

Coastal Walk – 4 miles

Dancing Ledge, Dorset

Short description: The walk highlights current and past farming practices, quarry areas and their legacy, interesting buildings and wildlife along this impressive stretch of the Jurassic Coast against the always changing backdrop of the sea. Views from here extend to the enormous wedge of limestone at Portland Bill right in the east across the bay to the start of Devon near Lyme in the west. Not all the walk is on National Trust land

Getting there:

Road: A351 to Langton Matravers then B3069 **Car parks:** SY997784 non NT car park **Foot:** part of South West Coast Path **Bus:** No. 144 Swanage- Langton Matravers For public transport information visit www.traveline.org.uk

Maps and start grid ref: OS Landranger 195 gr SY997784, Explorer OL15

Facilities available: Pubs and toilets in Langton Matravers **Terrain:** steep walking conditions, walking boots advised **Distance:** 4 miles **Accessibility:** Height gain of approximately 110 m over the walk. Cliffs are dangerous- children should be supervised

Points of interest: Follow the path down to Spyway Farm from the car park-Spyway was bought by the Trust in the early 1990's. The barn has a display room highlighting local wildlife. The fields below are managed as traditional hay meadows with no fertilizers or chemicals which ensure a plentiful supply of food for birds and bats. Continue on this path looking out for the following features:

1. In the second field after the barn there are sculptures of Limousin-cows important for grazing the grassland. At the bottom of the hill is Dancing Ledge- a remnant of Purbeck's quarrying industry for Portland stone last worked in the 1930's- the caves are now important roosts for greater horseshoe bats, an endangered species
2. In spring this area has many wildflowers such as cowslips, chalk milkwort, horseshoe vetch and the rare early spider orchid. Butterflies such as chalkhill and Adonis blue, and the local Lulworth Skipper also thrive on the short turf
3. Naval mile posts for ships to calculate true speed over a set distance of one nautical mile- last ones on mainland Britain
4. This sections climbs over steep slopes and then grassland again before heading west

5. Walk along tracks and hedges known as the priests way and past the lime kiln where limestone was made into lime to reduce acidity in the farmland. At Spyway head back up to the car park

Property contact details: Tel. 01297 561900

National Trust properties nearby: Burton Bradstock, Golden Cap

