

## **Big Dog Walk: Big Dog Forest is part of the Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark**

Big Dog Forest is 1,000 hectares in size and is cloaked largely with conifers. This beautiful short walk allows you to explore some of Fermanagh's best upland landscapes, and the forest is inhabited by wildlife as varied as red deer, herons and dragonflies. This is a truly special spot offering a great day out for the family.

**County:** Fermanagh

**Distance:** 4.1km

**OS Map:** Sheet 17

**Nearest Town:** Derrygonnelly

**Route Shape:** Circular, looped walk: Walk clockwise

**Route Type:** Forest woodland, lough shore and heathland

**Terrain:** All types of terrain

**Grid Reference (start):** H041494

**Grid Reference (finish):** H041494

**Point of Interest:** Possibly the most intriguing features along the walk are the two hills Big Dog and Little Dog. Their names originate from Irish Folklore as they are named after Bran and Skeola (Sceolan), two of the legendary Finn Mac Cool's favourite wolfhounds.

### **Route Description:**

From the car park, follow the black route as indicated by the way marked posts. The walk takes you along forest tracks, before opening out to bisect Lough Nabrickboy, providing magnificent views of this upland lake. There is a picnic area where you can enjoy a little feast before meandering through the forest to skirt the shoreline of Lough Doo. Pause a moment amidst the tranquillity of this south facing shoreline before moving on. One of the highlights of this route is the short but rewarding climb to the top of Little Dog, offering great 360 degree views of the surrounding area.

Please note: This Forest is managed sustainably by NI Forest Service. This walk is situated in a working forest environment and may be subject to diversions and closure from time to time.

### **Getting to the start:**

If travelling from Enniskillen, travel out along the B81 to Derrygonnelly and turn left at the end of the main street. Take the Garrison road via Knockmore and head into the hills. Approximately 10km from Derrygonnelly, take the lane on the right signposted for Big Dog car park.

From Belcoo take the Garrison road, approximately 11km turn right at the Cashel Cross Roads; continue along the country lane, after 8 km take the lane on the left signposted for Big Dog car park.

**Facilities:** Car parking and picnic area available, nearest amenities Derrygonnelly.

### **Accessible Terrain:**

*Conditions likely to be encountered:*

Steps, gullies, fences, streams, boulders, severe gradients, undefined edges, overhanging branches, some rest areas, way-finding markers at trail junctions.

Wheelchair access is not possible due to path gradients.

**Accessible Signage:** Walk information panel, route way marked.

**Publication:** Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark: Forest Walks Booklet.

**Publication Availability:** [www.marblearchcavesgeopark.com](http://www.marblearchcavesgeopark.com)

**Links:** [www.marblearchcavesgeopark.com](http://www.marblearchcavesgeopark.com) [www.forestserviceni.gov.uk](http://www.forestserviceni.gov.uk)

