

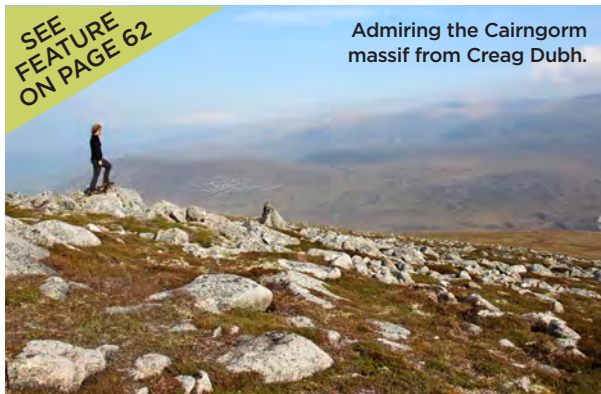


25 HIGHLAND LOCH AN EILEIN & CREG DHUBH

▶ Distance: 12½ miles/20km ▶ Time: 7 hours ▶ Grade: Challenging



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Admiring the Cairngorm massif from Creag Dubh.

PHOTO: RACHEL BROOMHEAD



CHOSEN BY...

RACHEL BROOMHEAD

A deliciously greedy route which seeks out the best of everything: the fragrant pine paths of the Rothiemurchus Forest, the tranquil waters of Lochan Mor and Loch an Eilein and the fresh highland airs of Creag Dhubb. It was from this modest yet spectacular outlying peak that the writer Nan Shepherd had her first view of the Cairngorm plateau, a mountain range that she went on to evoke so poetically in *The Living Mountain*. Adapt this route to suit your needs: start at Loch an Eilein for a shorter circuit or miss out Creag Dhubb if a low-level

stroll is the only option. But if you can, take your time and do the whole thing: every mile of this varied and beautiful landscape brings its own rewards.

1 Start

From lay-by take forest path towards Rothiemurchus Camp and Caravan Park, but turn immediately R onto narrow path which runs parallel to road, away from campsite. The path meets another track coming from Coylumbridge Hotel. Turn L onto this and go through kissing gate. Continue along track until you reach quiet lane. Go through second kissing gate, cross lane and continue on path opposite for half a mile to reach Lochan Mor.

PLAN YOUR WALK



ROUTE

Start/parking Lay-by on B970 near Rothiemurchus Camp and Caravan Park, grid ref NH914106

Is it for me? Mixture of forest paths and rough hillwalking. Very steep ascent to Creag Dhubb. No exposed edges

Stiles None

PLANNING

Nearest town Aviemore

Refreshments

Lochan Eilein; Hilton Coylumbridge Hotel

Public toilets

Lochan Eilein

Public transport

Bus 31 from Aviemore

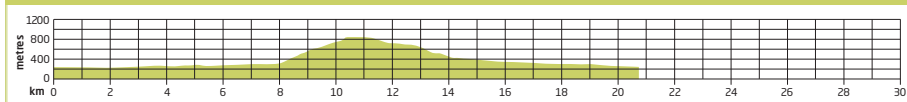
Maps OS Explorer OL57; Landranger 36

2 1½ miles/2km

At Lochan Mor continue to follow the track around the northern edge of the loch. The track soon leaves the loch and passes a cottage on R shortly



GRADIENT PROFILE



25 HIGHLAND LOCH AN EILEIN & CREAG DHUBH

► OS Explorer map OL57 ► Buy maps at: ordnancesurvey.co.uk/shop

before meeting a quiet road at Milton Cottage. Turn L onto road and follow to Loch an Eilein.

3 **2¼ miles/3.5km**
At end of road fork R for visitor and toilet facilities, otherwise go straight on to the loch shore. Turn R to begin anti-clockwise walk around Loch an Eilein, with the loch on L. Ignore track forking off to R and continue to follow main track as it curves L around loch until you reach footbridge at southern end. The smaller Loch Gamhna is now visible to R.

4 **3½ miles/5.65km**
Cross footbridge over stream and turn R at the fire brooms to walk with Loch Gamhna on R. After 400m turn L at fork, climbing slightly on narrow path through heather. Ford the small stream of Allt Coire Follais and turn L shortly afterwards to follow rough and steep path which soon rejoins stream and climbs alongside it through forest. Cross stream and emerge from trees with the water now on your R and the path soon disappearing. Follow the stream until it peters out and continue SE, climbing steeply over rough ground to crest the ridge of Creag Dhuhb. You will emerge close to the enormous rocky tor of the Argyll Stone. Navigate to the stones for a well-deserved rest and views of the Cairngorm plateau.



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5 **6½ miles/10km**
From Argyll Stone walk north along broad ridge to reach the non-descript summit cairn of Creag Dhuhb. Continue north and then track slightly R to descend down the north eastern spur of Cadha Mor. Continue to follow the line of the spur as it bends R to the SE and drops steeply to a grassy knoll in the Gleann Eanaich valley. Cross over knoll to reach broad dirt track.

6 **8½ miles/13.6km**
This is the upper of two tracks. Descend further to the lower track to walk closer to the river if desired. Turn L on either track; they merge after

a mile. Walk for another mile along the forested valley track to reach Lochan Deo.

7 **10¾ miles/17.3km**
Go through gate and continue straight ahead on forest track for two miles, ignoring turn offs for Loch an Eilein and the Lairig Ghrù. Pass Camp and Caravan Park on R to finish at B970 lay-by. **CW**

VIEW THE WALK ON OS MAPS ONLINE:
lfto.com/cwroutes

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



OS MAPS



Ordnance Survey

DATE WALKED
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

TIME TAKEN
□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

YOUR RATING
○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○