The Forests of the Southern Uplands
— Explore, Enjoy and Discover

Keep your eyes open...
Forests are great places for wildlife. The trees create lots of different habitats, from the airy canopy to the sheltered heather on the forest floor or the insect hotels of rotting stumps. Just take the time to sit quietly in any forest and you’ll see and hear something of the wealth of activity among the trees, from flowers and insects to birds and mammals.

The Forest of Ae and the forests around Eskdalemuir are recognised nationally for red squirrel conservation, whilst the upper edges of these forests are prime habitat for the black grouse.

As you walk, it may come as a surprise to know that you are actually on the bottom of an ocean! The rocks that form the hills beneath your feet were once mud on the bottom of an ocean between England and Scotland. As the countries collided, the mud was squashed, hardened and pushed up forming the Southern Uplands.

Our waymarked trails follow graded paths so you can find one that’s just right for you. All the trails in this leaflet have clear signs so you can follow the route even if you’ve never visited the forest before.

If you’re into mountain biking, there’s loads to do in this area. Ae, Dalbeattie, Mabie and Newcastleton are part of the 7stanes: forestryandland.gov.scot/7stanes

Beyond our waymarked trails, if you fancy heading out on your own, there are miles of forest tracks and unsigned paths to discover.

Remember that you are in a working forest. Our management work helps these great forests become even more diverse and attractive for wildlife and visitors, as well as supplying timber for use in our everyday lives. Please look out for operations signs and follow any diversions.

Find out more: forestryandland.gov.scot

For more information
Tel: 0300 004 6900
Email: enquiries.south@forestryandland.gov.scot

For information on public transport services contact: Traveline Scotland, 0871 2002233 or www.travelinescotland.com

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Mabie, just south of Dumfries, is popular for its views to the Solway Firth, and the variety of wildlife in its mixed woodland and lochs.

Newcastleton
The perfect forest for a peaceful picnic with a lovely view or a wilderness ramble. A wildlife haven with so much to see.

Use #FoundMyForest on your pictures and videos, and we’ll share them on social media.

Explore further...

1 Castle O’er
Hill Fort Trail
Climb up to the impressive hill fort on Castle O’er hill for fantastic views across Eskdale.
Long steep slopes on rough, narrow and grassy surface. Some sections may be muddy. Includes two stiles. There are no waymarkers on the fort itself to protect the monument.
1 mile / 1.6 km
Allow ¾ hour

2 Wauchope
Jonny’s Trail
Walk in the footsteps of Jonny the forester, along the Catlee Burn and up through oak, ash, birch and larch.
Largely wide firm gravel track, with section of uneven earth and stone.
Long slope with steep sections. Several bridges.
1 mile / 1.6 km
Allow ¾ hour

The Cauldron Trail
Climb up through the trees to enjoy the solitude of Wauchope, before winding back down through the trees. A good leg stretch.
Mostly wide, firm gravel track with long moderate slopes. Includes section of narrow, uneven earth and rocky paths with short fairly steep slopes.
1¾ miles / 2.9 km
Allow 1 hour

The perfect forest for a peaceful picnic with a lovely view or a wilderness ramble. A wildlife haven with so much to see.
**Bessie’s Hill**

1¼ mile / 2 km  
Allow 1 hour

Iron Age Trail  
Grass and earth paths, with some rough and potentially muddy sections. Some steep slopes and one short flight of steps. There are no waymarkers on the monuments to protect them.  
Climb through the magnificent Norway spruce trees to emerge in an Iron Age landscape. Great views over the River Esk.

**Craigieburn Forest**

Craigieburn Trail  
A wonderfully varied walk up to a great viewpoint over Moffat Dale and the dramatic hills of the Southern Uplands.  
Mostly wide but loose gravel tracks. Some narrow and uneven earth sections, including areas that may be muddy or wet. Long slopes with some steep sections.

**Craik Forest**

Burnside Trail  
A short stroll along the peaceful Borthwick Water, through graceful larch. Perfect for a picnic.  
Wide and firm track throughout, with occasional loose gravel. Gentle rises and one section of boardwalk.

Aithouse Burn Trail  
Walk through some of Craik’s oldest trees and along the lovely Aithouse Burn. Great views over the forest.  
Uneven grass and earth paths with some muddy sections. Some steep slopes. Includes a bridge and section of boardwalk.

**Forest of Ae**

Spruce Trail  
A wee wander along the burn and through mature, moss-clad Norway spruce trees, a favourite habitat of the red squirrel.  
Uneven gravel and earth paths. Some exposed tree roots and potentially muddy sections. Two short steep slopes and a pair of bridges.

Ae Forest is the perfect place to visit, whether you want to relax with a picnic beside the river, watch woodland wildlife, stroll through the trees or burn off some serious energy on the superb 7Stanes mountain bike trails.

**Key to Maps**

- Forestry and Land Scotland
- Land
- Woodland
- Other Woodland
- Main road
- Secondary road
- Minor road
- Forest road
- Footpath
- Road/track
- Railway/station
- Cafe/refreshments
- Bike shop
- Prehistoric monument
- Picnic area
- Wildlife viewing
- Country dusk
- Waymarked junction

**Take care on the hills**

Please remember that the weather on the hills and mountains can change very quickly. Even in summer, conditions on the tops of mountains are often much colder and windier than at the low levels, despite clear skies.

Enjoy Scotland’s outdoors responsibly:  
- Who you are with  
- Respect the rights of other people  
- Care for the environment.

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**FORESTRY AND LAND SCOTLAND**

**Bessie’s Hill**  
Car Park

**Craigieburn Forest**

**Forest of Ae**

**In 2019**

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**NEWS**

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**STRATHCLYDE FOREST**

**Green Hill Trail**  
A long route along the Water of Ae, before climbing the hill. Great views from the top, across to Queensberry Hill and Harestanes Wind Farm. Long slopes with steep sections on rough, narrow earthy path with exposed tree roots and muddy patches. One section of steps. Watch for vehicles on the first section.

**Water of Ae Riverside Trail**  
A delightful wander along the restful Water of Ae. As the path weaves beneath soaring Norway spruce trees, watch for wildlife in the trees and burn.

**Ae Naze Trail**  
A peaceful short stroll along the Water of Ae. With a perfect opportunity for a picnic.

**Burnside Trail**  
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**Aithouse Burn Trail**  
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