Eycott Hill Nature Reserve Connecting people and wildlife 2015 – 2020





Protecting Wildlife for the Future

The Eycott Hill project

In 2015 we began a five-year project at Eycott Hill Nature Reserve, funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund, to combine habitat restoration with restorative low-input farming and people engagement.

Over the five years we have planted 10,150 trees, restored six hectares of hay meadows, volunteers have contributed over 1,200 days of volunteering, delivered 47 skills courses to over 500 people, reached over 1,200 people with 173 art workshops and over 28,000 people have visited Eycott Hill Nature Reserve.

This scrapbook captures the highlights of the Eycott Hill project from 2015 to 2020 through infographics, images and quotes.

This project has been wonderful to deliver and we are excited to see how Eycott Hill Nature Reserve will develop over many years to come. We hope you enjoy reading about the project and can take something away from our experiences at Eycott Hill Nature Reserve.









Thank you

This project has been made possible thanks to National Lottery Players and support from The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Thank you to everyone who made a personal donation, and to our grant funders:

The Banister Charitable Trust, Biffa Award, Cumbria Waste Management Environment Trust, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, FCC Communities Foundation, The Garfield Weston Foundation, The National Lottery Heritage Fund and Natural England.

All of whom, collectively, have made the purchase of Eycott Hill Nature Reserve and the whole project possible.



Front Cover: Eycott Hill Nature Reserve © Nichola Jackson. 1. Volunteers hedge planting in March 2015. 2. Boardwalks over the wetlands in 2019 © Colin Aldred 3. Hay meadow in 2019 © Nichola Jackson. 4. Juniper near the summit of Eycott Hill in 2020 © Colin Aldred.



12 conservation days and 107 days of volunteering over the year



At the Blencathra Fell Care Day in September, 19 volunteers helped plant 1,000 wild flower plugs and seven trainees repaired five metres of dry stone wall.

A volunteer planting plugs.
 Hay meadow restoration in action!
 Hard at work repairing a dry stone wall.

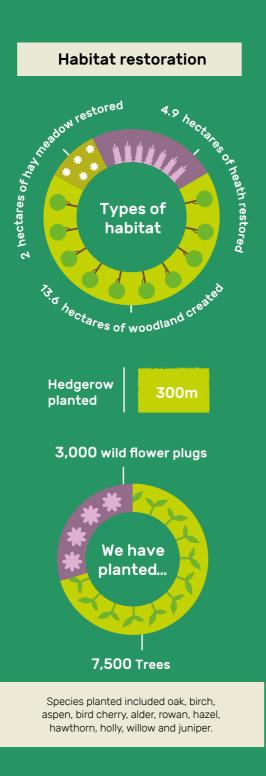




4. Finding the ideal place for the new trees.5. Making sure the trees are planted well!6. Getting the post in place.









Prism Arts Partnership

October was the start of a fantastic partnership with Prism Arts, a charity based in Carlisle dedicated to providing accessible art activities for all.

The first workshop programme involved 122 primary school children. After inspirational site visits that included mini-beast hunts, nature rubbings of volcanic rock, and exciting folklore stories, the children got to work illustrating and writing their own stories about Eycott Hill Nature Reserve.

1. 'Febe the Snipe' – Penruddock Primary School, December.

2. Tales about the great outdoors - St Herbert's Primary School, October.

3. Comparing mini-beasts - St Herbert's Primary School, October.

4. Drawing the landscape - Penruddock Primary School, October.

5. Spooky stories in the mist - Greystoke Primary School, November.

6. Hard at work during a school workshop - Greystoke Primary School, December.

7. Searching for mini-beasts – Penruddock Primary School, October.

8. Nature rubbings on the rocks - Greystoke Primary School, November.



"...A very positive experience and one which has enriched the children's curriculum – local geography, literacy, speaking and listening as well as the arts."

Mrs Matthews, Headteacher at Greystoke Primary School









215 visitors took part in 14 guided walks

- 1. Admiring wild flowers July. 2. Learning all about the geology of Eycott Hill – September.
- 3. Following the waymarked route – September.



Over 100 visitors attended the Discovery Day in June



Children enjoyed a wild adventure day in August, including mini-beast searches, scavenger hunts and an expedition to the summit of Eycott Hill.

- 4. A newt found during the mini-beast hunt.
- 5. Discovering the creatures found within the grasslands.
- 6. At the summit of Eycott Hill, hurray!





