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Upper Barden Round With Rylstone Edge

Starting point and OS Grid reference	Rough roadside parking (SE 038553)
Ordnance Survey map	OL2 Yorkshire Dales Southern and Western Areas
Distance	11.5 miles
Traffic light rating	

Introduction: I call this the Upper Barden Round simply to give it a title but it involves following mostly very clear tracks used primarily for grouse shooting around Burnsall and Thorpe Fell, Rylstone Fell and Embsay Moor. The area is part of The Duke of Devonshire's estate. It is a marvellous walk in summer when the heather is in bloom but watch out after the "Glorious 12th" once the grouse shooting season starts as the area might suffer closures on odd days. The shooting season ends on December 10th (apart from Northern Ireland).

The walk provides wonderful views in all directions which are especially dramatic from the edge above Rylstone.

The walk begins at an area of rough roadside parking (SE 038553). To get there, turn west off the Bolton Abbey to Burnsall Road (B6160) where the road sign indicates Eastby 2.5 miles and there is a brown tourist sign for the Embsay Steam Railway. Cross a cattle grid and ignore the parking on the right just beyond it. Round the next bend is a parking area on the left.

Please note there is no access for dogs on Barden Moor as a result of one of 52 bylaws which were introduced by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority when the 11th Duke of Devonshire introduced open access on to Barden Moor in 1969. The 52 bylaws were introduced in the main for conservation purposes.

Start: Opposite the parking is where the walk starts and there is a finger post for Rylstone. On reaching a broad track (SE033556), turn left but note your position as it is quite difficult to spot this junction on the way back. Below you is Lower Barden Reservoir.

Continue along this track for about a mile until you reach a junction with a green footpath (SE 021564) Turn right and when you join another track, turn left. This track becomes fainter but soon joins a broader grass track. Turn right and head for Upper Barden Reservoir which comes into view shortly after going through two large stone gateposts (SE 014576).

Turn right and cross the reservoir dam. Immediately after passing in front of the house, leave the main track to the left at a finger post for Burnsall. You stay on this broad track for about 1.25 miles then shortly after passing a tiny reservoir turn left (SE 025595). As you approach this reservoir you will see a stone shooting lodge on the horizon to your left where you are heading.

Turn left at the next main junction of tracks and head towards the shooting lodge, passing an old mine chimney on the left. Next to the shooting lodge is a small building with some benches inside used by shooters. It is only secured by a wooden gate and makes a convenient shelter for lunch in bad weather. Please leave no litter behind. Alternatively, there are some large rocks by the lodge.

Continue along the broad track until you come to a stone wall at a corner (SE 000599). Turn left.

Follow the wall until you come to a ladder stile which leads to the war memorial (SE 994588). Cross and admire the view across towards Malham. Follow the wall until you come to a ladder stile which leads to the war memorial (SE 994588). Cross and admire the view across towards Malham. Climb back over the wall to follow the same footpath and walk along Rylstone Edge until you reach the cross (SD 982576). At the cross is another ladder stile for a closer look.

On the eastern side of the wall, follow it downwards until it joins a broad track coming through a gateway (SD 985571). Turn left.

At the junction with the next track, turn left (SD 997571). At the next junction, carry straight on signposted Halton Heights.

As the track forks, take the right fork.

Stay on this broad track and as you come in line with the end of the dam, watch out for the path on the right where you came from the start of the walk. Take this path back to the car park.

