



01 DEVON SAUNTON SANDS & BRAUNTON BURROWS

■ Distance: 5½ miles/9km ■ Time: 3 hours ■ Grade: Easy



Braunton Burrows and Saunton Sands from the South West Coast Path.



PHOTO: ROBERT HESKETH

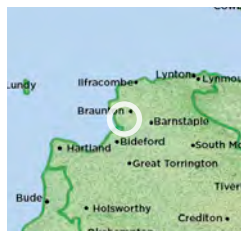


CHOSEN BY... ROBERT HESKETH

Huge dunes, a massive beach and tremendous views of North Devon and its coast make this a memorable walk. Behind the great expanse of Saunton Sands, a superb surfing beach which stretches some 4½ miles from Saunton Down to Crow Point, lies Braunton Burrows. One of Britain's largest and most impressive sand dune systems, the Burrows cover 970 hectares (2328 acres), making them second only in size to Sefton Coast, Merseyside. Braunton Burrows are designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and form the core of the UK's first UNESCO

Biosphere Reserve. From spring to early autumn they have a continuous succession of flowering plants, some 470 species, including 11 orchid varieties. They also shelter a rich variety of birds, butterflies (33 recorded species) and many animals. Unsurprisingly, rabbits are common and attract buzzards, kestrels and hawks, as well foxes and badgers. The Burrows have been continuously used by humans since ancient times. They, like Slapton Sands on Devon's south coast, were chosen for military training in 1943/44, as the terrain resembles the Normandy invasion beaches, thus helping assault troops prepare for D-Day.

PLAN YOUR WALK



ROUTE

Start/parking Sandy Lane car park, Saunton, grid ref SS463350, postcode EX33 2NX

Is it for me? Footpaths and beach. One steep, short ascent

Stiles None

PLANNING

Nearest town Barnstaple

Refreshments Saunton Break Café on beach

Public toilets Saunton beach

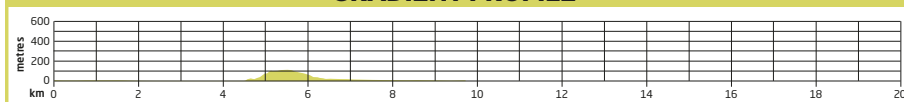
Public transport Bus 21C Croyde Bay-Barnstaple-Bideford route daily (stagecoachbus.com)

Maps OS Explorer 139, Landranger 180

If exploring the Burrows beyond this route, remember they are still a military training area, so do not enter if red flags are flying or pick up any metal objects - they may be unexploded



GRADIENT PROFILE



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OS Explorer map 139 Buy maps at: ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop



Braunton Burrows.

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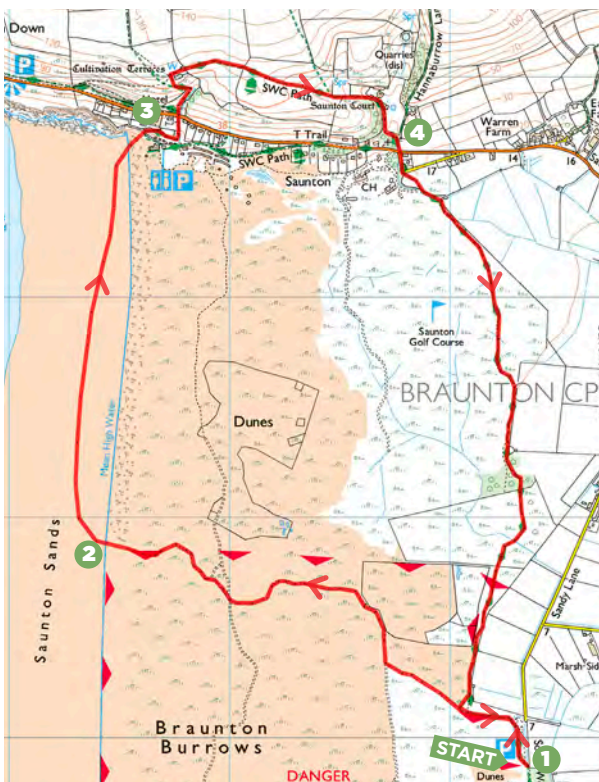
ordnance. Although visitors are welcome, please check the Braunton Burrows Facebook page for up-to-date information on cattle grazing, public works and military activity (which very occasionally leads to the Burrows being closed) before your walk.

1 Start

Follow stony track west signed 'Military Training Area'. Ignore bridlepath signs. Reaching path junction ('Dog Lane'), continue ahead. Follow broad, sandy track winding through dunes. Turn R at T junction, then immediately keep L.

2 1¼ miles/2.7km

Turn R along beach. At far end, turn R up ramp for café and toilets. Turn L 'Coast Path'. Climb concrete path to hotel. Continue ahead on narrow path R of tennis courts to road.



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3 3 miles/4.8km

Cross road to gate. Take 'Public Footpath Croyde Alternative Route Avoiding Amenities'. Climb to gate. Continue up field to signpost marked with Coast Path acorn. Follow track R (east) over hill, then down to Saunton Court. Follow driveway down and out to main road.

4 4 miles/6.2km

Cross main road into minor road. At corner,

continue ahead, signed 'Coast Path Public Bridleway', across golf course, then into military training area. Reaching T junction, turn L 'Bridleway'. Continue to start. **CW**

VIEW THE WALK ON OS MAPS ONLINE:

walk1000miles.co.uk/cwroutes

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



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DATE WALKED

TIME TAKEN

YOUR RATING