

# The Stiperstones Ride

## Mines, Moors and Wild Edric

Route 6



### Bilberries

Bilberries, known locally as whinberries or wimberries, are heathland plants widely distributed on the Stiperstones. Traditionally harvested by local people using a special combs, the berries were at one time sold for the making of dye and provided valuable income for poor mining and farming families. Whinberry pie is a local delicacy.



### Mary Webb

Mary Webb (1881-1927) author and poet, wrote evocatively about this area. She portrayed the lives of the local miners and farmers and their struggle to survive in such a rugged landscape. Her best known novels are Precious Bane, Gone to Earth and The Golden Arrow.

### The Bog

There is little left of what was once one of the largest lead and barytes mines in Shropshire. Lead mining ceased in 1883 but the site was worked for barytes during and after World War I. All that remains of a once thriving community, demolished in the 1970's, are the school, (now a visitor centre), a former pub and the ruins of the miners institute.



Ride over wild haunted moors and down steep valleys that were once the realm of Wild Edric. Pass Bronze and Iron Age cairns and forts, medieval houses and the stark skeletons of old mine workings.

The Stiperstones with its distinctive ridge capped with stone tors is the legendary meeting place of Shropshire witches. One of the larger tors is known as the Devil's Chair. The whole of the ridge has been mined for minerals, mainly lead, since Roman times and maybe before. Indeed a huge ingot of lead weighing nearly 90 kilograms and bearing Roman markings was found nearby.

Be careful on the moors, Wild Edric haunts them. Edric the Wild was a real man, a Saxon noble, who owned vast tracts of Shropshire

and the borders. He lived in the 11th century and fought the Norman invaders before finally making peace with King William. Legend says that Edric is not dead but imprisoned in the lead mines condemned for listening to the Conqueror. At dusk you may see a rider in a green cloak and feathered cap. This is Edric who with his fairy bride Lady Godda gallop across the hills whenever England is threatened.

The lead mine at Snailbeach was the largest in Shropshire and richest in Europe. Worked for almost 2000 years it only closed in 1955. The remains have been preserved, and the panels tell the history of the mines and the terrible disaster that took place here.

### KEY to maps

- Ride Route with direction number
- Jack Mytton Way
- Bridleway
- Footpath
- Byway
- A Road / B Road
- Other road

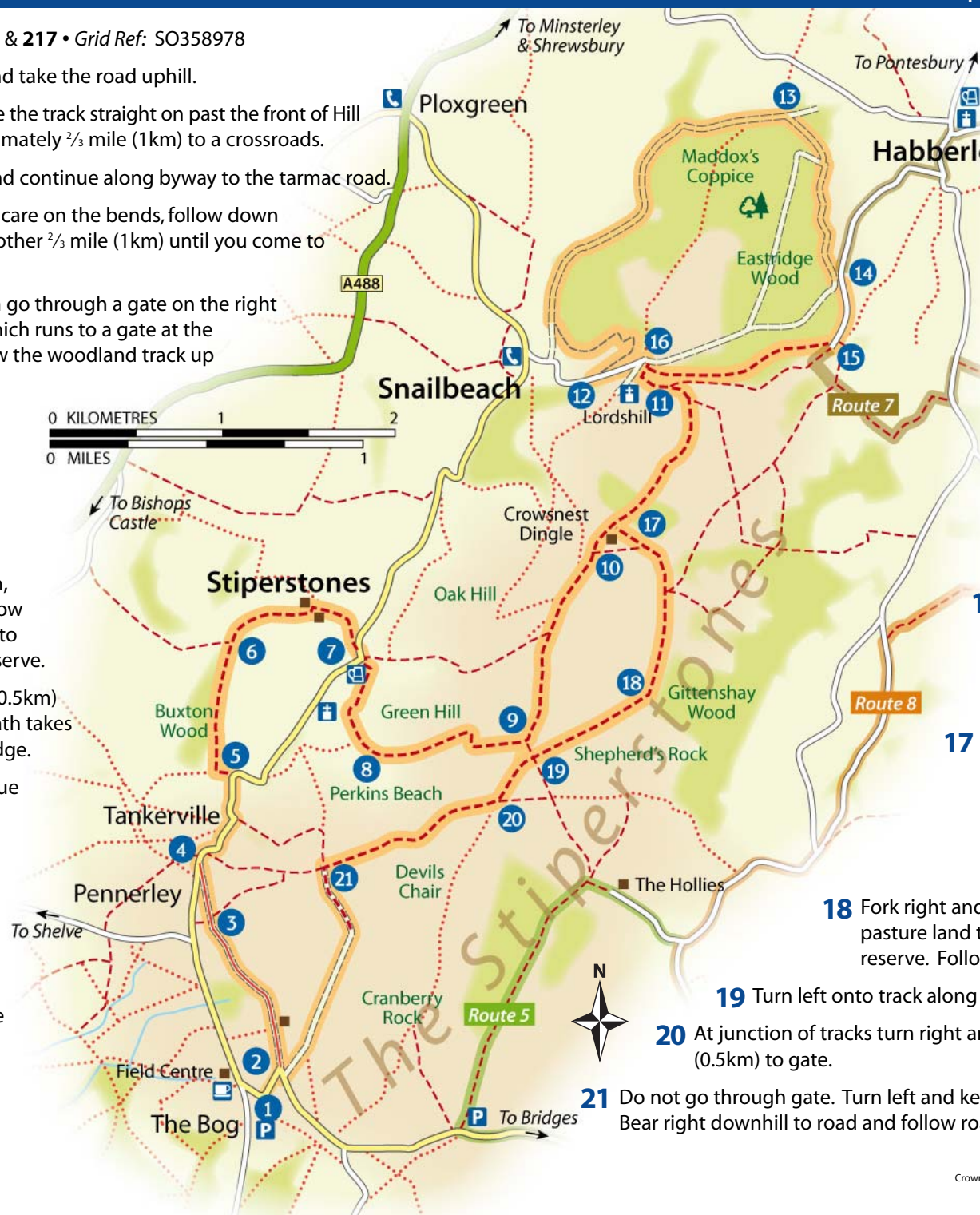
- Public House
- Telephone
- Car Parking
- Visitor Information
- Cafe / Shop
- Church
- Public Toilet
- Buildings

