goldcrest, siskin and Scottish crossbill, all seed-eaters - like the red squirrels. Foxes and pine marten hunt for voles, shrews, mice and beetles.

People have used this landscape for millennia. Near the car park stands the Clachan, a partly-restored 18th century farmstead. Even earlier are the conserved remains of an 8th century Pictish ring fort, a homestead and lookout point above Loch Tummel.

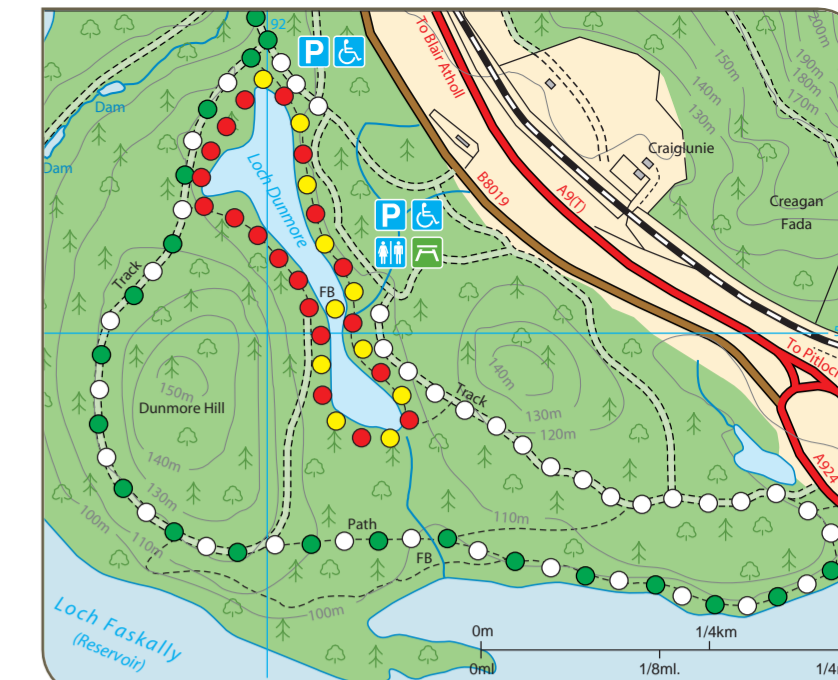
Faskally 4

the foresters' woodland



Facilities

- Dunmore Walk (easy access route)**
1.2 km | ¾ mile | 30 min
The trail skirts the shore of Loch Dunmore where the majestic trees provide a blaze of colour in autumn.
- Foresters' Walk**
2.4 km | 1½ miles | 1 hr
The trail follows the footsteps of foresters who learned how to create attractive and productive woodland.
- Pitlochry walks**
A network covering 65 km / 41 miles of Highland Perthshire. The tourist information centre has details.



The owners of Faskally House created this 'model forest' in the 19th century. The house became a school where young foresters learned how to restore woods destroyed by wartime felling and how to create more diverse woodland.

The woods around Loch Dunmore are home to a wide range of tree species, some more than 200 years old. As you enjoy the walks, you'll see the variety of trees that have been planted and maintained, often using innovative management techniques.

This is the heart of Big Tree Country and there are some magnificent specimens at Faskally. In contrast, look out for woodland and water wildlife - including the goldeneye, a distinctive tree-nesting duck.

