

Start: The lay-by on the Martley side of Ham Bridge

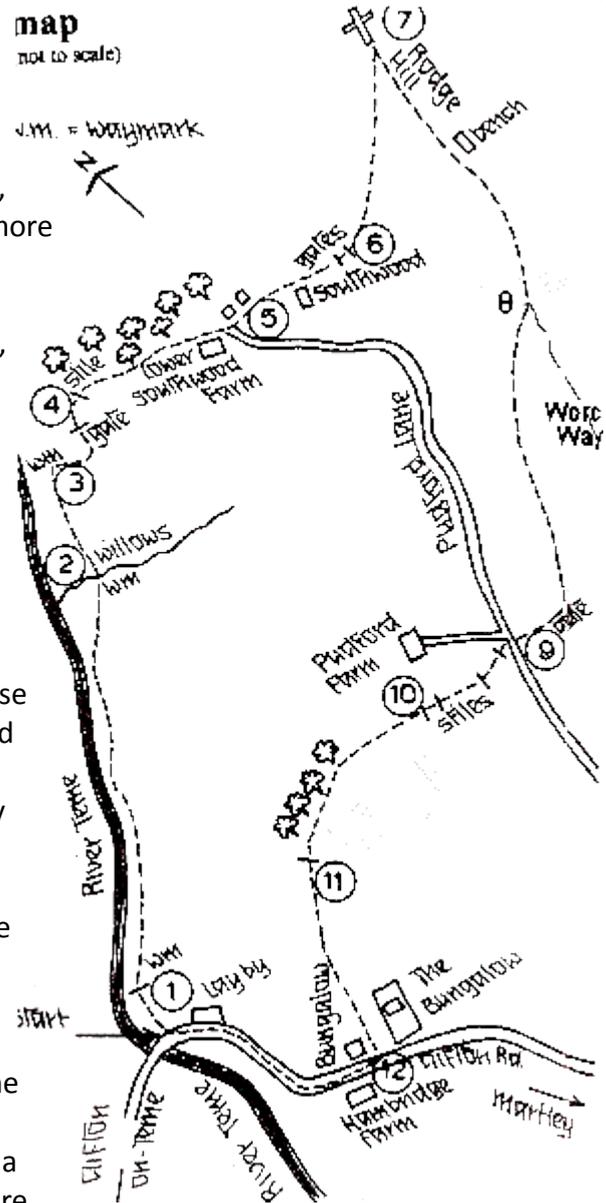
From the lay-by at Ham Bridge walk down to the gap into the field on the right, near the bridge and follow the signpost (1). In actuality the route crosses the field, some way away from the river bank, but often the crop is not cleared and walkers take a more obvious route!

In Summer, swallows and house martins dive down across the river and, throughout the year a kingfisher, grey wagtail and dipper may be seen anywhere along this stretch. In Winter, the colourful goosander may be found fishing below or the cheery siskin busying itself above you in its pursuit of seeds from the alder trees that line the bank.

Where a slight depression shows in the ground (an old boundary now removed) you reach a field boundary and a double stile. Go over the stiles, heading in the same direction, and along the path close to the river. Follow the waymark through the field and through a gap in the line of ancient willows by the waymark (2). In the older trees to your right, you may be lucky enough to hear the Greater Spotted Woodpecker's call, a sharp "quick quick" or the "doit, doit" call of the nuthatch. There are many holes in the trees here for both birds to find places to nest.

In the next field look for a muddy track going up on the right with a waymark (3). Follow this track up past an old metal gate that goes into the woods on the left, over another gate and, continuing to skirt the woods on your left, enter the narrow path along side a field that often has horses in it. Walkers fortunately are protected from their attentions by the wire fence on your right. At the end, cross the stile into woodland, (4) and turn immediately right and follow the switchback path through trees, bearing right at the path junction, until the end of Pudford lane (5) is reached, by Lower Southwood Farm.

A very short way up the lane ignore the bridleway to the left down a drive, and take the footpath up hill at the rear of the first cottage on your left. Continue up, over a stile, through a small fenced area and another gate into an old orchard. Continue to climb the steep slope next to the fence until, at the top, you come to a gate on the left side, go through it and continue through another gate (6). This is the toughest part of the walk. Keep the wire fence and then the woodland plantation on your left, right up to the end of the pasture and on up, through the gate at the top, to a path junction on the crest of the hill where you join the Worcestershire Way and Martley Circular Walk at a signpost indicating several ways (7). Turn immediately right, almost back on yourself, along the ridge and note, on the right, the fine views of the Teme valley and the Clifton ridge. The strategically placed seat affords a view in front of you of the motte at Homme Castle below, the river Teme between its tree lined banks, the extensive Weyman's wood behind and the spire of Clifton's church of St. Kenelm on the ridge above the valley. Inevitably, buzzards will be "mewing" above you and ravens "gronking" ! The panorama stretches from the hills of Wales to the Clee Hills in Shropshire, and is one of the finest views in Worcestershire. Continue along the ridge to a dip in the ridgeline at a junction of paths (8) and bear right down the bridle path (leaving the Worcestershire Way), go down between trees.



After some distance go through a field gate and turn right down to a metal bridle gate into Pudford Lane (9). Cross over the road and then a stile on the left of the drive to Pudford Farmhouse. Proceed diagonally across the field to a stile in a wire fence (10). Walk to a further stile as indicated by the waymark. Beyond this stile is another stile on the left. Cross this and walk along the field edge keeping woodland on your right and noting in the dip to the left, a large pond where Canada geese and goslings may be seen in early summer, also the occasional heron. Round the corner of the woodland (11), turn left down the field keeping the hedge and the pond to your left. Follow this track down to the road (B4204) (12). Turn right at the road (single file essential) and proceed down to your start point at the layby near Ham Bridge watching carefully for fast traffic coming round the bend.

Birds to listen out for, especially in spring: tits (great and blue), chaffinch, mistle thrush, mallard, pheasant, wood pigeon, chiffchaff, blackbird, goldfinch, willow warbler, stock dove whitethroat, magpie, jay, dunnoek (hedge sparrow).

The **Path-or-Nones** meet each third Sunday of the month for 2-3 hours from 9am, and has done since around 1985. The group tackles everything and anything on Martley's 41 miles of Rights of Way—clearance, installing gates, stiles, bridges, signposts and signage. We act on behalf of Worcestershire County Council and liaise between RoW users and landowners.

Volunteers are always welcome; we find it fun and worthwhile. Please contact Jon Pearsall 01886 888793 or John Nicklin 01886 888318
www.thepathornones.co.uk

Martley Parish supports the **Walkers are Welcome** initiative
www.walkersarewelcome.org.uk

All service outlets in Martley—pubs, shop, B&Bs, welcome path users.

Come to see our unique geology!
www.geo-village.eu

These walks were first written by Keith and Audrey Trumper in the early 90s

(updated Nov 13)

The Path-or-Nones

WALK 10

Grade: Moderate, distance 2.8 miles with one steep slope. Parking at layby near Ham Bridge

Remember the Countryside Code:

Respect other people

- Consider the local community and other people enjoying the outdoors
- Leave gates and property as you find them and follow paths unless wider access is available

Protect the natural environment

- Leave no trace of your visit and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under effective control

Enjoy the outdoors

- Plan ahead and be prepared
- Follow advice and local signs