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| <p>Distance: Approx 4.5miles</p> <p>Time Taken: Approx 2hrs</p> <p>Terrain: Good railway paths, fields and woodland paths. Can be muddy when wet.</p> <p>Total ascent / descent: 431ft</p> <p>Dog Friendliness: Very dog friendly. Dogs should be on leads through Hesleden and crossing busy roads.</p> <p>Toilets / Refreshments: Pub in Castle Eden and Heselden.</p> <p>Parking: Parking is roadside near the Castle Eden Inn.</p> <p>OS Maps: Explorer 308</p> | <p>029 – Castle Eden to Castle Eden Dene Circular</p> <p>Background: Castle Eden is a small village in County Durham, famous for the former Castle Eden Brewery which was home of the Castle Eden Ale. The Parish Council Web site states that "Castle Eden has its origins in the 10th century when King Reinwald led a campaign of Danish raids and land acquisition". Ownership passed among various Danes until it was eventually taken by Bishop Cutheard and given to Ealfrith; just prior to the Norman Conquest the estate was owned by Tilred.</p> <p>Castle Eden Dene is a site of special scientific interest and is home to an extraordinary variety of birds, more than 450 species of plants and some of our favourite mammals, such as roe deer and fox. At 3.5 miles (5.6km) long it covers 221 hectares of woodland and lowland grassland and is the largest of a series of valleys which run down to the coast between Sunderland and Hartlepool, reaching the sea at Denemouth.</p> <p>Route Description: We started our walk from the Castle Eden Inn in the village of Castle Eden, from the pub head around the side through the beer garden and towards St Jame's Fields (housing crescent). There is a public footpath sign posted between two houses. Take this path which leads onto the Hart-Haswell walkway.</p> <p>Turn right onto the walkway following this for approximately 1 mile. Leave the walkway on the left when you reach Hesleden onto station Road. Heselden is the left turn approximately 300 meters after you have come past the quarry area on your right.</p> <p>Head straight up Station road past two playing fields, one on either side, turn right at the top of Station Road onto Front street and past St Mary's Church. Turn left before you reach Hesleden Primary School, walking past the school keeping it on your right heading out of Heselden. Continue straight heading out of Heselden until you reach the B1281.</p> <p>Cross the B1281 and into the field straight ahead following the public footpath sign. Continue straight in this field for 0.3 miles and then turn left for 0.1 miles and then turn right again heading straight for Castle Eden Dene.</p> <p>Once you reach the entrance to the Dene, take the path on your left, keeping to the top edge of the dene. Follow this path through the Dene as it meanders through the woods and along the burn and it will bring you out to St James Church. The path through the dene is very clear and easy to follow.</p> <p>Walk past the church on your left and follow the road out to the B1281. Turn right and stay on the path until you reach the bus stop and then cross over the B1281 into the field with the public footpath sign. Follow this path straight ahead for a quarter mile until you join the walkway again, turn right and follow the walkway back to where you started.</p> <p>Points of Interest: Castle Eden Dene, which can be explored fully if you want to extend your walk.</p> |
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