



Newark Bay and Point of Ayre, Deerness, Mainland

A pleasant out-and-return coastal walk with a sandy beach, rocky foreshore and great views over the island of Copinsa

TERRAIN

Good tracks and grass/sand footpaths

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Bus routes from Kirkwall run along the A960 to Deerness, 0.75km from start.

START

Deerness Small Boat Owners slip.

USERS' REPORTS

There are no walk reports for this walk. Why not write the first?



Grade ([key](#))



Bog Factor ([key](#))

Walk Statistics

Distance	5.25km / 3.25 miles
Time	1 - 2 hours
Ascent	3m (Profile)
Start Grid Ref	HY567040

Walk Description

STAGE 1

If driving, park at the car park alongside the red and white building belonging to the Deerness Small Boat Owners club. The club have a wonderful slip built into the rugged Geo, which is available for public use subject to the payment of a small donation. If using the bus it is a short walk along the unclassified road from the A960. Head along the surfaced road passing a large anchor on the grass verge, with a plaque explaining that it was salvaged from a wreck offshore for use in conjunction with the nearby winch to pull vessels up the slip. Don't follow the surfaced road all the way down to the slip, instead take the wide track leading across the dunes on the left of the road.



STAGE 2

It's an easy walk, allowing time to look out over the bay towards the island of Copinsay and smaller Horse of Copinsay. Copinsay is an RSPB reserve with populations of sea birds such as fulmar, kittiwakes, guillemots and razorbills. The island is uninhabited, though the lighthouse was only automated in 1991 and is monitored from the Northern Lighthouse Board offices in Edinburgh. During the early 20th century the island was farmed by a single family that had 13 children. Along with the lighthouse keepers' families there were judged to be enough children of school age on the island to justify a permanent school teacher, with a room in the farmhouse serving as a school.



STAGE 3

As well as an abundance of bird life on the islands, Newark Bay itself is frequented by wading birds including purple sandpiper, sanderling, dunlin and ringed plover. In summer eider ducks can often be seen offshore. Drop down on to the sandy beach or continue along the easy path behind the dunes, topped with marram grass which maintains their integrity and helps them repel winter storms and protect the farmland beyond. Pass through another car park at the eastern end of the bay by Newark- the golden sand of this beautiful beach is justifiably popular. Just before reaching the buildings bear right and follow the signpost indicating 'Public Footpath to Aikersgill Road'.



STAGE 4

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This grass footpath continues close to the shore along the top of some low cliffs before reaching a further small car park and picnic area at the bottom of Aikersgill Road. Cross this and go through a small gate onto an area of rough ground criss-crossed with vehicle tracks. Keep right and you'll be in an ideal position to watch for wildlife offshore, from rare sea birds such as Pomarine Skua and Iceland Gulls, to porpoises and whales. Stroll along the shore as far as desired - being sure to watch out for camouflaged bird nests in the shingle during the summer months - before retracing your steps to the start.



Route: Phil Turner

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