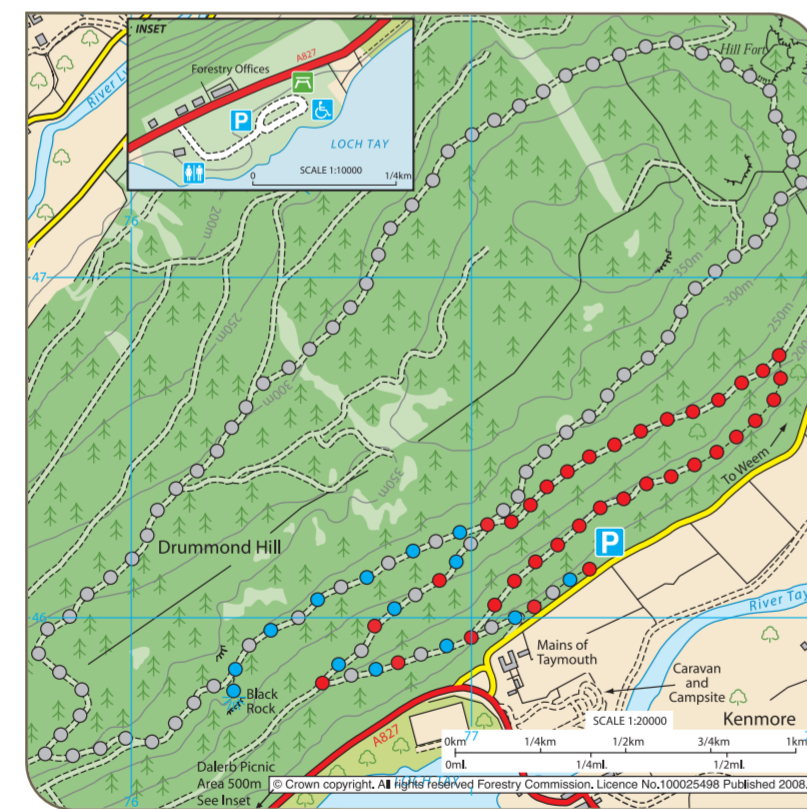
Drummond Hill 5

land of boars & bears



Facilities

- Black Rock Walk**
4.8 km | 3 miles | 1hr 30 mins
The trail zigzags up an easy gradient to the Black Rock viewpoint above Loch Tay and Kenmore.
- Taymouth Walk**
4.3 km | 2½ miles | 1hr 15 mins
The trail provides great views of Strathtay and Taymouth Castle, once home to the Campbells of Breadalbane.
- Caisteal MacTuathal Walk**
6.5 km or 10.5 km | 2 hr or 4 hr
The trail climbs to the hill fort; there you can retrace your steps or keep going and enjoy views of Appin of Dull, Glen Lyon and Fortingall.



In the 17th century, Black Duncan of Breadalbane (the upland of Scotland) planted Drummond Hill with what was probably Scotland's first managed forest.

The woodland, with its Scots pine, was ideal for re-introducing the magnificent capercaillie in 1837. They still thrive - with some permanent specimens in the attractive car park at Dalerb. Pine marten also live here and you may see hovering buzzards on foraging trips. The hill fort was part of a network of look-out points and commands spectacular views both north and south.



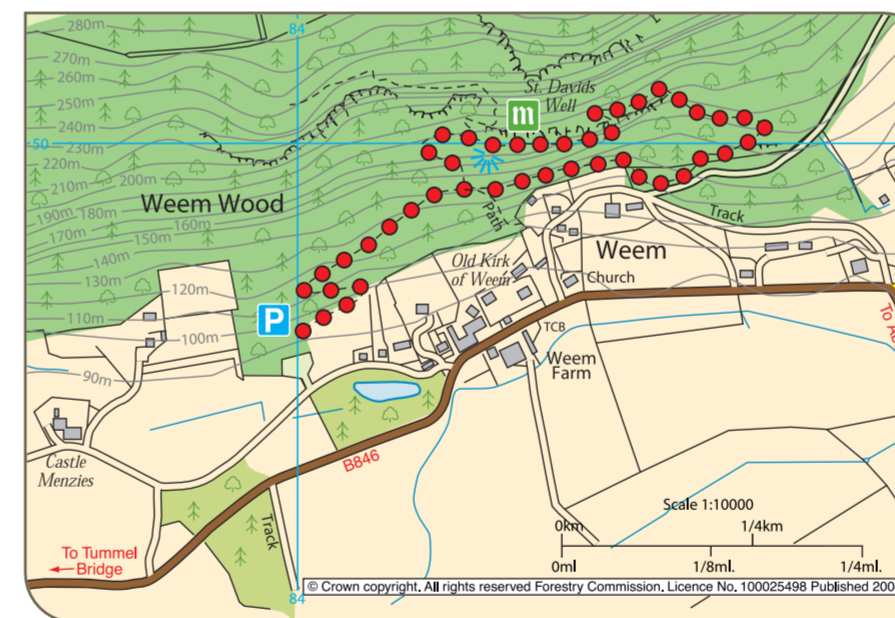
Weem 6

a haunt of dragons & demons



Facilities

- Weem Walk**
1.6 km | 1 mile | 45 min
The trail climbs steeply up the craggy slopes and past 'hidden' or mysterious sculptures to offer a fine view over the Tay at St David's Well.



Weem takes its name from the Gaelic word uamh, meaning cave. Legend has it that the cliffs and caves on these ancient woodland slopes once harboured strange beasts and beings. However, none has been seen recently! The wood also attracted David, the son of a 15th century laird, to spend time at what is now called St David's Well, reputedly a retreat used by St Cuthbert many centuries before.

