

Walk further

If you have never walked a long distance path before this is the ideal introduction: The Coleridge Way can be easily walked over a leisurely week, alternatively download the route guide and choose sections to do one at a time. Either way, the information in this guide can be used to help make your trip enjoyable and easy to plan. The Coleridge Way also links with other promoted routes including the **South West Coast Path** and **Two Moors Way** if you wish to walk further!



Watersmeet

Where there's a Quill there's a Way



The route is signposted in both directions making use of the quill logo. The website offers a full route guide and mapping to download. Walkers are advised to also carry **OS Explorer Maps 140** (Quantock Hills & Bridgwater) and **OL9** Exmoor.



Have an adventure

Why not add to the adventure and find details on the website of other activities to enjoy along the way such as apps, story boxes and geocaches.



Stay over

Visit the website for full accommodation listings, many providers will offer baggage transfers or include packages where they make the transfer arrangements for you.

Travel this way

To make the most of this linear route there are a number of options to help you travel from one end to the other. Public Transport services operate between Lynmouth and Minehead and Minehead to Nether Stowey (check Traveline for latest schedules - 0871 200 22 33). The **MoorRover** provides a pre-bookable on-demand service along the length of the route for walkers, in addition to local taxi firms - further information on the website.



Discover Moor

Exmoor, the coast and Quantock Hills have so much more to offer so why not allow a few extra days to discover wild moorland, high coastal cliffs, a heritage coastline, and some of the finest countryside on offer.

For full details visit www.visit-exmoor.co.uk

Ride the Coleridge Way

For those on horseback or mountain bike there is also the Coleridge Way Bridleway from Nether Stowey to Exford (33 miles). Visit the website for information and a route guide.



Protected Landscapes

The Coleridge Way runs between two protected landscapes, the Quantock Hills AONB and Exmoor National Park. Nationally protected landscapes exist in part thanks to the Romantic poets.

Coleridge, Wordsworth, Byron and Shelley all wrote about the beauty of the 'untamed' countryside and saw wildness as a metaphor for the human heart. This began a shift in public consciousness towards valuing nature and natural beauty. Wordsworth famously claimed the Lake District as "a sort of national property, in which every man has a right and interest who has an eye to perceive and a heart to enjoy"

This statement began a journey lasting 150 years towards protecting the country's most beautiful landscapes for the nation to enjoy. Exmoor National Park was designated in 1954. The Quantock Hills was the first Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to be designated in England in 1956.



Brown Argus
Photo courtesy of Butterfly Conservation

The Coleridge Way

In the Footsteps of the Romantic Poets



Walk the Coleridge Way to discover the landscapes that inspired the Romantic Poets

51 miles of breathtaking countryside



St. Audries Park from West Quantoxhead

www.coleridgegeway.co.uk

The Coleridge Way, Romantic Poets and literary links



© National Portrait Gallery, London

The Romantic Movement blossomed in the late 18th century. Its followers found particular inspiration in nature. Some of the most famous of the Romantic poets were drawn to the wild beauty of the open moors and coast of West Somerset and North Devon.

The Coleridge Way begins at Nether Stowey where Samuel Taylor Coleridge came to live in 1797 and from where he set out on almost daily walks over the Quantocks and Exmoor with his close friends William and Dorothy Wordsworth. They trekked over moors, down combes and along streams, composing poetry which resulted in 'Lyrical Ballads', a book seen as marking the start of English literary Romanticism.

The poet Robert Southey, a friend of Coleridge's, may have lodged at the Ship Inn, Porlock, in 1799 when he wrote his sonnet 'To Porlock'. Walking west from Porlock you pass close to the house built for Ada Lovelace, daughter of Lord Byron. Ash Farm in Culbone is reputedly where Coleridge stayed when he wrote 'Kubla Khan' and where he was famously interrupted by 'a person on business from Porlock'.

*'In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure dome decree'*

As the Coleridge Way drops into the valley of the East Lyn, you pass Oare church where Carver Doone shot Lorna in Blackmore's novel (1869). Watersmeet, further downstream, was also a favourite spot of Coleridge and Wordsworth. Arriving at Lynmouth you pass Shelley's Hotel whence the poet Shelley, 1792-1822, fled by boat to Wales with his wife and sister-in-law.