Getting to know botany with Keith Watson

Skills courses

14 training courses 132 people learning a skill

Courses included fencing, sedges, wild flower identification, moths, lichens, scything, sphagnum mosses, wildlife recording and livestock checking.

1. Wildlife recording day – September. 2. Beginners sedge course with Pytxis Ecology – July.





Cycle rides

46 people took part in guided cycle rides from Greystoke village to Eycott Hill Nature Reserve.

3. Taking a well-earned break at the entrance to the nature reserve – September.







"Just wanted to pass on thanks for a wonderful tour we had a couple of weeks ago...please do pass on our appreciation and amazement at the work that's being done."

Elizabeth Mills – guided cycle ride, March



Childrens' Trail Launch

- The Raven of Eycott Hill was launched with the Skelton Squirrels Wildlife Watch group in April.
- The easy-to-follow map and story allows children and families to follow the story of the Raven around Eycott Hill.



"I just wanted to say thank you for a fantastic event...We do not live in the Lake District but the next time we are in the area we will definitely look at what is going on at Eycott Hill."

Christine, Gareth, Natalie and Annabel Burke – Discovery Day, October



In July we held a two day Bioblitz attended by almost 100 people who learned about moths, mammals, dragonflies, geology and meadow flora. A total of 275 records were collected for 125 different species and 27 of them had never been recorded before.

4. Busy on the crafts table!

5. Discovering dragonflies.



"Thank you for organising such a brilliant day at Eycott Hill. We were both exhausted after trekking back and forth all day – but it was worth it!"

Lynn and Peter Wilkinson – Bioblitz



118 people attended Discovery Days in June and October

1. Brilliant bogs – June. 2. Spooky Halloween faces - October. 3. Fun exploring Eycott Hill – June.



Field Studies Centre Blencathra – Maple Walk School

20 children from Maple Walk School carried our conservation work for their John Muir Awards in May.

Arts programme

In partnership with Prism Arts, the Edington Centre, Eden Mencap and older people from Amy's Care in Carlisle visited Eycott Hill Nature Reserve in the summer to work on a textiles project, inspired by the flora and fauna in the hay meadows.

An exhibition of this work was held in Carlisle and Penrith libraries from November 2016 to January 2017.

1. Sunny site visits – Amy's Care, July. 2. Learning about Eycott Hill – Amy's Care, July. 3. Designing dazzling dragonflies

Eden Mencap, September.

4. Proud artists at the art exhibition in Carlisle library – November.

5. The Eycott cow, made up of lots of drawings of wildlife found at the nature reserve, on display at Carlisle library.





Eyes on Eycott Hill

Eyes on Eycott Hill is a brilliant animated film produced by adults from the Edington Centre in Penrith in partnership with the Haltwhistle Film Project and Prism Arts.

It combines folklore, stories written by local children, and the geology and wildlife of Evcott Hill into a fabulous tale of adventure. You can view the film, and see how it was made, by visiting our website www.cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk/prism-arts-project-eycott-hill

"...thank you for the sessions that we have done...the guys have thoroughly enjoyed themselves and their feedback about the whole experience has been positively glowing!"

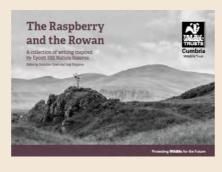
Mark Knox, Edington Centre Supervisor





4821 visitors 222222 18 walks took place in 2016 including family adventures, geology, magnificent meadows, mini-mammals and dragonflies.







Writing to the sound of skylarks – May © Geraldine Green

Creative Writing & Photography

• Two creative writing workshops in May and July attended by 14 people. Two photography workshops focusing on flowers and landscapes attended by 19 people.

• The Raspberry and the Rowan poetry anthology, a fabulous collection of writing, was the result of the writing workshops led by local poet and creative writing tutor Geraldine Green.

"It's been a wonderful, inspiring day. Please run more of these, Eycott is a fantastic resource!"

Jean Hill after the photography course – May





Water from Eycott Hill runs into Naddles Beck, which flows into the River Glenderamackin, a tributary of the Greta that joins the River Derwent in Keswick and flows on through Cockermouth and Workington, communities that have been affected by flooding.





950 trees

We have

planted...



.450 volunteer hours

10 volunteer event days

Volunteers



Planting trees – February

New interpretation on the reserve included information panels on the wildlife and landscape and a spectacular viewpoint.



Media placements

BA (Hons) Wildlife Media students from the University of Cumbria worked on short-term volunteering projects in 2017.

