

Pen-y-Bryn and Bryn Euryn, Conwy, Caernarvonshire



Strenuous Terrain

5 miles
Circular
3 to 3.5
hours

170114



Access Notes



1. All three options of the walk have fairly steep climbs and descents (including some flights of steps) which can be slippery after rain, so you will need stout footwear.
2. There is one kissing gate within Bryn Euryn.
3. The two longer options include a further two kissing gates (which are very tight – be prepared to breath in!), a ladder stile and one of the fields is likely to be holding cattle.

The Pen-y-Bryn is a lovely pub with a stunning garden and terrace, and garden windows with panoramic views out over the sea and the Great Orme.

A 5 mile (can be shortened to 3 miles or 1 mile) fairly strenuous walk from the Pen-y-Bryn in Upper Colwyn Bay, Conwy. The full walking route follows the steep valley sides down towards Rhos-on-Sea to visit the nature reserve, Bryn Euryn, climbing to the hill's summit, before returning back up the valley side to the pub.

If this is too strenuous for you there are two shorter/easier options. The first option is to perform the first half of the walk and then request a taxi back to the pub, saving the climb back up the valley slopes, reducing the walk to 3 miles (about 2 hours). The second option is to drive to the Bryn Euryn car park and just complete the middle 1 mile section of the route around Bryn Euryn, and then drive back to the pub for your refreshments (about 1 hour). The choice is yours.

Bryn Euryn is a prominent limestone hill overlooking Rhos on Sea, with fine views from the summit. It is a rich mixture of grassland and woodland where you'll have chance to enjoy beautiful butterflies, fabulous flowers, a historical hill fort and a magnificent ruined mansion.

Getting there

Colwyn Bay is located on the north Wales coast, just off the A55 between Conwy and Abergel. The full walking route starts and finishes at the Pen-y-Bryn pub on Wentworth Avenue (opposite the school) in Upper Colwyn Bay. The pub has its own large car park.

Approximate post code **LL29 6DD**.

If you would prefer to just complete the shortest version, you can park in the Bryn Euryn nature reserve car park instead. This is located just off Tan-y-Bryn Road in Rhos-on-Sea.

Approximate post code **LL28 4TU**.

Walk Sections



Start to Welsh Mountain Zoo

Leave the pub car park via the vehicle entrance and turn right heading downhill past the village stores on the left. At the first T-junction turn right and then cross over the road to turn left at the second T-junction. At the end of Pen-y-Bryn Road you will come to a third T-junction. Turn left (heading uphill) for just a few yards and then take the first turning on the right, called Cherry Tree Lane.

Follow the pavements along the pretty Cherry Tree Lane all the way to the bottom where the road swings right

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to reach another T-junction. (Note: take extreme care here as this next corner is quite hazardous so be sure to listen carefully for traffic). Cross over and turn left following the wall along the road edge and taking care of any traffic. On the right you'll come to the entrance to the Welsh Mountain Zoo.

1 → 2 Welsh Mountain Zoo to Conway Road



The zoo was first opened in 1963 and is home to a wide range of exotic animals including condors, California sea lions, chimpanzees, Sumatran tigers and snow leopards. There are also a range of native species including Welsh mountain goats.

Keep straight ahead along the road edge, passing the zoo to the right. Ignore the first kissing gate on the right (part of the zoo complex). Continue a little distance further and turn right via an old (and very tight!) kissing gate (alongside a wide metal gate) down a grass track marked with a public footpath sign. You may be able to hear strange animal calls coming from the zoo enclosures to the right. Straight ahead you'll see Bryn Euryn, the wooded prominent hillside which is the destination for this journey.

At the bottom of the grass track you'll reach a double farm gate with a ladder stile alongside. Cross this stile into the large hillside pasture (probably holding cattle). Bear right to follow the top right-hand boundary of this field, with views ahead out to sea. Keep ahead through the open gateway and stay along the right-hand edge of this next field. Follow the field edge as it descends fairly steeply and then swings left to wind downhill, staying fairly close to the fence on the right.

