

4. Continue walking in this direction towards the ladder stile which is visible near the top of the hill. Pass around the outside corner of the drystone wall & climb the stile. Follow the line of the wall onto the farm access road.

5. Follow the road down the hill passing through the gate at the side of the old farmhouse at the bottom. Turn left & climb through the gap in the stone wall.

1 Set off from the ruins of Wycoller Hall & climb the steps to the rear of the Hall up the hillside. At the top of the steps continue up the hill through the narrow opening at the side of the gate. Follow the track until you reach an open gateway with a field gate on your left.

2 Turn right off the track & follow the path past some old gate posts & on towards the opening in the stone wall.

3. Continue straight across the field, pass through the remains of a vaccary wall & climb the stile. Turn left & follow the fence up to the footpath which now runs diagonally upwards behind the Ash tree.

6. Walk diagonally across the field towards Parson Lee farmhouse which is now directly ahead. Pass through the gate & cross Wycoller Beck by the footbridge which is provided.

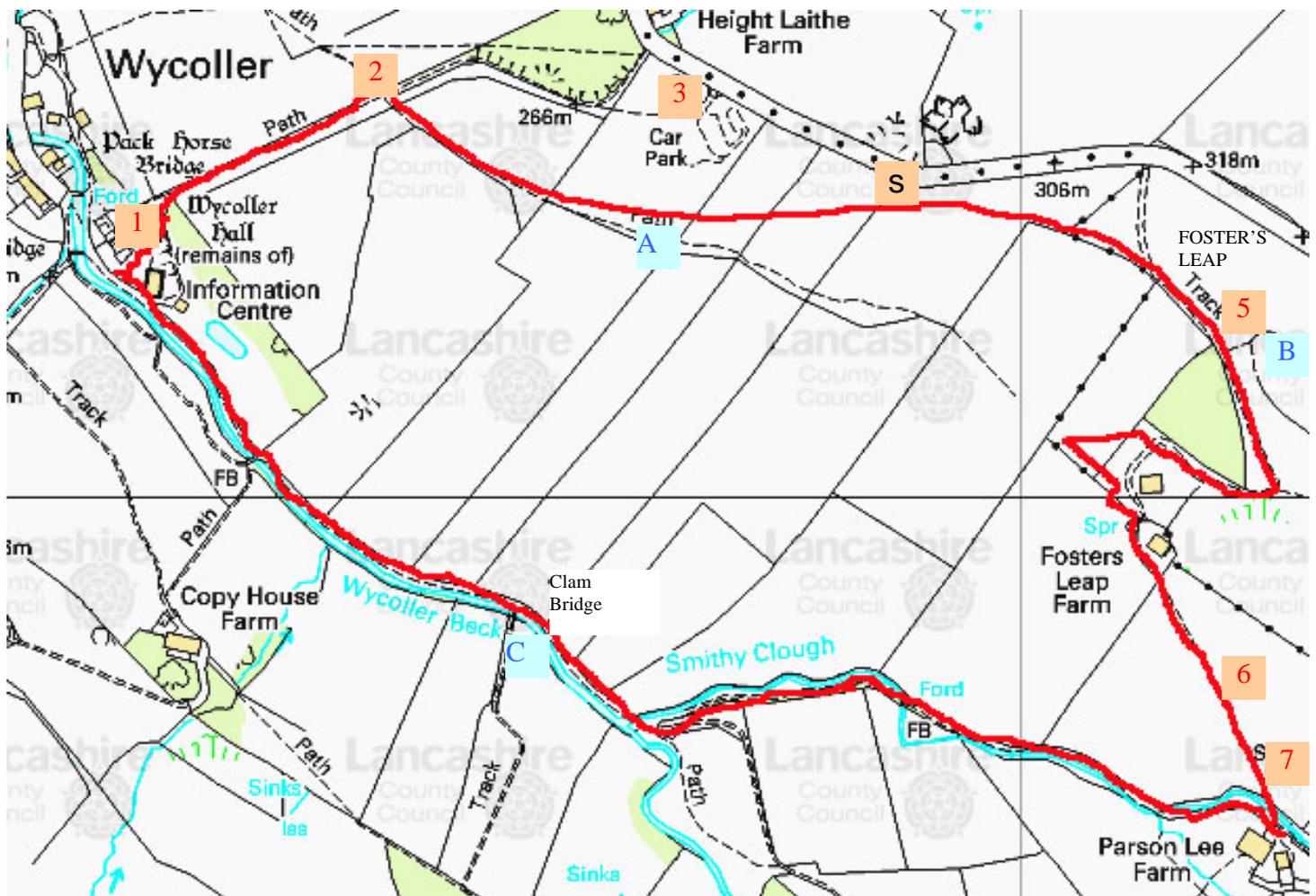
7. At this point, turn right & continue along the track through Smithy Clough, returning to Wycoller, along Smithy Lane.

