

A BOOT UP THE NORTHUMBERLAND NATIONAL PARK

Anthony Toole

The Northumberland National Park begins near the Scottish Border and snakes southward to the earlier border marked by Hadrian's Wall. It passes through several geological zones, each with its own landforms, vegetation and scenery. There are the volcanic rocks of the Cheviot Hills in the north, the fell sandstones of the heather-clad central hills, the limestone of the carboniferous era and the dolerite of the Great Whin Sill, the crags of which line the southern boundary.

Rocks are carved with secret graffiti of the Stone Age, the Bronze and Iron Ages left burial mounds and hill forts, Roman roads and forts extend far to the north of Hadrian's Wall and castles recall five centuries of border conflict that followed the Norman Conquest. Yet the legacy of this remarkable history is one of the most stunningly beautiful regions of Britain. Most of the walks, of between 2 and 8½ miles, are suitable for families and groups of friends, and follow public rights-of-way, across high, wild and lonely moorland, where the sky is wide and the loudest sounds are the hiss of wind, the babble of water and the distant calls of skylark, lapwing and curlew.

The ten walks are: Great Hetha; The Cheviot; Dunmoor Hill and Linhope Spout; Chew Green and Brownhart Law; Copper Snout and Usway Burn; Harbottle and the Drakestone; Darden Lough; Troughend Common; Bellcrag Flow; Broomlee Lough and the Hidden Loughs.

Halsgrove's new-format guidebook, containing maps, photographs and useful information will ensure a great walking experience. Packed with colour, the book is an ideal reminder of a visit to the area.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

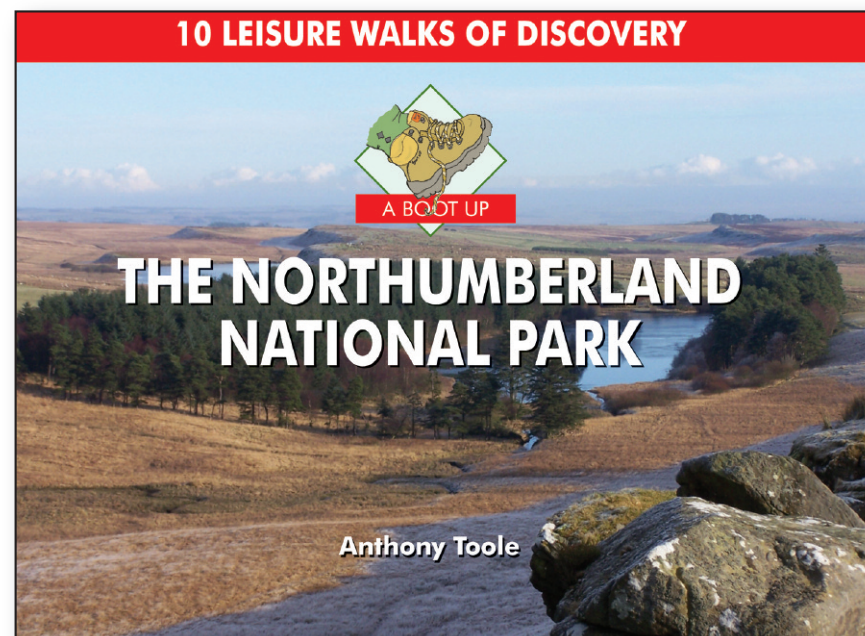
Anthony Toole lives in Newcastle upon Tyne, and spends much of his time walking in and writing about the hills of the north-east. He contributes walk descriptions regularly to *BBC Countryfile Magazine* and also contributed to the AA publication, *50 Walks in Durham and Northumberland*. He writes outdoor features for *The Northumbrian*, *The Countryman* and *North-east Life* magazines. He is a prizewinning member of Outdoor Writers' and Photographers' Guild and Writers and Photographers Unlimited. He has also written *A Boot Up the Durham Dales* and *A Boot Up the Northumberland Coast*, also for Halsgrove.

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A BOOT UP THE NORTHUMBERLAND NATIONAL PARK



Cheviot summit.



Linhope.



The Drake Stone.



Hadrian's Wall and Sewingshields Wood.



Shillmoor and the River Coquet.

1 Great Helio

Blackhags Rigg, and peering over this is the Schill, said by some to offer the finest view on the whole of the Pennine Way.

6 From the northern limit of the hill fort, move off to the north-east, and descend for 200 metres to where a stone wall runs to the western end of a conifer forest.

During the nineteenth century, the estate was owned by Lord Cullinstown, who led the British fleet into battle at Trafalgar. He planted oaks in the valley, hoping to ensure that Britain would never be short of oak for the hulls of her navy's ships.

College valley.

2 The Cheviot

A demanding 8½-mile hill walk over the summit of Northumberland's highest mountain.

The rounded summit of the Cheviot, visible, and unmistakable from almost any place in Northumberland, is the shrunken remnant of the once many times taller volcano that spilled its magma here some 380 million years ago. The granite bedrock of the summit is buried beneath peat, sometimes to a depth of metres. On the Banks, it is exposed as rubble fields, and most impressively its tall crags in the north-east and western cliffs of The Bizzle and The Ranthole. It is the highest mountain in Northumberland and has a hard mile

Levels: 65 miles
Terrain: Softest road, grassy hill tracks and old heath.
Park and Start: Grassy car parking area half-a-mile south-west of Longbush, at the end of a minor road running south out of Widdow.
Start ref.: NE 954225
Web site: www.northumberlandnationalpark.org.uk

from the Pennine Way footpath, so walkers on that route often need to make the difficult decision whether to include it or not on their expedition.

2 The Cheviot

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Example of a double-page spread.