In the bottom corner, pass through another old metal kissing gate to join a fenced woodland path between hedgerows. Follow this path steeply downhill, taking care as it is uneven and can be slippery. You will emerge via a set of steps onto the pavement alongside the main Conway Road.

2 → 3 Conway Road to Bryn Euryn Steps



Turn right along the pavement and when you reach the side road, Llanrwst Road, cross over with care to turn left over the footbridge which crosses the A55 dual carriageway and the railway. At the far side of the bridge, keep right down the short slope and then keep ahead, heading uphill and bearing left to join the road.

On the left you'll pass an old water pump. Continue on the main road passing between a number of properties. After passing some walled allotments to the left (and directly opposite Rhos Road on the right), turn left up the tarmac lane signed for Bryn Euryn Nature Reserve. After just a few paces you'll come to a set of steps on the right.

3 → 4 Bryn Euryn Steps to Bryn Euryn Summit



(If you are starting the walk from the Bryn Euryn Car Park follow the directions from this point – come out of the car park and turn left along the entrance lane back towards the road. Just before the road, you'll come to the steps up to Bryn Euryn on the left).

For the circular route around Bryn Euryn you will be following the summit trail which is waymarked with green arrows. Climb the steps which zig-zag steeply uphill. Keep ahead for just a short distance and you'll reach the remains of Llys Euryn.

The mansion of Llys Euryn was once celebrated in bardic verse. Its original name seems to have been Plas Bryneuryn which translates as, The Palace of the Golden Hill. Three sides of the building remain, with interior walls, a complete fireplace and chimney stack rising to around 50 feet, two other fireplaces and windows. More than anything else, its history makes this one of the more intriguing and important historical buildings in north Wales. The remains visible today are of the 15th century fortified manor house built for Robin, eldest son of Gruffydd Goch who led the old Welsh tribal division of Rhos. It was a large and very well appointed building for its time and was fortified because of the invasions of North Wales that occurred during the Wars of the

Roses. It is believed that an older (13th century) castle also stood on this site (although archaeology has yet to produce the evidence to prove this). This was owned by Ednyfed Fychan the seneschal (Chief Minister) to the Kingdom of Gwynedd in northern Wales, serving Llywelyn the Great and his son Dafydd ap Llywelyn. He was the ancestor of Owen Tudor and, thereby, of the Tudor dynasty.

Keep left and follow the path with the fence running on the left. You'll reach a T-junction with a wider stone track (and a gate to the left). Turn right along this track and, at the fork (where the red and green routes split), keep left. The path climbs into dense woodland and swings right where another path joins in from the left.

You will come to a junction of paths with a large sycamore tree at its centre. Turn sharp left picking up the next green arrow. This path starts relatively level and then begins to climb swinging left. The path then climbs more steeply and, as the trees on the right give way, you'll have great views across the hillside landscape. A little further up on the left you'll find a bench should you wish to catch your breath and enjoy the views.

Beyond the bench, continue on the path as it climbs steeply swinging left. The path continues through a small dip before making its final steep ascent (take care here as the path can be loose with stones and a little slippery). At the top you will see the concrete trig point and interpretation board marking the summit.

4 ➔ 5 Bryn Euryn Summit to Bryn Euryn Car Park



Take time to catch your breath and enjoy the magnificent views. Ahead you'll have views out to sea including the elegant offshore wind farm, and behind you'll have chance to enjoy the mountains and hillside skyline including Conwy Mountain.

The summit sits at 131 metres above sea level and is the site of a 6th century hillfort. The old fort has been identified with 'The Bear's Den', mentioned by Gildas the Wise. His work *De Excidio et Conquestu Britanniae*, which contains narratives of the post-Roman history of Britain, is the only substantial source for history of this period. The fort is thought to have been a stronghold of Cynlas the Red, 6th century King of Rhos. There may have been an older hill fort here, dating from the iron age.