The Menzies family, whose nearby castle has been restored, planted many grand trees in the 19th century to provide a backdrop for their home and garden. They were among the numerous Perthshire lairds who pioneered the introduction of exotic species brought back by famous 'plant hunters' from North America and Asia. Among them were David Douglas from Scone, whose name identifies a mighty fir tree, and Archibald Menzies from Aberfeldy, who had been a gardener at the castle before becoming a noted botanist and plant collector.



Grandtully 7

picturesque stronghold of the Picts

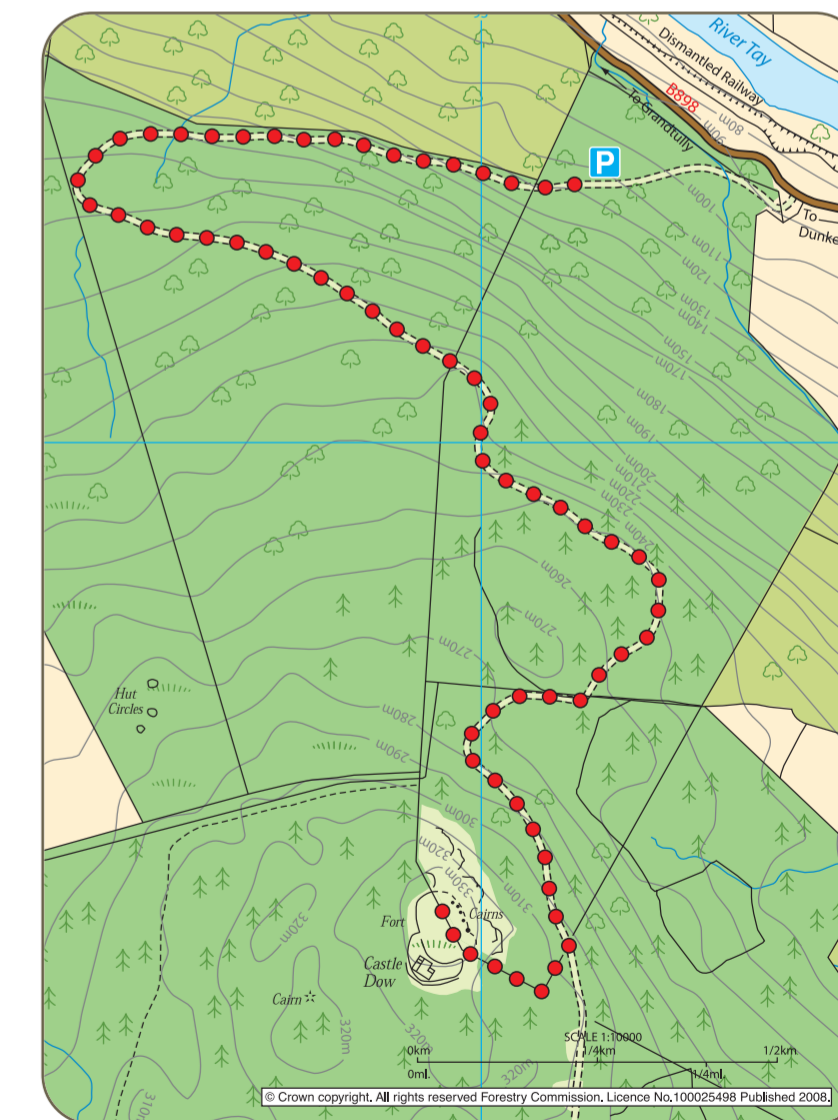


Facilities

- Caisteal Dubh Walk**
7.2 km | 4½ miles | 2hr 15 mins
The trail climbs steadily through woodland and then young conifers to reach the hill fort with its commanding views over Fortingall.

This part of Scotland was for long occupied by the Picts, the Celtic tribes that the Romans called Picti, meaning 'painted'. They built the pre-historic fort called Caisteal Dubh (or Castle Dow), the black castle which gave defenders unrivalled views over the River Tay and beyond. It's now a scheduled monument.

You reach the fort, and the strange line of Victorian pillar cairns, through mixed broadleaved woodland and then a recent plantation of Sitka spruce, which will be felled for its timber. Where practicable, trees are harvested under 'continuous cover' which is a more scenic alternative to the clear felling that is necessary in some forests.



Juniper woodland is a special feature here and the trees contrast with the ground-hugging bushes which are characteristic of many Scottish hillsides. Look out for the seed-crunching Scottish crossbill, black grouse at the woodland edge, red deer grazing in the distance and pine marten hunting for food among the trees.

