



White Down Bluebell Walk

Distance: 3 km=2 miles

very easy walking

Region: Surrey

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Map: Explorer 146 (Dorking)

Woodland, bluebells, views



In Brief

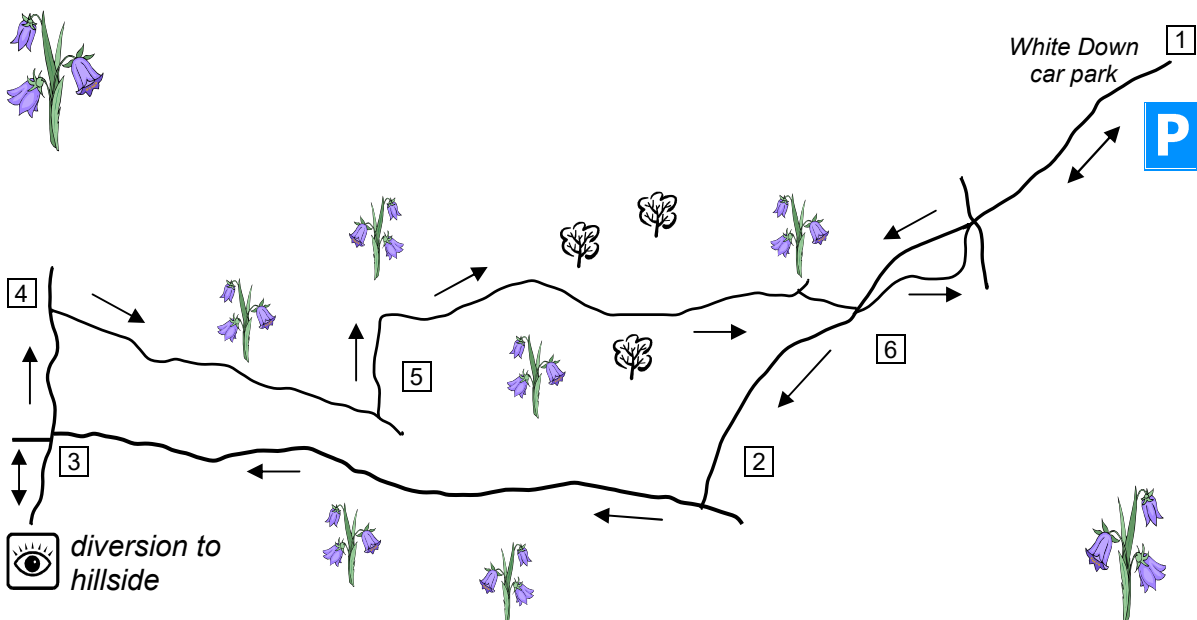
White Down (or White Downs) has one of the best displays of bluebells in Surrey, all concentrated within one area known as *Old Simms Copse*, an easy walk from the car park. The bluebells here come out a little early and the best time is around the last week of April, give or take a week either side. This little circular picnic walk takes a lesser-known route through some of the most glorious glades.



This walk is fine for any type of clothing and dogs are welcome. If April is showery, you may need stronger shoes or wellies to clear some puddles.

The walk begins at the **White Down car park**, grid ref TQ 114 495, very approximate **postcode RH5 6SX**, in Whitedown Lane, north of Abinger, Surrey. To get there from the London area you can use either of the routes at the end of this text (→ **Getting There**).

The Walk



- 1 From the back of the car park, follow the main wide path for 250m and go straight over a crossing path. You should now be greeted by the first wide expanse of bluebells which will stay with you for nearly the whole walk. In about 250m, keep to the main track as it curves left. In another 250m, you reach a T-junction by the hillside where a wide level track comes in from the left.



2 Veer **right** on this track. Don't worry if you see few bluebells at first. Soon you are rewarded with woodland thick with bluebells. Keep to this wide track, avoiding any temptation to wander away on any of the side paths, for about 600m total, when you reach a T-junction by a finger-post. The route is **right** here on a wide path, ignoring the signed bridleway ahead.



3 *However, it is worth making a very short diversion here by turning **left** and through a gate out onto the open hillside of Blatchford Down where you have a stunning view of the valley below and to the Greensand hills beyond. Leith Hill is to the left of the dip and the Hurt Wood to the right. (See other walks in this series.) The contrast with the secluded woodland is really striking. ... Now you need to retrace your steps past the fingerpost and keep straight on.*



4 In just 100m, look out for a wooden post with a faded blue arrow pointing ahead. Turn **sharp right** here (ignoring the direction of arrow!) on a clear but rather narrow path. The path zigzags right-left near the start and winds quite a lot, getting wider [2014-18: with several fallen trees to go round!]. It takes you for some distance through a wonderful spread of bluebells. Just keep to the path all the time! After a total of 350m, you come to a triangular 3-way junction. **Don't miss this vital junction !!**



5 Turn **sharp left** here on a nice clear path. It soon wheels right, snaking a lot, through some of the best of the bluebells. Later it runs beneath some fine tall beeches. Stay on the main path all the time, avoiding vehicle tracks and fallen debris. Eventually, you will see a wide track ahead in the distance. This is the track that you took on the way out. Before you reach the track, your path veers right a bit and narrows. You soon meet the track.



6 There is a nice way now of finishing the walk on a more interesting path close to the bluebells. Instead of going left on the rather rutted track, cross over it and up over a bank to take a clear sandy path, left, running parallel to the track. In 80m, this narrow path veers **right**, away from the track, through the dense bluebells. Be careful where you tread! Take any route you like - wherever the bluebells are best - but remember to veer **left** to re-join the main path, crossing back over the bank. Now continue over the wide crossing path and you are soon back at the car park.



Getting there

By car: From **Dorking**, follow signs for *Ranmore*. Go just over 3 miles, avoiding the Denbies car park and three junction on your right, till you reach a **cross-roads** with Critten Lane and Whitedown Lane. Turn **left** on Whitedown Lane. The car park is 600 metres on your right.

You can also start at the **A3-M25** junction. Take the *slip road* signposted *A3 Guildford* but, in 100m, turn **left** on a road signposted *Effingham* that runs past a lake through forest. Follow the road to a T-junction and zigzag right-left over a humpback bridge, passing *Effingham Junction station*. At Effingham village, go straight ahead over two mini-roundabouts. Go through traffic lights over the main A246 road and follow a winding road to a crossroads with Ranmore Common Road and Crocknorth Road. Give way (!) and cross straight over. The car park is 600 metres on your right.

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