

Trip Report: Snowdonia

Date: 17th April 2011

Group: Tony, Jim G, Ian, Heather, Hugh, Marie, Neil, Ann, Colin and 3 mutts

Route: Snowdon via Rhyd-Ddu and Snowdon Ranger Paths

Total Distance: 11 miles

Total Ascent: 4058 ft

Weather: Halcyon

Time: 6 hours 30 mins

Blessed with unseasonal fine weather, we made an early enough start to rendezvous at 9.00 with Hugh and Marie at the Welsh West Highland Railway car park in Rhyd-Ddu, just north of Beddgelert, Snowdonia.

This area is known to some as the quiet side of Snowdon and while it does avoid the hordes of Pen-y-Pass and Llanberis, an ascent of Wales's highest mountain from Rhyd-Ddu does mean starting from just 150m leaving a climb of 900m to the summit.

Our ascent began with the sun already strong and the group sweated its way to the top. After an hour and a half slog we stopped for a coffee break and chose a spot with fine views from the top of the Llechlog cliffs.

We carried on suitably refreshed, all that is except Heather, who let it slip that she had forgotten to bring any water on the trip, but never mind the shop at the top will probably be open.

We continued along Llechlog with the final climb up to the Snowdon summit along the ridge of Bwlch Main.

The views from the summit were incredible, and there can't be many days when from the top of Snowdon we can see the whole of Anglesey, Harlech, Cader Idris and the Great Wall of China.

The unusual fine weather meant the summit train was running, and with it hordes of tourists over-crowding the fine mountain peak. Ian did his local tourist guide bit for a visiting American family and after a trig-point group photo we then began our descent. But wait, was that another 3000 feet peak Jim spied in the distance? Yes, it was, and we bonus-bagged Crib y Ddysgl before we know it.

We crossed the railway track and picked up the Snowdon Ranger path down off the summit and after a few friendly run-ins with a group of mountain-bikers we changed course for yet another summit in Moel Cynghorion, with Hugh wisely deciding to head for home along the Ranger path.

It was hot, it was steep, it was just like one of Colin's Howgill Fells, but eventually we made it to the top and the views across to Llanberis were worth it, as Ann agreed.

All that remained was the final trek back to Rhyd-Ddu along an innocuous 3 mile valley walk. Soggy feet, and a gorse bush tumble for Jim later, we were happy to meet up again with Hugh in the car park.

The de-brief in the sunshine of the Dysart garden provided a perfect ending to a great day out.

Tony