

Nature's Harvest... 2 miles

Clent Hills, West Midlands

Join the many day-trippers who have traveled to the Clent Hills from nearby towns and cities for over 200 years. Sitting only 8 miles outside of Birmingham, the hills offer a haven of peace and tranquillity, with beautiful woodland and plenty of wildlife, perfect to blow away the cobwebs with an autumn ramble.

Getting there and facilities

Start: Nimmings Wood car park **Grid ref:** SO 938807 **Map:** OS Explorer 219
Buses/Rail: Regular buses (Kidderminster-Birmingham) take you within 25 minute walk of the start of the walk. Alight Clent village. See www.traveline.org.uk
Road: SW of Birmingham, not far from the M5 (Junction 4 then A491)
Facilities: Car park, accessible WCs, café
Contact us: 01562 712822 / clenthills@nationaltrust.org.uk

Look out for...

Beautiful autumn colours

As you walk through woodland in the Clent Hills you'll be greeted with a spectacular myriad of autumn colours and bustling wildlife. You may notice lots of old beech 'pollards'. These are 250 year old trees, which were cut just above head height so that they sprouted a mass of branches low down, providing food for livestock. Today, they are home to insects, beetles and nesting birds. Also hidden in the hills is New Pool, a natural pond awash with autumn colour from the surrounding mixed deciduous woodland.

Open grassland

We are committed to restoring dry acid grassland, now a rare habitat throughout the UK. It was once prevalent on Clent, when animals grazed the land to keep down any new plant growth by eating seeds and shoots before they could establish themselves. When the animals were removed, scrub, bracken and trees started to take over and the grassland and wildlife it supported was lost. Through careful management plants, such as Bilberry, Sheep Sorrel and Heath Bedstraw, are returning encouraging birds, like Linnets, butterflies, such as Small Copper, and also Solitary bees.

Breathtaking views

On the top of the hill there are amazing views of the Cotswolds, Shropshire Hills and Welsh borders. Always changing depending on the weather, one visit is never the same and never enough to take it all in.



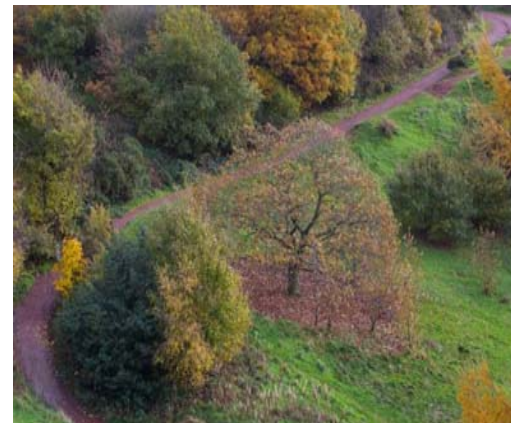
If you're lucky you may spot a Redwing in trees and hedgerows around the hills, look out for the distinctive creamy stripe above its eyes and its orangey-red flank. Redwings are the UK's smallest thrush and are a threatened species, due to a decline in their breeding activity over the last 50 years.

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As you wander through the ancient woodlands, look out for berries to pick from bushes and trees. You will also notice deadwood lying around the woodland floor, which forms an important part of the cycle of tree health by adding nutrients back into the soil and providing a habitat for many invertebrate species, which in turn attract birds and mammals.