To continue the walk, continue past the trig point and you'll pick up the next green arrow leading you downhill on a grass path. (Take care as the path can be slippery in places). The path swings left as it re-enters woodland, continue swinging left to reach a T-junction with a more level track. Turn right along this. You are now following a section of the path that you used on your ascent.

Continue as the path becomes wider and stoney and swings right, with another path coming in from behind. When you reach the kissing gate ahead, keep straight ahead through this. Pass Llys Euryn Cottage on the right and just beyond this, fork left to join a set of stone steps.

Bryn Euryn has a rich variety of wild flowers both in the grassland and woodland, which love the lime rich soil here. The woodland

flowers are best seen in the spring and include wood anemone, dog's mercury, wood sorrel and wood avens. The flowers support a great variety of insect life. Twenty six species of butterfly have been recorded on the hill.

Follow these steps winding steeply down through the woodland to reach a T-junction with a wide surfaced track. Turn left along this and you will come to the Bryn Euryn car park on the left (the end point of the walk for those performing the shortest of the three walk options). If you have left your car at the Pen-y-Bryn but would prefer to get a taxi back to the pub, there are two numbers for local taxis below. You are located at the Bryn Euryn Nature Reserve Car Park, just off Tan-y-Bryn Road and you need to return to the Pen-y-Bryn pub in Upper Colwyn Bay.

Dale Cabs, Colwyn Bay - 01492 532020
Elite Cabs, Colwyn Bay - 01492 535555

5 ➔ 6 Bryn Euryn Car Park to End



Continue along the road past the car park on the left and you will come back to the T-junction with Tan-y-Bryn Road. From this point you will be retracing your steps back to the pub.

Turn right along the road and follow this all the way to the bottom where it swings hard left. Keep ahead here into the no through road. Keep left at the fork, up the slope and cross the footbridge over the railway and dual carriageway. At the far side, turn right and cross to the left-hand side of the road when it's safe to do so. Continue until you reach a set of steps off to the left, marked with a footpath sign.

Turn left up these steps and continue up the steep slope with care to reach a kissing gate. Pass through this into a pasture and follow the left-hand fence as it climbs and swings right. Follow the top of the first field, pass through the open gateway and continue across the top of the next field. Cross the ladder stile in the corner and follow the grass track all the way up, through a kissing gate and out to the road.

Turn left along the road edge and follow this back past the zoo entrance on the left. Follow the road edge with extreme care as it swings right and then turn right into Cherry Tree Lane. At the far end, turn left at the T-junction and then take the first right into Pen-y-Bryn Road. A little further along turn right into Troon Way. Take the first left into Wentworth Avenue where you'll find the Pen-y-Bryn on the left for some well deserved hospitality.

Disclaimer

This walking route was walked and checked at the time of writing. We have taken care to make sure all our walks are safe for walkers of a reasonable level of experience and fitness. However, like all outdoor activities, walking carries a degree of risk and we accept no responsibility for any loss or damage to personal effects, personal accident, injury or public liability whilst following this walk. We cannot be held responsible for any inaccuracies that result from changes to the routes that occur over time. Please let us know of any changes to the routes so that we can correct the information.

Walking Safety

For your safety and comfort we recommend that you take the following with you on your walk: bottled water, snacks, a waterproof jacket, waterproof/sturdy boots, a woolly hat and fleece (in winter and cold weather), a fully-charged mobile phone, a whistle, a compass and an Ordnance Survey map of the area. Check the weather forecast before you leave, carry appropriate clothing and do not set out in fog or mist as these conditions can seriously affect your ability to navigate the route. Take particular care on cliff/mountain paths where steep drops can present a particular hazard. Some routes include sections along roads – take care to avoid any traffic at these points. Around farmland take care with children and dogs, particularly around machinery and livestock. If you are walking on the coast make sure you check the tide times before you set out.

