

Skelp Walk

START About 7km. from Westport at the entrance to Brackloon Wood. Take the N59 (Leenane Road) from Westport, go through Knappagh and turn right at the Owenwee sign. Entrance is through a wooden gate on the right hand side

TIME 3 hours

TERRAIN Road and rough track (may be a little wet in parts)

Enter Brackloon Wood through the gap to the left of the gateway and follow the path as it circles through the forest in an anticlockwise direction. Ignore the two turns to the left. The path leads directly to the exit gate; go through the stile to the right of the gate.

Turn left along the road and take the first turn right onto a smaller road. Then take the first left down a steep hill and continue on uphill. This brings you to a T-junction with a small white cottage and red barn a little to the left; turn right here.

Walk on up the hill and at the brow superb panoramic views across Clew Bay begin to open up in front of you. Turn left at the next T-junction. Continue up this hilly road for a kilometre or so, until you see a rickety gate leading onto a cart track to your left. Go through the gate and begin the climb up over the mountain (The Skelp) with its ever more stunning views. Follow the track as it swings left away from the Bay. At the top of the hill, new views open out ahead across extensive bogland.

The way is impeded by sheep wire, cross using the small wooden stile and continue along the grassy track with its splendid views of Croagh Patrick. When it joins a minor road at a T-junction, turn left, walk on for about 3km along the valley until the road swings sharp left beside a small bridge (this is the starting point for Walk 5). Continue along this road to another T-junction. Turn right here and 100m or so brings you back to the starting point.

