

# SLIEVE BLOOM

inclined to **Hike it!**

## Kinnitty Looped Walks

## Knockbarron Eco Walk

QR Code



Funded by the Department of Rural and Community Development

# Hike it!

### Category

Walking/Hiking Trails

### Trailhead 4

Kinnitty  
(Grid Ref. N211 046)

### Trail Quality

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### Terrain

Scenic view / forest road

### Format

Circular

### Distance (km)

5km

### Difficulty

Moderate

### Time

1hrs 30mins approx.

### Services (distance in km)

Kinnitty 4km

## Trail Directions

Follow **red arrows**.

**Stop 1 On Top of the Esker.** Nowhere will you find a more spectacular example of a classical esker. The sand and gravel which they contain were the rock material which the glacier had picked up as it ground its slow way across the land, and were washed out as the ice melted. As these glacial streams were banked by walls of ice, their beds of sand and gravel were left as upstanding ridges when the ice melted.

**Stop 2 The Marsh.** There are two small areas of marsh at this end of the woods. A host of wetland plant species occurs here, including several species of sedges, marsh bedstraw, marshwillowherb, wild iris, skullcap, marsh pennywort and dozens of others

**Stop 3 Inside the Esker.** So undisturbed is the esker system that you seldom have an opportunity to see what it is made of inside! Here where the track (the one that leads into the wood from where you saw the bees) cuts through it you can see the chaotic jumble of boulders, cobbles, gravel and coarse sand, all mixed up together, dumped by the turbulent meltwater in the ice tunnel in which the esker formed.

**Stop 4 The Blue Haze.** Knockbarron has a diverse and interesting flora and fauna. The most striking aspect of the flora is the profusion of bluebells that carpets large areas of the wood in spring. This reflects Knockbarron's status as an ancient wood, because although it has always been a managed wood, sections

**Stop 5 An Ancient Wood Bank.** At this point you can see one of the ancient

enclosure banks. These may have been wood banks, ancient enclosures constructed hundreds of years ago to keep animals from straying into managed forest. There is also the possibility that they predate the forest itself.

**Stop 6 Knockbarron Forest** (or the Glen Wood as it is often known locally) came under state forest management around the 1940s. At that time a variety of trees were planted: Grand Fir, Scots Pine, Norway Spruce, Sitka Spruce and Beech.

**Stop 7 Looking West.** You have now crossed onto a different - and equally spectacular - esker that runs more or less in the same direction as the one you started on. As you walk along this stretch keep an eye out for the thick rope-like stems of wild clematis that climb into the canopy of the trees.

**Stop 8 Knockbarron Oaks.** In a number of areas in the woods you can find remnants of the oak that was more widespread in the Glen Wood when it was part of the estate of the Drought family (who lived at Droughtville just beside Knockbarron).

**Stop 9 The High Point.** The ridge is up to 20m high at some points. You may have noticed the way the esker rises and swells at intervals. Often it branches at these 'beads,' and there is often a change in the level at which the esker stands.

**Stop 10 Gravel Exposure.** This is another good place to see what the inside of the esker looks like (we saw it earlier at Stop 3). Look for the oak trees along the next stretch of the ridge. The network of forest tracks further diversifies the plant and animal life of the wood, because different species occur along these more permanently well-lit areas.