- 1. Emily Dodd blogged about events and filmed some of the 'slow the flow' work. Photo: A volunteer looking out from the summit, September © Emily Dodd.
- 2. Ben Wolstencroft promoted volunteering through photography and online blog posts. Photo: Dry stone walling, January © Ben Wolstencroft.
- 3. Jess White carried out a geology photography project. Photo: Volcanic rock, January © Jess White.

Student and graduate placements

- 4. Rachel Todner joined the project in June 2017 for a nine-month sandwich placement before returning to the University of Leeds for her final year.
- 5. Louise Richards completed her voluntary placement in April 2017 and moved from the uplands to the coast, joining the National Trust to work at Formby.



"It was a great activity! My younger daughter made a bee-line for it!"

Tullie House Nature Explorers' Festival



Making volcanoes!

Eycott Hill Nature Reserve on display at the Tullie House Nature Explorers' Festival in March.







Arts workshops

Five primary schools from Braithwaite, Distington, Greystoke, Penrith and Penruddock enjoyed working with David Napthine, an artist and writer from Prism Arts, to develop stories inspired by a visit to the nature reserve.

The stories were taken to residential homes in Penrith where older residents could contribute their ideas. The finished stories were then used to inspire the schools' performance pieces in 2019.

1. Listening to David in the viewpoint – Distington Community School, January.

2. Getting inspiration for their stories – Penruddock Primary School, January.

3. Found the magic moss - Greystoke Primary School, January.







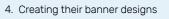
Later in 2017 the schools were partnered with groups of older people or adults with learning disabilities to design and make textile banners or puppets for their performances.

They started by drawing their designs on paper, before making a fabric pattern, then selecting different types of textiles to use.

- 5. Showing off their work with residents and visitors at Cold Springs residential care
- 6. Team work Greystoke Primary School
- at Winter's Park residential home -Braithwaite CofE Primary School, September.



The Edington Centre drama group in costume at Eycott Hill – August



- Distington Community School, November.
- home Penruddock Primary School, October.
- and the Edington Centre, September.
- 7. Sharing designs with older people



6

The Edington Centre drama group adapted their animated film Eyes on Eycott Hill and created a play based on the story. This toured local schools and residential care homes, headlining a variety performance at the Penrith Playhouse in October.



Events



11 training courses 131 people learning a skill

Ready to get arty! — Arty in Nature, April



Looking in detail – wildlife recording day, August

"It's been a wonderful, inspiring day. Please run more of these, Eycott is a fantastic resource!"

Kirsty Phillips – Moth identification, August

Capturing nature – pen and ink workshop, October

Making sure those stones are in line

– dry stone walling, September

"The course was spot on for me, a great mix of

serious learning, good company, fun and in the

most spectacular location." Eric – dry stone walling, September

Finding species in the meadows — wild flower walk, July

Family fun — Discovery Day, June

Volunteers



In memory of Stephen Owen

In 2017 the Eycott Hill project and Cumbria Wildlife Trust lost a dear colleague and friend Stephen Owen, who sadly died while taking part in a fell race.

In April 2018 Stephen's family and friends joined Cumbria Wildlife Trust for a memorial event at Eycott Hill.

325 trees were planted on the slopes leading up from Naddles Beck to create new wet woodland and more than 700 heath plug plants were planted, helping to improve habitats for wildlife.



What has been your most positive experience as a volunteer?

"I particularly enjoy volunteering at Eycott because there is the opportunity to appreciate a range of habitats."

"Being on site with the herd of cattle when one calved!"

"Satisfaction of tree planting, fixing walls. Joy of watching cattle!"

Jenny Ostridge and Jack Beckwith on short-term voluntary placements during the summer.



* * *

Newton Rigg College agriculture students learning survey techniques — May

Education

- 77 children from four primary schools took part in their John Muir Award.
- 2 secondary school visits with 59 pupils carried out their A-Level geography fieldwork.
- Four classroom lessons for Ullswater College for their John Muir Award.
- 80 students from Newton Rigg College visited Eycott Hill as part of their Farm Habitat Management unit.



2 student placements & 1 media placement

Skills courses

- 1. Lichen Identification – March © Emily Dodd.
- 2. Creative writing workshop
- April © Geraldine Green.

...................

15 training courses – 122 people learning a skill

"Many thanks for the day; it is always a delight to be outside and inspired by the landscape."

