

Ayrmer Cove, a hidden gem...3 miles Ringmore, South Devon

 THE NATIONAL TRUST


www.nationaltrust.org.uk/walks


Explore the beauty and remoteness of the Ringmore Valley on a journey through old smuggler's lanes and down to an unspoilt, secluded cove, boasting magnificent coastal views. Return through fields and woodlands rich in wildlife.

Start: Ayrmer Cove car park - grid ref: SX 649456 – map: OS Explorer OL20

Getting here and local facilities

By bike: 4 miles from Modbury along busy, narrow roads, steep in places

By bus: service 875 Plymouth (close to ) to Bigbury-on-Sea, via Ringmore; Fridays only

By train: Plymouth  15 miles

By car: just off A379 between Modbury and Kingsbridge

Car park (NT) and pub ('Journeys End Inn') in Ringmore village. Shops at Challaborough (1 mile) and post office at St Annes Chapel (2 miles). Contact us on 01548 810197

Things to look out for...

Historical field boundaries

Ringmore Valley contains many hedgerows from the 1800s which are still maintained by traditional cutting and laying practices. The hedgerows also provide great nesting sites for a variety of birds, including the nationally rare curlew bunting.

Rivers and streams

The stream running through the valley is a wonderful haven for wetland plants and animals. The site of an old mill up-stream and earth works of ancient 'catch meadow' systems (where water was diverted to fertilise the grassland) indicate that it was once used more intensively.

Seashore

The seashore is a constantly evolving place offering something new each time you visit. Ayrmer Cove consists of rock pools and small dunes that are constantly developing, bound together with marram grass. Sea sandwort has also found its home here, forming a lush green carpet and bearing greenish white flowers in summer.

Fields and woodlands

As you return from the cove you will see fields of wild flowers and some which contain rare arable plants that require cultivation to exist. In the woodlands you'll find a mixture of oaks and softwood plantings; the timber is used on the estate. The site of an ancient orchard lies at the top of the woods and is currently being restored with traditional Devon apple varieties.



Ayrmer Cove is an ideal place for exploration. At low tide the vast rock pools are teeming with marine life such as blennies, anemones and starfish. The cove itself also has some unique and colourful rock formations, great for anyone interested in geology.



Many dragonflies can be seen darting around the rivers and streams in summer. The emperor dragonfly (pictured here) is one of the largest species in Europe. You'll need to have keen eyes to spot one though as they possess amazing speed and agility!



You may well see reptiles, like this slow worm, pictured here, in the grass or basking in the sunshine on the stone walls in Ringmore Valley.

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"a peaceful place to revive your soul with lots of interesting things to discover and wonderful photo opportunities"

