

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

## Tarland-Drummy Wood-Tomnaverie-Tarland Way (Aberdeenshire)

### Route Summary

This gentle excursion into the varied countryside around Tarland makes for an excellent introduction to the many walking opportunities in the area, with a paths network maintained with help from the MacRobert Trust. On the route, the visit to the Tomnaverie Stone Circle is unforgettable.

Duration: 2 hours.



### Route Overview

**Duration:** 2 hours.

**Transport/Parking:** Infrequent Stagecoach bus options. Check timetables. There is a free car-park at the walk start/end point.

**Length:** 5.920 km / 3.70 mi

**Height Gain:** 81 meter. **Height Loss:** 81 meter.

**Max Height:** 183 meter. **Min Height:** 139 meter.

**Surface:** Moderate. Well maintained paths and tracks.

**Difficulty:** Easy.

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

**Dog Friendly:** Yes, on lead near public roads and farm livestock (see Waypoint 12).

**Refreshments:** Options in Tarland.



### Description

This is an easy walk from the attractive little Deeside village of Tarland, taking in a varied rural environment with fine views of the Howe of Cromar, surrounding hills and the more distant Cairngorms. During the early part of the route through the mature and delightful Drummy Wood we rub shoulders with ancient history, passing through an area of great archaeological interest due to the prevalence of hut circle remains and old field enclosures. However, the undoubted focal point on the walk is Tomnaverie Stone Circle, a striking ancient monument whose situation and state of preservation always makes a big impact. The impressive bulk of Morven Hill, a little to the West, dominates the outlook during the open sections of the route. With its rounded slopes, it is sometimes compared to a



sleeping giant. On a fine day there are majestic views of the rugged Lochnagar Mountain, 20 miles away on the edge of the Eastern Cairngorms. Tarland sits at the centre of The Howe of Cromar, a wide bowl on the eastern edge of the Grampian Mountains between the rivers Dee and Don. If arriving by car from Aberdeen on the B9119 it is likely that your attention will be immediately grabbed as the road passes over the hill into the Howe of Cromar, with the mountains of Lochnagar, Morven and Mount Keen setting an exceptionally beautiful backdrop to a rolling patchwork of fields and woodlands. Queen Victoria was said to be enchanted by this view of the Howe and a viewpoint is named after her – “The Queen’s View”. Try not to miss it on your left as you enter the Howe. There is a small car-park across the road. As result of excavations at the Tomnaverie Stone Circle and other ancient sites in the area it is understood that there has been human activity in this area for at least 6,000 years. The recumbent stone circle is at the mid-point on the route on a low hill that enables wonderful all-around views – framing Lochnagar over the recumbent stone in a truly spectacular fashion. The village of Tarland itself has a fine old Square with some buildings dating back around 300 years.

## Waypoints

### (1) Start walk at Drummy Woods car-park

(57.12634; -2.86593) <https://w3w.co/claim.decays.additives>

The walk starts and finishes at the walkers and mountain bikers car-park off Burnside Road in Tarland. The car-park is about 150 m SSW from the entrance to the access road and is signposted for walking routes and the Tarland Trails bike track. After checking out the information board, take the rough road going SSW, with the trees of Drummy Wood on your left side and more open ground on your right side.



### (2) Left at bench and onto path through Tarland Trails arch

(57.12193; -2.87169) <https://w3w.co/glaze.divisions.icebergs>

After gently ascending on the rough road, in 600 m, where there is a bench on your right side, take the path on your left into the trees, under an arch. This is the start-point for the Tarland Trails mountain-bike tracks so be sure to step well off the track to give way to any cyclists you encounter. (612 m)



### (3) Right off cycle trail onto footpath

(57.12180; -2.86713) <https://w3w.co/retaliate.lighten.installs>

In 300 m, leave the bike trail to veer right onto a walkers' path where there is a staggered wooden safety barrier. Keep following this path through the woodland. (907 m)



### (4) Go right at t-junction by walks post

(57.12087; -2.86478) <https://w3w.co/exam.verb.seating>

In 200 m, or so, go right at a paths t-junction by a walks post. (1.1 km)



### (5) Right again at t-junction by another walks post

(57.11963; -2.86520) <https://w3w.co/reporting.drawn.washable>  
In 100 m, go right again at another t-junction by another walks post. (1.2 km)



### (6) Left along rough access road

(57.11925; -2.86663) <https://w3w.co/gagging.tested.sweetener>  
In another 100 m, or so, the path meets a rough road at a t-junction. Go left along the road for about 100 m, looking for a walks post and path on your right side. (1.3 km)



### (7) Right off access road at walks post - onto woodland path

(57.11841; -2.86613) <https://w3w.co/handy.hopping.clasping>  
In 100 m, go right off the rough access road at a walks post to follow a woodland path. (1.4 km)