Susan – Creative writing workshop, April







Prism Arts Partnership



Children from Braithwaite CofE Primary School, Distington Community School, Greystoke Primary School, Penruddock Primary School and St Catherine's Catholic Primary School worked with professional artists and project staff to develop tales inspired by the landscape, geology, folklore and natural heritage of Eycott Hill Nature Reserve.

1. Penruddock Primary School learning their story for the performance – December.

2. St Catherine's Catholic Primary School listening to Ali from Prism Arts – June. 3. Greystoke Primary School taking in the scenery at Eycott Hill – June.

4. Braithwaite CofE Primary School get into character – June.



In November members of Prism Arts Studio Workshop Group developed characters and stories, made beautiful creatures and site dressings, inspired by their research into the wildlife of the nature reserve.

- 5. Constructing a violet ground beetle.
- 6. Making the bumblebee.
- 7. The finished bumblebee!



In 2019 the stories were performed by the schools, the Edington Centre and the Prism Arts Studio Workshop Group in an outdoor theatre performance on the nature reserve.

events

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560

attendees



- 22 guided walks
- Three cycle rides
- Two Discovery Days and 105 attendees
- 150 people at our Incredible Insects Day in July

"Please find enclosed cheque in huge appreciation of a very enjoyable guided walk, by Alex, on Eycott Hill in April. I will certainly be back later in the year! What wonderful work the Trust has carried out at this amazing site!"

Liz – guided walk, April





"What an amazing day it was...! Beautiful beautiful site indeed."

April – Incredible Insects Days, July

1. Looking at work from Eycott summit during a guided walk - April © Emily Dodd.

- 2. Striding across the boardwalk
- March © Emily Dodd.
- 3. Exploring the meadows at the Incredible Insects Day - July © Guy Broome.



Geocaches

GeoCaching is an outdoor adventure activity where participants use a mobile phone app or GPS device to go on a treasure hunt. The EarthCaches were developed with the help of volunteers and members of Cumbria GeoConservation.



2 GeoCaches

4 EarthCaches 120 finds logged





- 1. Bracken bashing August.
- 2. Celebrating The National Lottery's 25th Birthday with lunch at Eycott Hill - November.
- 3. Stone pitching a very muddy section on the way-marked path - November
- 4. Tree maintenance in one of the woodland areas - October.
- 5. Ensuring the water monitoring equipment at Naddles Beck is cattle proof – December.



"I've been involved in all sorts of projects at Eycott Hill, from dry stone walling and fencing to planting and maintaining trees, hedges and a variety of other plants. It's been great to be involved 'hands on' and see the habitats and wildlife improve."

Alex – Eycott Hill Nature Reserve volunteer



Staff from Plantlife visited Eycott Hill as part of their visit to the Lake District in August



"We found the day really interesting and informative, everyone was very knowledgeable and helpful. Thank you!"

Atkinson family after the wild flower identification with The Farmer Network – May



Skills courses



- 1. Introduction to lichens February.
- 2. Wild flower identification with The Farmer Network – May.
- 3. Fungi of grasslands October.

5 training courses

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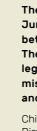
59 people learning a skill



Education

- 121 students took part in their John Muir Award.
- 62 students studying courses in Animal Management and Agriculture from Newton Rigg College visited Eycott Hill.
- 18 students carried out their A-Level geography fieldwork.
- 13 students studying Wildlife Media at the University of Cumbria captured the wildlife.







The Hill of Dreams

1 outdoor theatre performance, 120 performers and 95 audience members.

The Hill of Dreams outdoor theatre performance in June was a celebration of the four-year partnership between Cumbria Wildlife Trust and Prism Arts. The performance included tales of tropical seas, legends of battling giants, warnings about mischievous faeries, stories of volcanic eruptions, and the adventures of intrepid explorers.

Children from Braithwaite CofE Primary School, Distington Community School, Greystoke Primary School, Penruddock Primary School, St Catherine's Catholic Primary School, adults from the Edington Centre and Prism Arts Studio Theatre group wrote and performed the pieces with the support of professional artists from Prism Arts.

1. Distington Community School performing 'The Faeries of Eycott Hill' © Prism Arts.

2. 'When the Giants Came' by St Catherine's Catholic Primary School © Prism Arts.

3. Penruddock Primary School performing 'Before the Volcano' © Prism Arts.

4. Artwork from the project on display in the exhibition marquee © Stephen Trotter.



"The children have a much more developed understanding of the local environment and how precious it is which I was delighted with. I was so proud."

