

# The Mack Walks: Short Walks in Scotland Under 10 km

## Banchory-Scolty Hill March Trail (Aberdeenshire)

### Route Summary

Starting and finishing on the outskirts of Banchory, this is a short walk through mature woodland but with a moderately demanding 200 m overall ascent, mostly in the short but steep climb to the top of Scolty Hill where there are splendid wide-open views.

Duration: 2 hours



### Route Overview

**Duration:** 2 hours.

**Transport/Parking:** Stagecoach bus services to Banchory. Check their timetable. It is a 2 km walk from the centre of the town to the walk start-point. Forestry Commission Scolty Hill car-park, near Banchory.

**Length:** 4.850 km / 3.03 mi

**Height Gain:** 204 meter

**Height Loss:** 204 meter

**Max Height:** 289 meter

**Min Height:** 106 meter

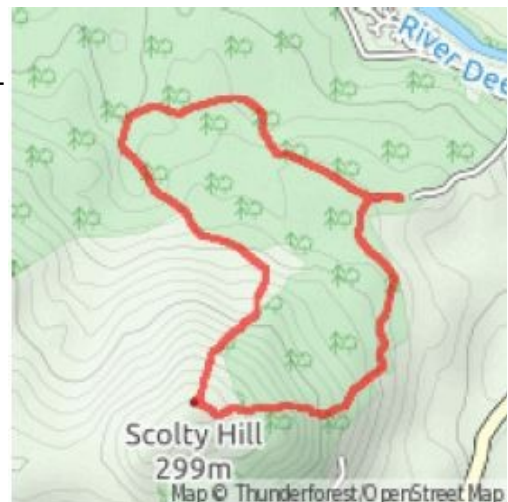
**Surface:** Rough in places. A mix of good paths and forest roads with some steep stony sections.

**Child Friendly:** Yes, if children are used to walks of this distance and overall ascent.

**Difficulty:** Medium to easy.

**Dog Friendly:** Dogs on lead or under close control at all times. Pick up, bag and remove any mess!

**Refreshments:** Options in Banchory.



### Description

This is a popular and very pleasant forest walk in mature pine and larch woods. The mid-section involves a fairly steep ascent to the top of Scolty Hill, with its distinctive monument, a well-known landmark in lower Deeside. At only 289 m, Scolty is a low hill on the eastern edge of the Grampian Mountain range. However the views from the top are extensive and very rewarding, assisted by two hill-finders, one fixed on the southern aspect, one on the northern. All of the town of Banchory is seen nestling underneath the hill, with a section of the River Dee running through it. The Scolty Hill monument is a 20m tall tower, built in 1840 as a memorial to local man, General William Burnett, who campaigned with Lord Wellington. The tower was restored in 1992 and a viewing platform added. It is worth ascending the steel spiral staircase to enjoy even better views over Banchory, the Dee Valley and the Grampian Mountains. The route is well signed, and mostly follows the red-waymarked March Trail which leads through the different habitats of the woodlands, part owned by the Forestry Commission. The town of Banchory, at the gateway to Deeside, makes for a pleasant refreshment stop after the walk.



## Waypoints

### (1) Start from Scolty Hill car-park

(57.04314; -2.51694) <https://w3w.co/neatly.freshest.freezing>  
From the Scolty Hill car-park head west for the steel gate into the forest on the forest road, passing a couple of information boards on your left.



### (2) Left to follow Red Trail

(57.04314; -2.51908) <https://w3w.co/backswing.fermented.impaled>  
Shortly after passing the information boards, go left to follow the Red Trail marking on a wooden post. (132 m)



### (3) Veer slightly right to follow Red Trail

(57.04139; -2.51933) <https://w3w.co/decimal.hoped.fruity>  
In just over 200 m, veer slightly right to follow the Red Trail marker post. (345 m)



### (4) Cross forest road and up mountain bike track

(57.03534; -2.52080) <https://w3w.co/chariots.threading.print>  
In another 860 m, or so, upon rising up to join a forest road, immediately cross the road and take the narrow path ascending steeply up the hill. This path is used by mountain bike enthusiasts. The path is indistinct in places and the ascent is fairly rapid, on a rough surface. Eventually you will join a more well-defined path. Keep going up and eventually you will see the Scolty Hill tower above you as you go through a small steel gate. (1.2 km)



## (5) Scolty Hill

(57.03548; -2.53098)

<https://w3w.co/peanut.settled.engineers>

In 600 m you will have arrived at the Scolty Hill monument and tower where there are superb views in all directions. Use the two 'hill-finder' guides on the south and north side of the hilltop to assist. You may also ascend the tower to take in the views from that aspect. When you are ready head for the Banchory side of the hilltop. (1.8 km)



## (6) Down Red Trail path facing Banchory

(57.03560; -2.53095) <https://w3w.co/nests.fluffed.loads>

Take the path down from the north side of the hilltop, with the town of Banchory below you and to your right a little. Follow the Red Trail marked wooden post. (1.9 km)



## (7) Left along smooth Red Trail path

(57.04053; -2.52616) <https://w3w.co/rewarding.choice.segregate>

After 600 m descent, go left when the path meets a wider and smoother path, following the Red Trail marked post. (2.5 km)



## (8) Carry straight on at x-roads on Red Trail

(57.04133; -2.52800) <https://w3w.co/talked.chimp.revamped>

In 200 m, at a x-roads of paths with an information board and signposts, carry straight on following the Red Trail. (2.7 km)