### (8) Cross B9119 road and through gate to continue on woodland path

(57.11604; -2.86740) <https://w3w.co/rekindle.washed.ripen>  
In 500 m, the path emerges onto the B9119 road. Cross the road and go through gate to continue on another woodland path which soon leaves the woodland to take a grassy path between fields in a broadly ENE direction. You will begin to notice the prominent spire of St Moluag's Church in Tarland in the middle distance on your left side, with Alastrean House also clearly visible a little further East as views of the Howe of Cromar open up. (1.9 km)



### (9) Through gate and right along rough access road

(57.11784; -2.85642) <https://w3w.co/slugs.quiz.sharpness>  
In 700 m, after going through a gate, the path bends a little to the left where there is another gate which takes you onto a rough access road. Go right here. (2.6 km)



### (10) Left off rough access road and over stile

(57.11662; -2.85284) <https://w3w.co/bike.clashing.muscular>  
In about 200 m, go left off the rough access road, over a large wooden stile onto a woodland path. In about 120 m the winding path meets a field edge and goes right for a short distance towards an old stone wall partly obscured in bushes. (2.8 km)



### (11) Over dry-stone wall steps - left and uphill

(57.11764; -2.85105) <https://w3w.co/copes.briefing.waking>  
In 200 m, go over the stone steps on the old field wall and take the path going gently uphill, with the wall and bushes on your left side and open ground on your right side. (3.0 km)



### (12) Through gate and cross field to go through next gate

(57.11861; -2.85125)  
<https://w3w.co/summaries.coughed.celebrate>  
In 100 m, go through a gate on your right side and cross a narrow area of field\* to go through another gate. Keep following the path as it gently ascends, passing the old Royal Observer Corps bunker on your left side, before reaching the Tomnaverie Stone Circle on the exposed low hilltop. (3.1 km)

*\*Note: the field may well contain farm livestock. If so, please take appropriate care and ensure dogs are on lead.*



### (13) Tomnaverie Stone Circle

(57.11937; -2.84976) <https://w3w.co/fidelity.fled.infinite>

In 200 m, or so, you will have arrived at the hugely impressive Tomnaverie Stone Circle, with marvellous views of the Howe of Cromar and surrounding hills. Morven Hill is, of course, prominent, only a few miles away to the West. If the visibility is good you may also have a fine view of Lochnagar, about 20 miles away to the South-West. When you are ready, descend past the information board on the path going NE, then E, downhill towards the car-park, ignoring the first path you meet going down to the B9094 road on your left. Walk through the car-park towards the public road, looking out for a walks post and grassy path on your right at the junction with the road. (3.3 km)



*\*Note: Tomnaverie is a recumbent stone circle, a kind of monument found only in north-east Scotland. There are about 100 of them. They're defined by a large stone laid on its side (recumbent), flanked by two upright stones, usually on the south or south-west arc of the circle. These monuments may have been used for: a) astronomical observation – the midsummer moon would have been framed by the recumbent stone in the south-west, and/or to frame sacred landscape features – Tomnaverie has a spectacular view of Lochnagar and Morven. [thanks to Historic Environment Scotland]*

See: <https://www.historicenvironment.scot/visit-a-place/places/tomnaverie-stone-circle/history/>

### (14) Right along grassy path at car-park entrance

(57.11980; -2.84409) <https://w3w.co/appoints.products.radiates>

In 400m, or so, from the stone circle on the hilltop, go right along a grassy path at the car-park entrance. The path goes E, with the B9094 parallel and close on your left side. In about 120 m, go through a gate, then left to cross the busy B9094 road with care. Go through the gate on the other side of the road, then right for a short distance, then left to follow the grassy path gently downhill, with fields on either side, towards the Tarland Burn. (3.7 km)



### (15) Left along Tarland Way grassy path

(57.12251; -2.83991) <https://w3w.co/offers.guests.supposed>

In 500 m, facing a footbridge over the Tarland Burn, do NOT go over the bridge. Instead, go left along the grassy path, part of the Tarland Way between Aboyne and Tarland, as it heads back towards the village of Tarland, with the Tarland Burn always close on your right side. (4.2 km)



## (16) Cross B9119 road at bridge and onto Burnside Road

(57.12587; -2.85812) <https://w3w.co/throw.glare.liberated>

After 1.1 km, arriving back at Tarland, the path ascends past wooden safety barriers to cross the B9119 road by the old stone bridge. Please take extra care crossing the road as your view to the right may be partially obscured by the hump of the bridge. Now follow the pavement along Burnside Road, with the Tarland Burn still on your right side. In about 460 m, you will arrive at the signpost for walking routes and the Tarland Trail bike track on your left side, where you turn left to walk up the access road back to the car-park where you started the walk. (5.3 km)