Nicola Proudfoot – Class teacher at St Catherine's Catholic Primary School





"....The charity have done a marvellous job on their reserve! A must visit place with fine views of ole Saddleback aka Blencathra."

Terry Abraham – on Twitter after his walk in May



"A very nice spot with great views and lots to look at. We liked the way there were bits of information spread along the trail, as well as at the start. Good waymarked path too, although it was boggy in places!" — March







articles about Eycott Hill in the press

1. Dusking for moths – June. 2. Discovery Day – July. 3. Geology walk – September.

"Very light sunny evening so not many moths around but lovely to walk round Eycott Hill and learn."

Susan Squires – Dusking for moths, June



"This is what we love about Geocaching, bringing you to places that you may never have known about. Couldn't believe that this was new to us after so many visits to the Lakes." — January

Geocaches

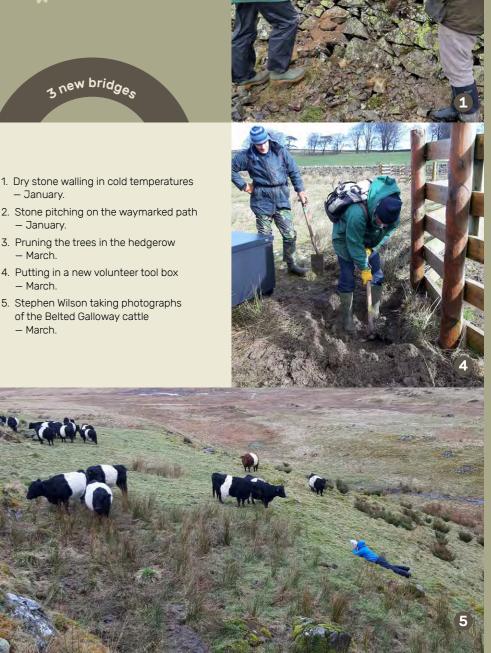
Meet the grazier walk – October





"I volunteer at Eycott principally as a livestock checker but I have carried out other work there, too, from time to time. I confess to feeling a real burst of pride at the knowledge that I'm part of such a superb project."

Anne Burton – Eycott Hill Nature Reserve volunteer





Education

Jess Cowburn joined the project in June 2019 for a 10-month sandwich placement before returning to the University of Cumbria to complete the final year of her zoology degree.



- 1. Jess (second from right) alongside Guy Broome, Nichola Jackson, Imogen Rutter and Caroline Walker at the Discovery Day in July 2019.
- 2. Jess (far left) helping to repair a section of dry stone wall at a conservation day in February.

Final-year graphic design students at the University of Cumbria completed a project all about the Natural Capital report of Eycott Hill Nature Reserve. The students interpreted the report and designed banners, booklets, models and even an animated film. The best design was displayed at the Uplands for **Everyone Conference in February.**

3 & 4. Designs on display at the Uplands for Everyone Conference.



"Thank you so much to everyone at the Trust for an amazing placement experience! It certainly wasn't boring and everyone was fantastic to work with. It's something I will definitely remember for a long time to come, mainly as my wellies are still wet on the inside!"

Jess Cowburn – student placement 2019–2020



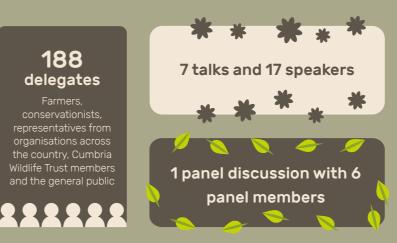


"I am greatly encouraged to continue to learn identification and enjoy my wildlife walks armed with better information. Thanks!"

Susan Rendell-Read – Lichen identification, February

Uplands for Everyone Conference

The Uplands for Everyone Conference highlighted the work that the Trust has done at Eycott Hill Nature Reserve and how, through a collaborative programme of restorative, low-input farming, habitat restoration and people engagement, this special place has been put into natural recovery for everyone's benefit.



1. Sam and Claire Beaumont from Wilder Gowbarrow, Ullswater.

2. Tony Juniper CBE, Chair of Natural England, headlined the conference and spoke about the importance of a partnership-based, holistic approach to environmental recovery. Tony, pictured with Stephen Trotter, CEO of Cumbria Wildlife Trust.