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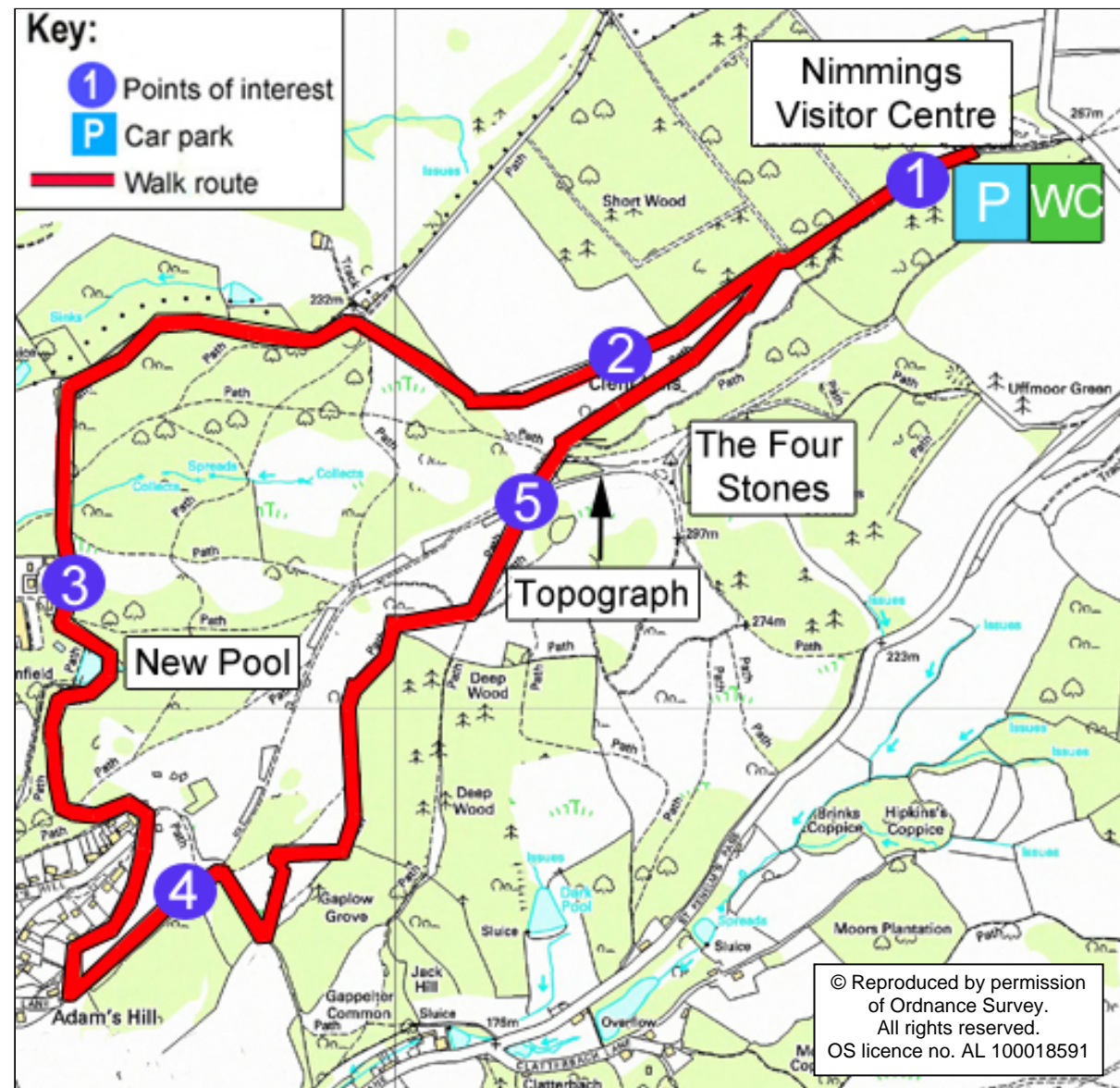


The open grassland and woodland provides plenty of opportunities for wildlife spotting, in particular wintering birds. Redwings, wintering thrushes and Fieldfares can all be spotted from October onwards. Migrating birds, such as Wheatear and Ring ouzels, might make an appearance too.

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Route directions

1. From Nimmings café, climb up a gentle zig-zag slope into the woodland. Turn right and follow the lower path leading down into woodland. At the next crossroad, again stick to the lower path taking you around the boundary fence of Hagley Hall Estate.
2. Continue to follow the same path round the boundary fence, which becomes a red brick wall. Parts of this path can get very muddy, but if you've got your wellies it's a great place to see the beautiful autumn colours and is a more peaceful area of the hillside. You may be lucky enough to spot deer around here too.
3. The path will take you to New Pool, awash with bright coppers and huey reds. Leave the path that you have been following and take the smaller path to your left. Follow this path up to the open grassland, where you will be able to see the Hill Tavern pub down to your right.
4. Walk towards the pub and when you get to the wooden gate, before the road, take the lower path which runs alongside the fence. This takes you up to a bench, have a seat and admire the great views of the Adam's hillside of Clent village. Follow this path round and look out for a wealth of blackberry bushes to your right. After you've collected a great stash of berries to take home with you, continue along the path as it takes you back up to the top of Clent. Continue to walk along the top, past the Scots Pine Plantations and back toward the topograph.
5. At the topograph, you might like to take a look at the different hills and towns you can see from here. Take the lower path below the topograph and to your right you will see areas of dry acid grassland, with bilberry bushes full of fruit. This path will take you back towards the car park and café, which is open Tuesday to Sunday, 10am to 4pm, and serves hot food and drinks, including luxury hot chocolate.



Distance, terrain and accessibility

A 2 mile (3.2km) walk, with some steep climbs and uneven paths that run through woodland and can be very muddy. There are tree roots and other obstacles in places. These paths are also used by horse riders and cyclists. Dogs welcome, please take any mess home with you.

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Find out more at www.nationaltrust.org.uk