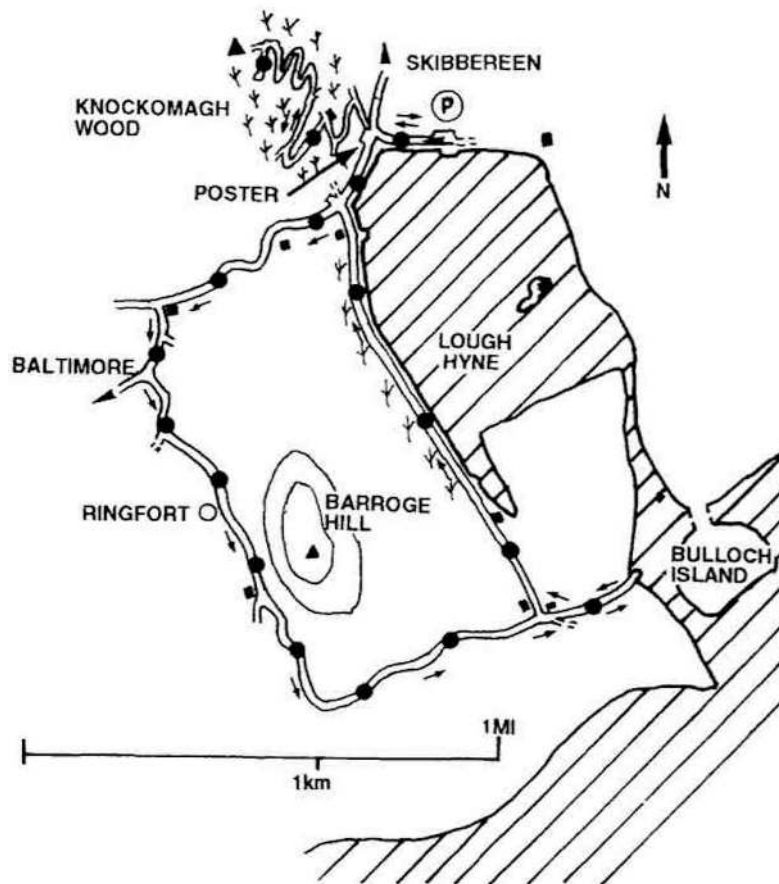


WALK NO. 5. LOUGH HYNE



Distance: Lough Hyne Loop: 7KM Time: 1.5Hrs
 Knockomagh Wood 3KM Time: 1.5Hrs

Terrain: Quiet roads, steep here and there, the wood walk is a steep uphill wood path (You could easily do both walks here)

Start and finish: Lough Hyne is a well-known Marine Nature Reserve some 4MI (7km) SW of Skibbereen, and it is well signposted ("Lough Ine") from Skibbereen onwards. When you get there, turn left along Lough Hyne and park at the waterside.

Comment: The feature of Lough Hyne is that it is directly connected to the sea by a very narrow channel which, by a geological quirk, is below high tide and above low tide. Because of this, and I suppose the Gulf stream effect, it is home to a hugely varied and rare range of marine life. The wooded hill nearby affords excellent views from a really old oak and beech wood.

Walks: From the car-park, walk back out to the road, where there is an interesting poster about Lough Hyne and its marine life.

For the Lough Hyne loop walk. Go left on the road, which starts to swing right, upwards - ignore the lesser (level road going out left along Lough Hyne. Continue up your rather steep winding road, watching for traffic. At the top, turn left at a T-junction with a ' Skibbereen 8 MI' sign, and then left again at the next T-Junction about 300m later. After another uphill 500m, watch for a fine ringfort on your right, just at the crest of the hill. This quiet road wanders along, generally SE-wards, with

Barloge Hill on the left and improving sea views to the right over Roaringwater Bay, and you should see over to Mount Gabriel near Schull, for instance. Ignore a lesser road down to the right just after a ruin, and then after another uphill your road soon begins a winding descent and swings left. Ignore for now a T-junction, and continue down 300m along a leafy lane to the pier at Bulloch Island. The narrow rapids out of (and into!) Lough Hyne are over to your left, but are difficult to get at and so are not on our agenda. When ready, go back up to that last T-junction, and now you turn right, to return on a lovely level walk to the start, beside beech, holly, whitethorn and woodbine, and all the rest.

For the Knockomagh Wood walk From that poster, go through the wooden stile into the level path in the wood, for less than 100m. Turn up sharp left and follow the upward path, up to steps where a little sign ("hill top) confirms you are on correct route, and just after this, turn up left again when passing a ruined stone cottage on the right. Now simply follow the upward path (ignore a right down steps at one point), as it weaves up through a most beautiful unspoilt wood, through a carpet of ivy and all kinds of woodland flowers, including bluebells in season. The wonderful views over Lough Hyne will provide an excuse for a regular breather, and there are many sets of steps to help you up. At a clearing at the top, take the left fork, to get grandstand views over Lough Hyne and the nearby coast. Return as you came up, through these wonderful old woods.