Coleridge Cottage



The Coleridge Way

In the Footsteps of the Romantic Poets



Walk 51 miles through the breathtaking countryside of the Quantock Hills, the Brendon Hills and Exmoor National Park. An area so beautiful it inspired writers such as Samuel Taylor Coleridge who produced some of his best known work, often composed and planned out whilst walking in these wild and remote landscapes.

The route takes you up over open moorland, down ancient wooded valleys and through historic villages, finishing on Exmoor's dramatic coastline in Devon. The walk can be completed over a leisurely week, making the Coleridge Way a perfect introduction to long distance walking. Stay along the way in a choice of high quality accommodation, all offering a warm welcome and friendly local advice.

Photos courtesy of Exmoor National Park Authority, Quantock Hills AONB and Ruth Luckhurst. Front cover photo by Jon Coole.



Visit www.coleridgegeway.co.uk for all the information you need to plan a visit. If you have any questions call either of the friendly teams at Porlock Visitor Centre on 01643 863150 or Lynton Tourist Information Centre on 0845 4583775.

Highlights along the Coleridge Way:



- 1 **Nether Stowey** in the foothills of the Quantock Hills AONB was home to Coleridge between 1797 and 1799. The award winning Coleridge Cottage, owned by the National Trust, is well worth a visit before you begin.
- 2 **Holford** is surrounded by beautiful ancient oak combes, climbing to open heathland hilltops.
- 3 William Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy lived at **Alfoxton Park** during their friendship with Coleridge.
- 4 Extensive views over the Bristol Channel and over **West Quantoxhead** as the route skirts the Quantock Hills.

- 5 Fascinating buildings in very picturesque **Bicknoller** which lies on the lower slopes of the Quantocks. Part of the church, which has a huge yew tree in its grounds, dates from the 12th century.
- 6 **Monksilver**, on the boundary of Exmoor National Park, takes its name from the Latin "Silva" meaning woodland i.e. Monks Wood.
- 7 The steep climb up **Bird's Hill** is rewarded with views of ancient woodland and glimpses of the Bristol Channel through the trees.
- 8 **Roadwater** lies close the West Somerset Mineral Railway Line which in the 19th century transported iron ore from the Brendon Hills to Watchet.
- 9 The high ground above **Luxborough** is an ideal place to look back over some of the high points of the route between here and Nether Stowey.

- 10 **Wheddon Cross** is the highest village on Exmoor and famous for 'Snowdrop Valley' in the nearby Avill Valley.
- 11 Your first taste on the route of real open Exmoor moorland with views of **Dunkery Beacon**, Exmoor's highest point. Keep an eye out for Exmoor ponies.
- 12 **Webber's Post** Beautiful viewpoint where wild rugged moorland gives way to wildlife-rich woodland.
- 13 Pass through ancient **Horner Wood**, part of the National Trust Holnicote Estate, to discover the medieval packhorse bridge at Horner also known as Hacketty Way Bridge.
- 14 "**Porlock!** thy verdant vale so fair to sight" (Robert Southey). A great place to take a break midway along the Coleridge Way. Explore Porlock Vale, the shingle beach, marshes, wildlife, woodland, plus the village itself. Call into the visitor centre to sign the Coleridge Way log book and find out more.
- 15 **Culbone Woods** near England's smallest church and the farm where Coleridge conceived his poem '*Kubla Khan*'.
- 16 Follow the steep-sided **Deddy Combe** into the wild Doone Valley to **Oare** with its church, made famous as a location in R D Blackmore's romantic novel '*Lorna Doone*'.

- 17 The route follows the valley along tranquil riverside paths beneath towering hills passing **Malmsmead** and **Brendon** en route to the celebrated waterfall and wooded setting of **Watersmeet**
- 18 **Lynmouth** The western end of the Coleridge Way is located near the pretty harbour, outside the National Park Centre at the Pavilion. From here you can follow the South West Coast Path up to **Lynton** 400ft above Lynmouth (linked by a Victorian water powered cliff railway).
- 19 From Lynton, the **Valley of Rocks**, which Coleridge visited in November 1797 with Wordsworth, is a short stroll away.