WYCOLLER – FOSTER'S LEAP –

SMITHY CLOUGH

3 kilometres (under 2 miles; allow 1¼ hours)

A short walk which offers the visitor an opportunity to explore the variety of scenery, wildlife habitat & the influence of farming on & around the Country Park. The first section of the walk climbs out of Wycoller up the valley sides to the impressive group of boulders overlooking Wycoller valley, known as Foster's Leap. The walk returns to Wycoller via Smithy Clough following Wycoller Beck along the valley bottom.



WYCOLLER – FOSTER'S LEAP – SMITHY CLOUGH

3 Kilometres (under 2 miles; about 2¼ hours)

Flora & Fauna

Starting from the picturesque ruins of Wycoller Hall the walk to Foster's Leap offers an opportunity to enjoy the varied landscape of the area and to see a good cross-section of the rich wildlife in and around the Country Park.

Although there is very little woodland proper in the Country Park, trees, wild & planted are a vital part of the landscape.



Small groups of many species planted above the Hall conceal many birds such as the Robin, Wren, Dunnock, Song

Thrush and Blackbird. In summer time, look out for the slender olive green form of the Willow Warbler – it is surprisingly tame.



Trees & shrubs exist in the Wycoller landscape for different reasons and climbing the path across the fields towards the Haworth Road, this can be clearly seen. Vestiges of the natural woodland survive only along the bottom of the stream valleys. Small groups of trees were planted close to farms for shelter; trees have also grown up in the hedgerows.

Whilst climbing the hillside, notice how much greener many of the lower fields in the valley are compared to the higher ones. More fertilisers and better drainage encourage the



growing grasses which support more sheep and cattle.

In contrast the low wiry tussocks of the Matgrass and the tall dark green stems of the Soft Rush for example, give a rougher, browner look to the hillside and



make for poorer grazing, but more interesting wildlife. Look out for Lapwings and Meadow Pipits over rough grass and for Snipe in damp rushy spots – which may well conceal a Brown Hare too.



Butterflies such as Small Tortoiseshell, Red Admiral & Meadow Brown are still commonly seen on sunny summer days

The Sycamore copse below Foster's Leap is a typical 19th century plantation. Such plantations were planted by farmers as a source of fuel, building materials or for shelter.



Smithy Clough, below Parson's Lee, is richer in wildlife. Ash and Alder are the main native trees, the sycamore being descended from those planted in the valley.

Plants to look out for include Herb Robert, Wood Sorrel and Butterbur and several different ferns. Dipper,



Grey Wagtail and in summer



Common Sandpiper are birds to be seen (or heard)

along the beck. In summer is also possible to glimpse a bird with a bright orange-red tail – the Redstart – which favours mature trees.



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The walls of Wycoller Hall and nearby buildings provide nesting sites for Swallows, House Martins and Swift.

POINTS OF INTEREST (see map)

A - Vaccary Walling: Slab stone walling associated with medieval cattle rearing. Evidence suggests the stone was quarried from nearby Combe Hill and erected between 1100 -1400

B -. Foster's Leap: This evocative group of huge boulders is reputed to have taken its name from a feat of athletic skill performed by Foster Cunliffe, who leap from boulder to boulder. Less fortunate was a sheep stealer, offered his freedom if he could jump the rocks. On horse back the thief was able to clear the gap but could not stop and both horse and rider plummeted to their deaths below.

C - Clam Bridge: A solid slab of gritstone – one of the earliest & most primitive types of bridges remaining in England.