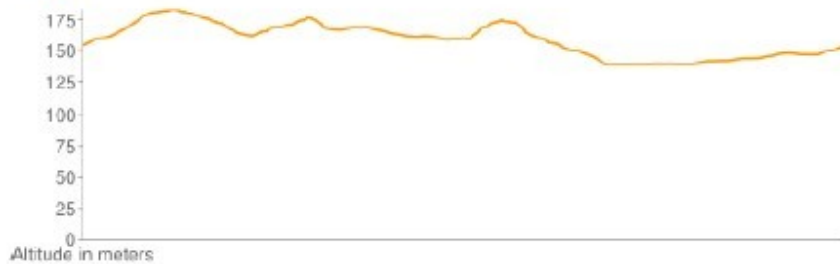
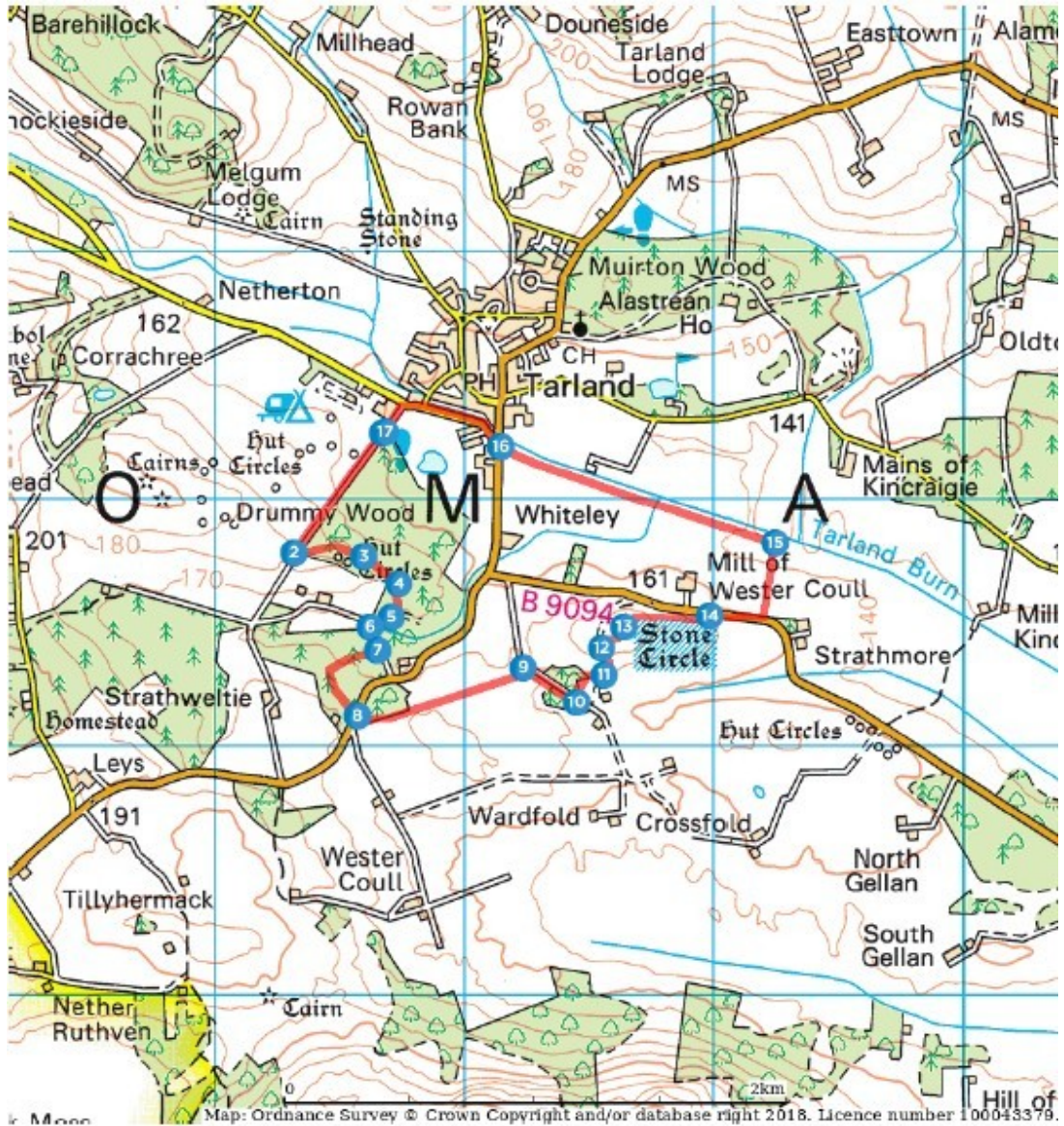
## (17) Finish walk back at Drummy Woods car-park

(57.12635; -2.86582) <https://w3w.co/claim.decays.additives>

In 600 m, you will have arrived back at the Tarland Trails car-park where you started the walk. (5.9 km)



## Route Map



### Links:

[Photos from Walk](#)

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

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

[Access Walk on Viewranger](#)

[Access the Walk on OutdoorActive](#)

[Access Walk on OSMaps](#)

[Access Walk on Wikiloc](#)