

## Wadhurst Park

12.5 miles, 7 hours

Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 136

**Refreshments:** No refreshments on route but pubs and coffee shops in Burwash.

**Walk description.** This walk leaves Burwash by the track beside the Catholic Church and passes to the left of Mottynsden Manor House, a Grade II listed 17th century Manor House in a tranquil setting. The area around here used to have apple orchards, but most have been cleared and the only one left that this walk passes through is not maintained and the trees are now in a poor state. The walk continues into the Franchise Manor estate, passing through a small woodland just to the west of the farm which is full of snow drops in early spring. Continuing, the walk passes through one of the few remaining hop gardens in the area.

At Witherenden Bridge the walk crosses the infant river Rother, then having passed through Newbridge wood you arrive at Bivelham Forge Farm. As you leave the farm there is a collection of birds of prey kept behind the stables on the right. Sometimes these birds are tethered in the paddock on the right. Continue into Batts wood and then Dens wood. In Dens wood the boundary of Wadhurst Park is followed. Further on the first of two paths through Wadhurst Park is followed. Wadhurst Park is an area of 960 acres. 750 of these acres are fenced in and constitute a deer-park with herds of seven different species of deer, Fallow, Manchurian Sika and Père David, the Chinese Marsh deer, being the most numerous. The other species are Barasingha from Nepal, Axis from India, red deer and Chinese water deer.

The walk leaves the park and from Lodge Hill Farm access road there are good views across the park almost all the way back to Burwash. The walk then re-enters Wadhurst Park passing close to the lake where the second largest herd of the rare Père David deer in the world, can very often be seen. The walk then goes through wood and fields heading back towards Burwash passing Holmshurst Manor a Jacobean mansion where Roger Daltrey from the rock group "The Who" has lived with his family since 1970.

**Route Description. Start Burwash car park.**

Exit the car park onto the High street and turn left. Continue along the High street to the Catholic Church which is on the right. Take the driveway beside the Church car park and where a footpath goes off to the left stay on the drive, following it around and downhill until it ends.

At the end of the drive, cross over a stile to follow the path between fences, to a footbridge and a gate, cross the bridge and go through the gate into a field. Turn left, going down a field with the hedge on the left. At the bottom of the field go through a gate and continue down to a footbridge.

Cross the bridge and head uphill, keeping the hedge on the right to a gate in top right-hand corner of the field (Mottynsden manor is on the right). Go through the gate onto a drive and then turn right. Continue on the driveway to Mottynsden House. Just before you reach the house, take a path to the

left up into an orchard. Cross a stile into the orchard and turn right continuing with the hedge on the right to a gate in the corner of the orchard.

Go through the gate and cross the driveway to the path opposite, continue beside a wooden fence and then up some steps to follow the right-hand edge of the field to a stile in the corner of the field. Go over the stile and cross the track to a stile opposite. Cross the stile and follow a path to then cross another stile into a field.

Keep to the right hand side of the field with a fence on the right, to a gateway. Pass through the gateway and then the footpath goes diagonally across the field to just left of the far bottom corner. (At times this path can be ploughed up, if so, then follow the field boundary keeping the hedge on your left, to a footbridge in the far bottom corner which will be on the left).

In the far bottom corner cross a footbridge and then continue straight across the next field to a hedge corner. Go through a gap in the hedge and then continue forward through three hop gardens keeping the hedge on the left.

At the end of the hop gardens, pass through a gate and then bear right down to another gate. Go through this gate and bear left to a gate onto the road. Having passed through the gate turn right along the road and cross the bridge over a river.

Continue pass Witherenden Mill and then take the signed footpath on the left, and continue along the driveway to Witherenden Farm House. Where the driveway bends right, cross a stile in the hedge on the left. Turn right and follow the edge of the field to the field corner, and then turn left (don't cross the stile in corner) but continue following the field edge with the hedge on the right. Look for a stile in the hedge on the right. Cross this stile and turn left to a gate.

Pass through the gate and cross a bridge and then turn right and follow the river and then the field boundary to a bridleway into a forest on the right. Follow the bridleway around to the left and continue to a farm then keep forward on a track and concrete road through the farm to a T junction.

Turn right at T junction and continue following the track passing to the left of a house and then continue uphill with the forest on the right. Where the track bends left stay on the track following it towards the house at the top of the hill. Go through a gate to the left of the house into a forest and then keeping left where the track curves right to the house.

Continue on the path through the forest taking the right path where the path forks and then cross over a forest ride to continue on the ride opposite going steeply downhill. Continue on this ride to the staggered junction at the bottom of the hill and then go right and then left. At the next junction, turn right and follow the path to a stile.

