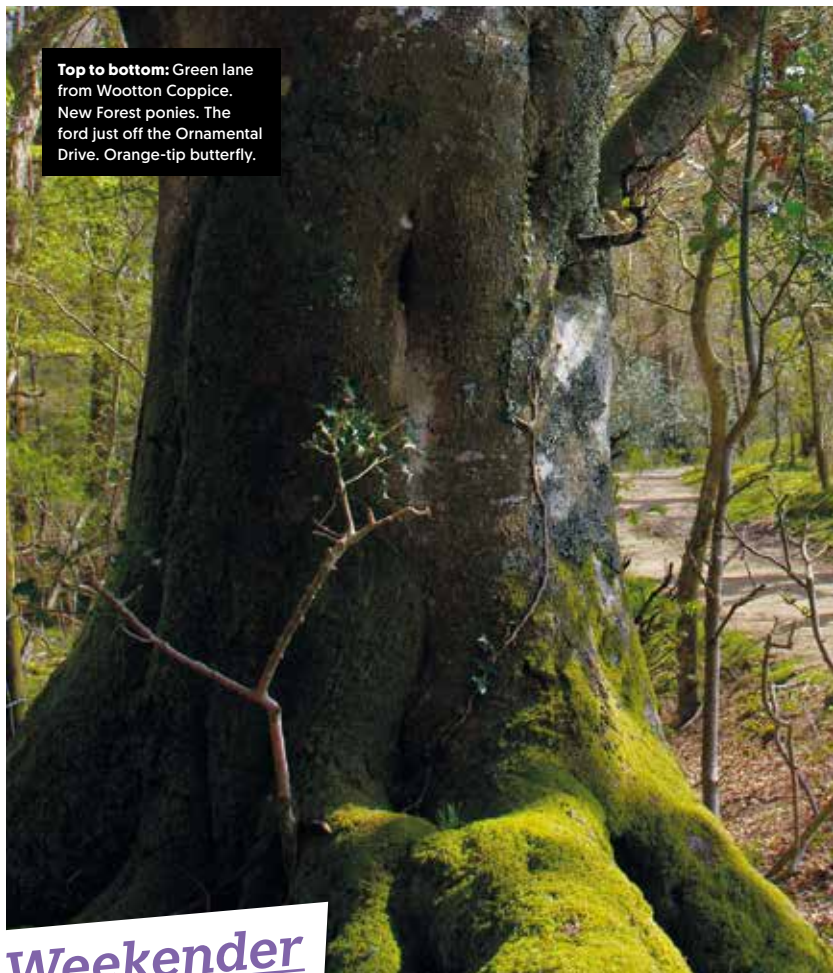


Top to bottom: Green lane from Wootton Coppice. New Forest ponies. The ford just off the Ornamental Drive. Orange-tip butterfly.



**Weekender**

# New Forest

Enjoy stunning trees, varied landscapes, wild ponies, and great cycling. **Ben Searle** guides you on this varied, family-friendly ride



## Wait for it!

This ride is not advised until after the coronavirus restrictions have been lifted.



### BEN SEARLE

#### Cycle tourer

Ben has toured, worked in, and written about cycling for most of his life. He has other New Forest rides at <https://my.viewranger.com/route/curations/381>.

**W**illiam the Conqueror named his former hunting ground Nova Foresta. Today verderers and commoners continue historic grazing practices that maintain the forest's semi-open landscape – expect wandering animals.

This ride incorporates heathland, railway path, village tea stops, fords, beautiful forest trails, meadows, and picturesque country lanes. It is easily accessed from campsites, Brockenhurst railway station, the New Forest Youth Hostel at Burley, and cycle hire at Burley ([forestleisurecycling.co.uk](http://forestleisurecycling.co.uk)) or Brockenhurst ([cyclex.co.uk](http://cyclex.co.uk)).

Shortcuts are limited. Unlike other public forests, cyclists *must* keep to the approved routes. These are shown as orange dots on the OS Explorer map and have numbered waymarker posts ([newforestnpa.gov.uk/things-to-do/cycling/cycling-routes/](http://newforestnpa.gov.uk/things-to-do/cycling/cycling-routes/)). The New Forest Tour bus carries cycles and helps make shorter rides possible ([thenewforesttour.info](http://thenewforesttour.info)), but pricing is weighed against one-off trips. ●



Weekend ride

# A NEW FOREST DAY OUT

• Start/finish: Brockenhurst (by railway station) • OS grid ref: 302020 • Map: OS Explorer OL22 New Forest (1:25k) • Distance: 38km [23 miles] or 33.5 km [21 miles] with shortcut • Climbing: 375m • Bike type: tourer, hybrid • Ride level: Reasonably fit beginner/family • GPX file: [cyclinguk.org/newforestdayout](http://cyclinguk.org/newforestdayout)



**5 THE ORNAMENTAL DRIVE**  
A quiet, narrow road with lots of characterful beech trees. (It's worth turning left for a potter gently uphill before turning back.) Again, take care crossing the A35.

**1 ROYDON WOODS**  
Just off the route, the **bridleways in Roydon Woods nature reserve are rideable and take you to stunning bluebell displays in spring – worth the diversion!**



**2 The railway path**  
This largely flat railway path strikes across the moors and commons, providing easy cycling.

**3 Wootton Coppice**  
The former railway course becomes a busy B-road for 2km. My hillier alternative is to follow a quiet road to marker post 185, joining a green lane. It then becomes a forest trail that climbs to the A35, which has fast traffic; cross with care!

**4 Burley**  
Once home of 'white witch' Sybil Leek, the village has several tea rooms and pubs. The Cider Pantry is a popular café, with home-made cider and food.

**6 Queens Meadow**  
Turn off the Ornamental Drive and there's a ford – fun on a warm day. At Queens Meadow nature reserve, you might see deer. Or stay on the road to get back, saving 3.5km.



**i New Forest Cycling Week in doubt**  
Cycling UK's annual family cycling week in the forest was scheduled for 24 July to 1 August but may not go ahead due to the pandemic. For updates, visit: [newforestallyc.org.uk](http://newforestallyc.org.uk)

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