Simon Garner, National Trust Warden

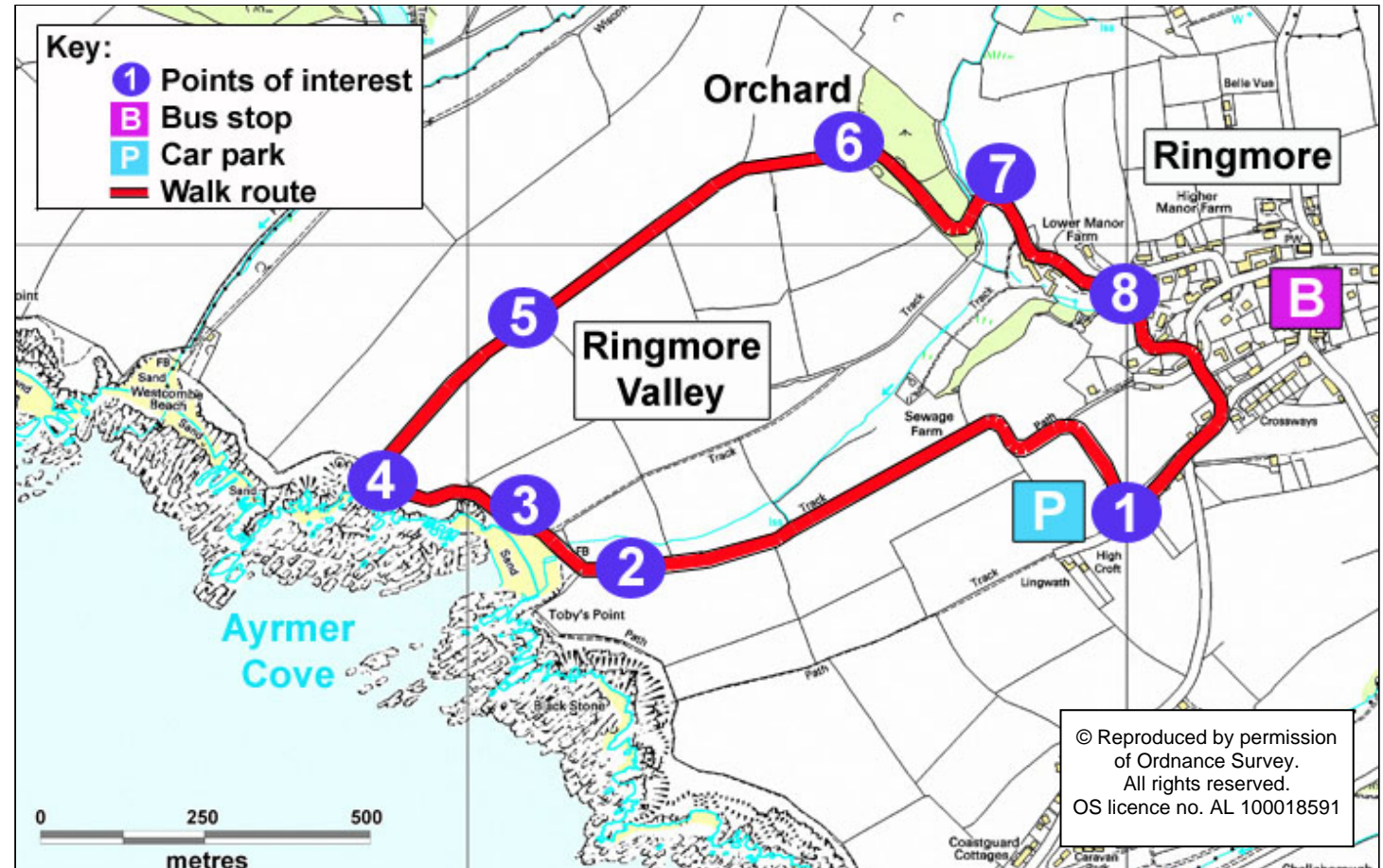
Terrain and accessibility

A 3 mile (5km) circular walk or 1.5 miles (2.4km) to the cove and back. Fairly strenuous with several steep slopes and steps. Route can be muddy in places after wet weather.

Resting points, with some benches, located at various points along the route. Dogs welcome under close control.

Directions

1. At the far end of the car park follow the sign for Ayrmer Cove along the path known as Smuggler's Lane. The path veers left then winds down to the beach. Look out for wildlife in the hedgerows and admire the hedge laying. Halfway down is a resting point and your first real glimpse of the cove.
2. Just before the beach there is a stretch of restored dry stone wall. This is a great place to spot reptiles, especially adders! At the beach turn right, cross bridge over the stream and head over the sand dunes.
3. Follow the path from the sand dunes through a gap in the wall, then up a steep hill and on to the South West Coast Path. Continue along this path until you get to a fence line and a way-mark post to 'Ringmore'. From the coast path you will notice the cliffs are eroding and we have had to move the path a number of times.
4. Take a moment to savour the breathtaking coastal views before turning right along the top of Ringmore Valley and along the footpath inland, following a dry stone wall.



5. The footpath follows a stone wall back towards Ringmore. Go through two gateways and after the third head downhill following the path by the fenced bank to the woods.

6. Enter the woods and take the path straight down the hill (there is a short excursion to the orchard area signed on your left). At the bottom of the hill turn left onto the track and follow this round to the right until you come to a small stone bridge.

7. Cross the main stream over the bridge (this is a good place to see brown trout and watch for kingfishers) following the footpath. Go through a gate then walk up the hill. Veer left around the back of Lower Manor Farmhouse and follow the road up.

8. Just before the brow take the public footpath to the right. Continue to the road. Veer left towards Journey's End Inn. At the inn turn right up the hill and follow the road to a T-junction. Turn right and walk along verge back to car park.

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