### INFORMATION

Stiperstones Inn: 01743 791327  
The Bog Visitor Centre: 01743 792484

**Start: The Bog car park** OS map 216 & 217 • Grid Ref: SO358978

- 1 Turn right out of The Bog car park and take the road uphill.
- 2 Where the road bears sharp right take the track straight on past the front of Hill Cottage. Follow this track for approximately  $\frac{2}{3}$  mile (1km) to a crossroads.
- 3 Keep straight ahead at crossroads and continue along byway to the tarmac road.
- 4 Turn right on to the road and taking care on the bends, follow down through Tankerville. Continue for another  $\frac{2}{3}$  mile (1km) until you come to a sharp right hand bend.
- 5 Turn left onto a track and after 100m go through a gate on the right and follow a cross field brideway which runs to a gate at the bottom edge of Buxton Wood. Follow the woodland track up the hillside.
- 6 At a junction of paths in the wood take the right hand path and follow the track through gates which eventually leads to the road in the village of Stiperstones.
- 7 Turn right on the road then left up a track just before the Stiperstones Inn, keeping the stream on your left. Follow this lane up to a gateway leading onto the Stiperstones National Nature Reserve.
- 8 The track narrows and after  $\frac{1}{3}$  mile (0.5km) bear right by old stone walls. This path takes you to the top of the Stiperstones ridge.
- 9 Turn left onto main track and continue for about  $\frac{2}{3}$  mile (1km)
- 10 When a gate appears in front of you do not go through it but take the track to the left. Follow an old hedged lane then descend through fields for about  $\frac{2}{3}$  mile (1km).
- 11 At a junction of paths keep left down to Lords Hill Chapel. Follow the tarmac lane round to the right then left and start the descent towards Snailbeach.



- 12 After about  $\frac{1}{3}$  mile (0.5 km) take a sharp right turn onto a track. Follow the path through remains of mine workings up into Eastridge Wood. The path leads you down onto a wide forestry track which takes you around the perimeter of the woodland. Keep to the main track for approximately 2 miles (3.5km) ignoring all branches off it.

13 At a wide fork take the right hand track until it emerges at a car parking area.

14 Go out onto tarmac road, turn right and continue for approximately 350m.

15 Turn right onto brideway. Follow track up wooded valley to gate at top.

16 Turn left onto track and then left at road to return to Lordshill Chapel. Retrace your steps up the hill to a gate by a band of conifer trees.

17 Go through gate and turn left uphill to gate in corner. Follow track through heather, keeping left at fork. Continue to gate leading off the Nature Reserve onto a track amongst trees.

18 Fork right and follow brideway across rough pasture land to gate leading back onto nature reserve. Follow track back up to Shepherds Rock.

19 Turn left onto track along top of ridge.

20 At junction of tracks turn right and follow downhill for about  $\frac{1}{3}$  mile (0.5km) to gate.

21 Do not go through gate. Turn left and keep to track along edge of reserve. Bear right downhill to road and follow road down to The Bog car park.