### (9) Right at clearing to follow Red Trail

(57.04497; -2.53598) <https://w3w.co/rich.storming.neon>  
After 600 m gentle descent, go right at a t-junction at a wide clearing, following the Red Trail marked post. (3.3 km)



### (10) Right to follow Deeside Way

(57.04619; -2.53561) <https://w3w.co/rich.storming.neon>  
In 200 m, or so, where a road goes off to your left, veer right to follow the Deeside Way sign in that direction. Ignore a triangular junction on your left when you meet it. (3.5 km)



### (11) Left off Deeside Way to follow Red Trail

(57.04634; -2.53207) <https://w3w.co/drizzly.artichoke.repeated>  
In 200 m, go left off the Deeside Way forest road to take a rough road with a marked wooden post for the Red Trail. (3.7 km)



### (12) Right into trees to follow Red Trail

(57.04647; -2.52661) <https://w3w.co/photos.economics.jets>  
In 400 m, or so, go right to follow a path into the trees with a wooden post marked for the Red Trail. (4.1 km)



### (13) Left at stone wall to follow Red Trail

(57.04480; -2.52513) <https://w3w.co/rating.firepower.files>  
In 200 m, the path through the trees meets a dry-stone wall.  
Go left for a short distance here. (4.3 km)



### (14) Right through gap in wall to follow Red Trail

(57.04487; -2.52490) <https://w3w.co/thinnest.same.thing>  
Almost immediately, in about 15 m, go right through a gap in  
the dry-stone wall to follow a path that veers slightly left  
through the trees. Soon you will pass a Red Trail marked  
post. (4.3 km)

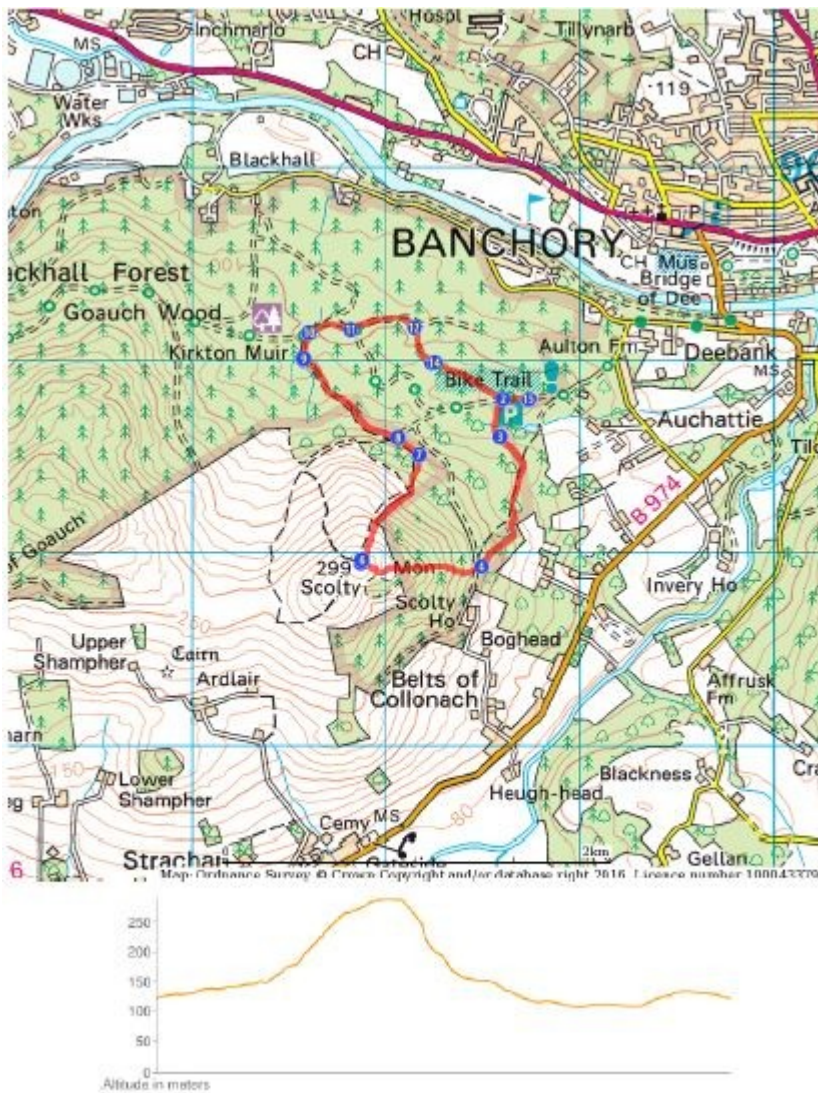


### (15) Finish walk back at car-park

(57.04316; -2.51684) <https://w3w.co/neatly.freshest.freezing>  
In 500 m, or so, you will have arrived back at the steel gate on  
the forest road by the Scolty Hill car-park where you started  
the walk. (4.8 km)



## Route Map



### Links:

[Photos from walk](#)

[Download Route Guide](#) (PDF with illustrated Waypoints)

[Download GPX file](#) (GPS Exchange Format)

[Access Walk on OutdoorActive](#)

[Access Walk on OSMaps](#)

[Access Walk on AllTrails](#)

[Access Walk on Wikiloc](#)