

FAIRBURN INGS LAKES AND BIRDS



5 miles (8km) 2hrs 30min **Ascent:** 131ft (40m)

Paths: Good paths and tracks (some newly created from spoil heaps), 7 stiles

Suggested map: aqua3 OS Explorer 289 Leeds

Grid reference: SE 472278

Parking: Free parking in Cut Road, Fairburn. From A1, drive into village, turn L 100yds (91m) past Three Horseshoes pub

A visit to West Yorkshire's very own 'Lake District', now a bird reserve.

1 Walk down Cut Road as it narrows to track. Soon you have main lake to R, and smaller stretch of water to L. When track forks, keep **R** (unless you want to visit 1st of bird hides, in which case detour to L). Path finishes at end of lake, on approaching **River Aire**.

2 Go **R** here to join path along top of ridge (old spoil heap), with river to L and lake R. Look out for couple of other bird hides, before you lose sight of lake. Path crosses broader expanse of spoil heap, through scrubland, following river in broad arc to **R**, before descending to stile above another small mere. Bear **R** on broad track and drop down into car park of **Fairburn Ings visitor centre**.

3 Meet road. Go **R** for 100yds (91m), then go L ('Ledston and Kippax') for just 100yds (91m), and pick up path on **R** that hugs **R-H** fringe of wood. Beyond

wood, take path between fields; it broadens to track as you approach **Ledsham**. At new housing estate, turn **R**, along Manor Garth.

4 You arrive in village by **ancient church**. Walk **R**, along road (or, for refreshments, go **L** to **Chequers Inn**). Beyond village, where road bears L, take gate on **R**, leading to good track uphill. Where main track goes **R**, into fields, continue along track ahead, into woodland. Leave wood by stile, crossing pasture on grassy track. Cross 2 stiles taking you across narrow spur of woodland.

5 Head slightly **L**, uphill, across next field, to follow fence and hedgerow. Continue – soon on better track – across stile. Beyond next stile track bears L, towards farm buildings: but keep straight on, with fence on R, along field path. Go through metal gate then join access track downhill. When you meet road, go **L** and back into **Fairburn**.

