

# BLACK WATER TRAIL

- **Circular riverside and forest walk**
- **2.5km/1½ miles**
- **Allow 1 hour**
- **Hard surface path and beaten earth**
- **Easy**
- **Stout shoes or boots recommended**
- **There is a ticket machine at each end of the Raiders Road forest drive, charging a small fee**

**PARKING (APRIL TO OCTOBER)** From the A75, follow the A762 to New Galloway. Just north of Mossdale, a Forestry Commission sign indicates the entrance to the Raiders Road forest drive. Follow Raiders Road to a car park on your left at Stroan Viaduct. Two trails start from here.

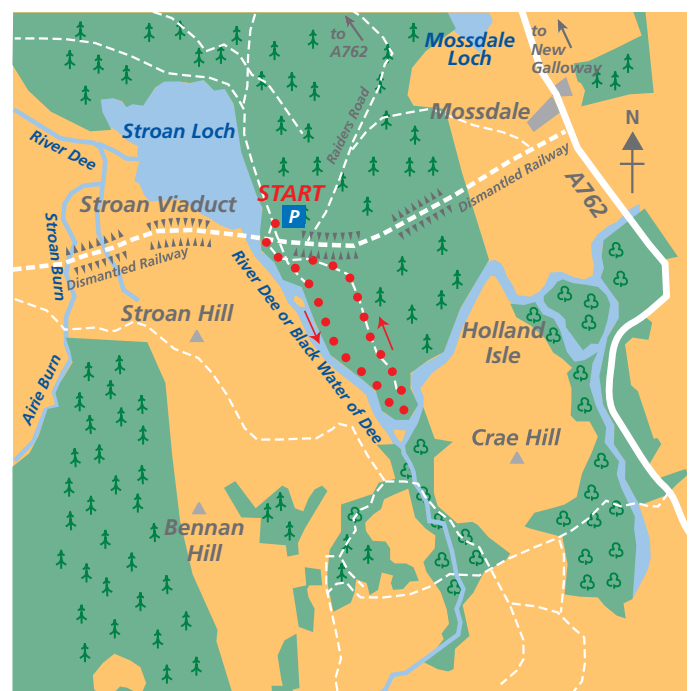
**PARKING (OCTOBER TO APRIL)** When the Raiders Road is closed there is sufficient parking for two or three cars just before the ticket machine and barrier at the start. Please take care not to block the entrance. Walk to the start of the route. This adds a total of 5km/3 miles.

**START** The start of the Black Water Trail is just before the viaduct. Follow the path along the Black Water of Dee, returning through the forest. This trail is no longer waymarked but is easy to follow. The route can be shortened by following a forest ride half way along the trail.

The Raiders Road runs between Clatteringshaws and Mossdale for 10 miles, following the course of an old drove road. Stroan viaduct, situated just off it was built in 1863 as part of the Portpatrick to Dumfries line. Last used in 1965, it is now home to Daubenton's bats and provides an attractive backdrop to Loch Stroan.

The surrounding countryside is rich and varied. Hills, moors and heath support a variety of wildlife. Teal and goosander frequent wetlands, while up on the moors, skylarks take cover amongst the purple moor grass. There are plenty of opportunities to stop and appreciate the rugged scenery along the River Dee or Black Water of Dee, named after its dark, peaty water.

The route returns through quiet, shady, conifer forest. Here birds such as crossbills feed on the cones, using their specially adapted beak to extract seeds. Roe deer also live in the forest but are very elusive and difficult to spot. Continue straight ahead through the trees, ignoring the path off to your left and soon you head back under the viaduct to the car park.



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