3. The afternoon session included a fantastic panel discussion about public goods, chaired by Caz Graham (freelance journalist for BBC Radio 4) with Julia Aglionby (Executive Director England, Foundation for Common Land), David Harpley (Conservation Manager at Cumbria Wildlife Trust), Candida and Sam Hodgson (farmers at Glencoyne Farm) and Simon Humphries (Greener Farming Programme at Natural England).





"It was great to be part of such a positive event, where farmers and ecologists could openly discuss the many issues facing the uplands and look for potential solutions and opportunities. The overriding message was that working together is the way forward!"

> Sam and Claire Beaumont who spoke about their regenerative farming project Wilder Gowbarrow, Ullswater.



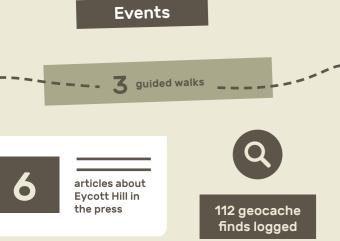
Quotes from delegates

"Very inspiring conference, thank you!"

"Thank you for a really interesting and informative day, good mix of presentations promoting good discussion.

Really well done!"







- 1. Guided walk February.
- 2. Dark Skies February.
- 3. Cycle maintenance January.
- 4. "A beautiful morning of frost, blue skies and sunshine."
 geocaching at Eycott Hill Nature Reserve, March.
- 5. The group in the viewpoint talking to Eycott Hill Reserve & Training Officer Imogen Rutter © Eden Rivers Trust.

Visitor Comments

"The views from Eycott Hill Nature Reserve are some of the best of the Lake District fells."

"Eycott Hill is a great place. Thank you Cumbria Wildlife Trust."





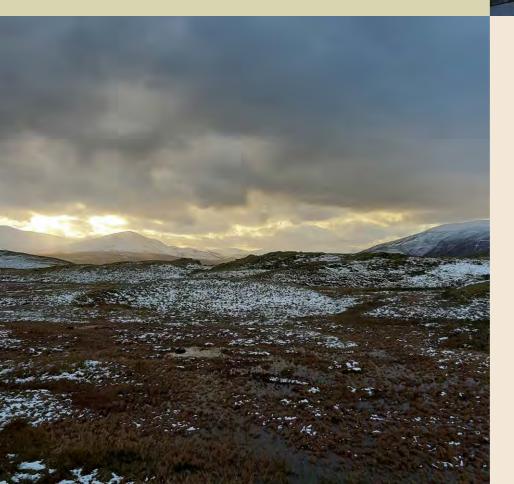
Eycott Hill project staff welcome Eden Rivers Trust and their group of facilitation fund farmers and partner organisations. They discussed the improvements to the nature reserve that have boosted the natural capital value of the site.

Thank you

We would like to thank each and every volunteer who has been involved with the Eycott Hill project, from helping out at discovery days to building dry stone walls. Your support has been incredible. The support we have received throughout the project has been instrumental to its success – it simply would not have been possible without all the help from the wonderful volunteers.

Thank you to all the organisations, partners and contractors we have worked with over the five years. We hope you have enjoyed being a part of the project and we thank you for your involvement.

Thank you to everyone who has attended an event, taken part in a skills course or just visited Eycott Hill Nature Reserve. Your support has been invaluable and we hope you continue to visit this fantastic upland nature reserve.





We hope you enjoyed reading all about the Eycott Hill project. Open to the public, experience the wealth of wildlife for yourself.

There is free car parking and cycle racks can be found by the entrance to the reserve.

There is a waymarked path to the summit of Eycott Hill which follows the driest route. However, it is over uneven and sometimes very wet ground so wellington boots are recommended, particularly after heavy rain.

Please keep dogs on a lead to avoid disturbing the wildlife and grazing animals that are on the reserve all-year round. Eycott Hill Nature Reserve is near the hamlet of Berrier, just off the A66 between Penrith and Keswick.

Moderate

Map reference

OS Landranger sheet 90, Explorer Map OL5

Grid reference

11 394 301

Nearest postcode CA11 0XD

Size

216 hectares

Status

Site of Special Scientific Interest (111 hectares)

About us

Cumbria Wildlife Trust is the only voluntary organisation devoted solely to the conservation of the wildlife and wild places of Cumbria.

The Trust stands up for wildlife, creates wildlife havens, seeks to inspire people, and raises environmental awareness.

Contact us

Cumbria Wildlife Trust Plumgarths, Crook Road, Kendal LA8 8LX

Telephone: 01539 816300 Email: mail@cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk

www.cumbriawildlifetrust.org.uk

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