Cross the stile and a bridge over a stream and then keep left at a footpath junction. Continue on the path as it climbs through the wood to a house driveway, forest track and path junction Turn right on the tarmac driveway passing to the right of some cottages at the bottom of the hill and then continue to a T junction. At the junction turn left.

Where the driveway joins a road at a sharp bend keep forward, passing Buttons House and then at Buttons Farm on the left (now houses), turn left onto a footpath along an enclosed track to a gate in the fence. (Wadhurst Park) Pass through the gate and continue forward on a path between trees which then becomes a track.

Continue on the track to a gate, do not pass through the gate but turn right and follow the fence to a footpath gate beside an electricity substation. Pass through the gate and continue forward crossing a driveway and then take the driveway, passing to the left of Combe House. Pass Combe House and then turn right onto a track.

Continue on this track to eventually pass between houses to a junction. Turn left on the access road passing a farm, some buildings and then Lodge Hill Farm on the left. Continue along the access road until it turns left and there is a shed on the right. Here take the path on the right passing to the right of the shed and then continue with a fence on the left. Continue on the path all the way down to a footbridge at the bottom of the hill, crossing stiles and footbridges along the way.

Cross the footbridge at the bottom of the hill and turn left through a woodland. The path is indistinct but keep the stream on the left, to a stile into a field. Cross this stile and continue across the field towards a telegraph pole with a stile to the left of it. Cross the stile and keeping to the left edge of the next field continue to a track. Turn left along the track, crossing a bridge and then take the path on the right to a stile.

Cross the stile into a field and continue forward across the field to a stile in the fence on the opposite side. Cross the stile and maintain the same direction in the next field, heading towards the left end of a small woodland, to locate kissing gate in the fence. Go through the kissing gate and continue forward, up the hill to a track. Turn right on the track heading downhill to a bridge.

Cross the bridge and take the left hand track, continuing with the woodland on the left and then passing through a row of trees, (the old field boundary). Now bear right up the hill to a marker post. Maintain the same direction to join a track through a small strip of woodland and then continue forward uphill to a kissing gate in the fence.

Go through the kissing gate and ignoring the path going into the forest, follow the path between the forest and the fence. Continue following the path where it leaves the fence and enters the forest. At the junction of paths turn left and continue to a crossing of rides, then turn right

Ignore the ride going right and continue to a T junction. Turn right and at the next junction of paths turn left to cross a stile and exit the forest.

Continue down the left hand side of the field to join a track. Turn left and follow the track, turning sharp left at the bottom of the hill and continue to a road. At the road, turn right to pass some farm buildings on the left.

At the end of the farm buildings turn left on a track between a house and the farm buildings. Continue forward through two gates and across a bridge into a field.

Head straight across the field aiming for the telegraph pole opposite. Pass through a hedge and then turn left through another hedge to then follow the left-hand edge of the field. Pass the first gateway and go through the second gateway. Keep the field boundary on the left and look for a small path going up the bank between two small pieces of woodland (path can be over grown so care is needed)

Cross a stile into a field and then bear right across the field towards a stile located to the left of a small woodland. Cross this stile and head straight across the field towards a tree which is slightly to the left, and then continue forward with the hedge on the left, to a footbridge in the corner of the field.

Cross the footbridge and continue forward across the field to a gate. Pass through this gate and continue forward up the hill with a woodland on the right, to a gate. Go through the gate and continue forward to a bridleway. Turn right and follow the bridleway to join a road (Holmshurst Manor is on the right). Cross the road and turn left on the wide grass verge to a lane. Turn right along the lane and continue to a house on the left. Do not follow the road around the corner, but instead continue forward into the field and follow the right hand edge of the field downhill to enter woodland.

Follow the path through the wood and where the main path turns right, continue forward on an indistinct path going downhill to join a track. Turn left on the track and then at a gate leave the track on the right following another indistinct path up to a kissing gate.

Go through the kissing gate and continue forward uphill with the farm buildings on the left to a gate. Go through the gate and continue to the second gate on the left. Go through this gate and continue forward on a small path beside a bungalow garden to a driveway.

Turn right on the driveway and go through the second gate into the field on the right. Follow the right hand side of the field downhill to a gate. Go through the gate and head straight up the field to another gate.

Go through the gate and continue forward with hedge on left to a gate, go through this gate and head uphill to the top left-hand corner of the field near to a farm. Cross the stile in the corner and turn left on a bridleway to the road. Turn right along road and follow it downhill and then uphill to a sharp bend, here look for steps in the bank on the left leading to a kissing gate.

Pass through the kissing gate into a field and then keep a wooden fence on the right to a small gate in the fence. Go through the gate and then continue to follow the fence to a stile in the corner. Cross the next field to a stile in the far top corner. Cross this stile onto an enclosed path and follow to join a track. Turn right on the track and at the road turn left and follow the road back to the car park.