

## Ice-Age tour, western Herefordshire

This tour takes in the glacial landscapes and the historic ice-age ponds of the region and can be completed by car or by bicycle. The itinerary is quite flexible; for example the first two stops could be omitted if the wider glacial context was of less interest. The route could be taken as a whistle-stop tour on a single day or covered over several visits. The route starts in Hereford and ends at Leominster where there are rail connections for cyclists.

Starting point: Hereford railway station. The driving route follows the ring road initially whilst the cycling route cuts across the city centre. Minor roads are then taken to Breinton Common

1. SO451399, viewpoint over the Wye gorge, Breinton Common. This is a convenient location for appreciating the recent change of course of the River Wye as a consequence of the last ice age and its cutting down to form this steep valley side.



2. SO459419. Brockhall quarry (disused), Stretton Sugwas. There is a kissing gate at the entrance to these disused gravel quarries. This was the location of a high end-moraine representing the furthest eastern extent of the Herefordshire ice lobe some 20-25,000 years ago. Gravel deposits can be seen on the banks of the newly created ponds and lakes whose biotas will take some time to reach the diversity of the kettle-hole ponds to be seen later in the itinerary.



3. SO438428 (parking) Kenchester. This is excellent hummocky moraine terrain with many kettle-hole ponds on private land. Walk west along the minor road for 200 m from the parking place and then south on the bridle way. In the second field there is a large ice-age pond that varies in depth and area greatly and appears to be connected to the regional water table.

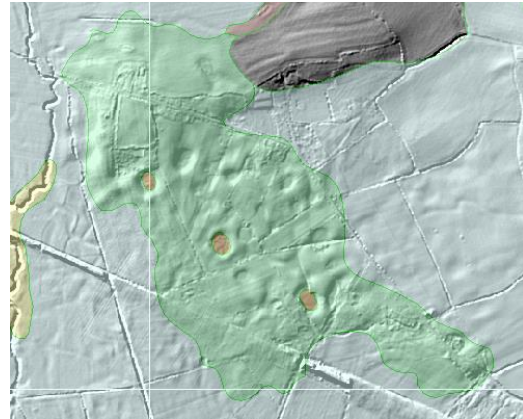


4. SO379 469 viewpoint on road leading north to Norton Canon running along a moraine ridge which here reaches 115 m altitude. The lowland area to the west (around 60 m altitude) was the site of a glacial lake probably impounded by this ridge. The ridge probably formed during a stand-still during retreat of the ice.





5. SO364484, ponds at Norton Wood. The LIDAR image (below) shows a landscape with a region of hummocky moraine (green) pocked with numerous kettle-hole depressions some of which have peat deposits (orange).



6. SO341476 Waterloo-Sturts nature reserves. (Photo 1946-7 air photo after floods courtesy of David Lovelace). Opportunity for walking tour of ponds' area.



7. SO295 538, Birches Farm



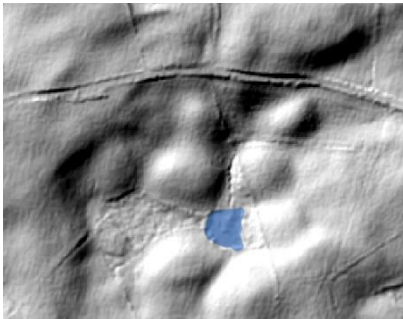
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Birches Farm: air photo  
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8. SO347592 The Forge (S side of Arrow Valley). Walk ESE for 600 m to reach a scenic kettle hole in a small, peat-lined valley. The scenery further along the road provides excellent examples of kettle-hole terrain.

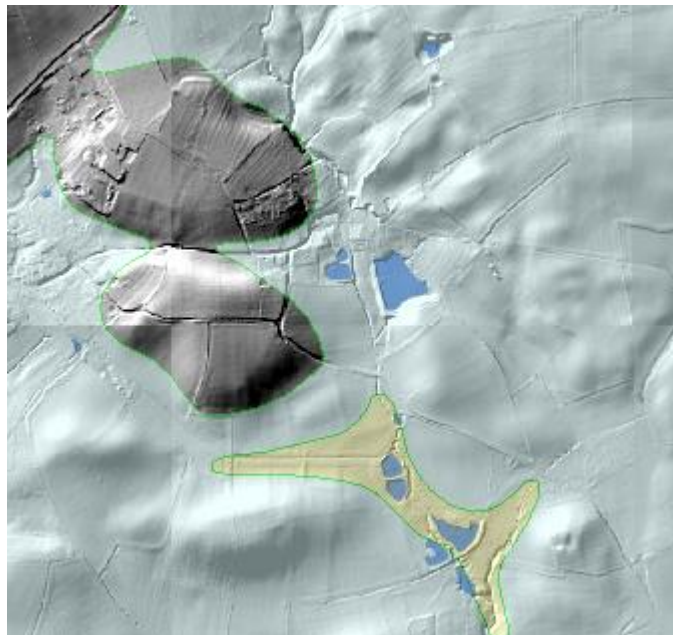


9. SO384625 W of Shobdon. Viewpoint of distinctive large hummocks previously regarded as possibly streamlined, but LIDAR data shows that they are not elongated. In the background to the north, the glacial sediments are draped against the bedrock ridge. The larger water



bodies in this area, including Pearl Lake and those in Shobdon Park have been heavily modified by humans.

10. SO441 Lucton. Viewpoint from bedrock hill (southern of two grey hills shown below) to till-covered terrain with ice-age ponds.



The suggested route from Lucton for cyclists continues through Aston SE to Leominster railway station. The terminal moraine is just east of Leominster.